



## Supervision in Inclusive Islamic Early Childhood Education: Strategies Approach for an Integrated Program

Received: 01-02-2024; Revised: 16-06-2024; Accepted: 20-08-2024

### Dandy Prasetyo Awaludin\*)

Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta,  
Indonesia

E-mail: [dandyprasetyo.2022@student.uny.ac.id](mailto:dandyprasetyo.2022@student.uny.ac.id)

### Tira Fitria Astrid Dhica Sintya

Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta,  
Indonesia

E-mail: [tirafitria.2022@student.uny.ac.id](mailto:tirafitria.2022@student.uny.ac.id)

### Nurtanio Agus Purwanto

Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta,  
Indonesia

E-mail: [nurtanio@uny.ac.id](mailto:nurtanio@uny.ac.id)

### Hermanto

Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta,  
Indonesia

E-mail: [hermansp@uny.ac.id](mailto:hermansp@uny.ac.id)

\*) Corresponding Author

**Abstract:** The implementation of supervision in the field of education does not only focus on evaluation or assessment of weaknesses but rather on efforts to improve the quality of education. Supervision in early childhood education that implements inclusive programs needs to be continuously developed to adjust to the learning environment in schools. This study aims to describe the strategy for developing inclusive education supervision in integrated one-roof Islamic early childhood education institutions in Pati Regency. This study uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. The source of research data was obtained from informants of three school principals from each early childhood education service unit, namely TPA, KB, and TK. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis process is carried out inductively by detailing empirical facts through direct activities in the field. The results of the study indicate that in integrated Islamic-based inclusive early childhood education institutions, educational supervision and coaching programs have been implemented by all teachers and school education personnel. The strategy for developing educational supervision that can be applied forms a solid foundation for optimizing inclusive learning practices. These strategies include an in-depth understanding of inclusion, teacher involvement and training, development of inclusive learning plans, utilization of resources, and continuous monitoring and evaluation. Overall, these findings continue to emphasize the inclusion program promoted by the institution.

**Abstrak:** Pelaksanaan supervisi dalam bidang pendidikan tidak sekedar berfokus pada evaluasi atau penilaian terhadap kelemahan, melainkan lebih pada upaya untuk meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan secara menyeluruh. Supervisi dalam pendidikan anak usia dini yang menerapkan program inklusi perlu terus dikembangkan menyesuaikan dengan lingkungan belajar di sekolah. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan strategi pengembangan supervisi pendidikan inklusi pada lembaga PAUD Islam terpadu satu atap di Kabupaten Pati. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus. Sumber data penelitian diperoleh dari informan tiga kepala sekolah dari setiap unit layanan PAUD yaitu TPA, KB, dan TK. Teknik pengumpulan data meliputi observasi, wawancara dan dokumentasi. Proses

*analisis data dilakukan secara induktif dengan merinci fakta empiris melalui kegiatan langsung di lapangan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dalam lembaga PAUD inklusi berbasis islam terpadu telah mengimplementasikan supervisi pendidikan dan program pembinaan yang didapatkan oleh semua guru dan tenaga kependidikan sekolah. Strategi pengembangan supervisi pendidikan yang dapat diterapkan membentuk fondasi yang solid untuk mengoptimalkan praktik pembelajaran inklusi. Strategi tersebut meliputi pemahaman mendalam tentang inklusi, pelibatan dan pelatihan guru, pengembangan rencana pembelajaran inklusif, pemanfaatan sumber daya, dan monitoring evaluasi berkelanjutan. Keseluruhan temuan tersebut tetap menitikberatkan program inklusi yang diunggulkan oleh lembaga.*

**Keywords:** *Supervision, Inclusive Program, Early Childhood Education*

## INTRODUCTION

The practice of inclusive education in Indonesia has developed since 2003, and to date, more than 36,000 educational institutions have registered themselves as providers of inclusive education (Kepala Badan Standar, Kurikulum dan Asesmen Pendidikan Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Inclusive programs in early childhood education are a very positive step in efforts to provide equal learning opportunities for all children, including children with special needs (Izza et al., 2023). However, its implementation in the field still faces various challenges and problems. The results of initial observations in the field show that data on students with special needs continues to increase in each new school year. However, the number of teachers and education personnel in PAUD schools is limited, resulting in an imbalance in the learning process.

A previous study found that coordination in inclusive learning requires cooperation or involvement from all school communities (Pangestuti & Darsinah, 2023). Meanwhile, supervision activities play an important role in facilitating and ensuring effective coordination between all school stakeholders (Dwikurnaningsih, 2020; Damayanti & Kamarubiani, 2021; Lanawaty et al., 2023). Thus, the statement from the principal in the initial observation in the field initiated the need to develop educational supervision activities in which to adjust to the existing

school environment conditions. The principal targeted all teachers to be able to develop their competence through educational supervision activities.

Teachers are the main component in implementing educational supervision (Ma'sun et al., 2022). In supervision activities, teachers can get strong motivation to develop their abilities (Prasetia et al., 2022). The quality of teacher teaching has great significance because it directly affects children's learning success (Atmojo et al., 2021; Arifin, 2022). Through educational supervision, the principal can provide support, guidance, and feedback to help teachers improve the quality of learning. Thus, developing teacher quality is very important for graduate competence (Yayuk & Sugiyono, 2019) including in schools with inclusive programs (Hartono, 2019; Munisah, 2020). In addition, effective supervision also involves collaboration between teachers and supervisors, as well as the provision of relevant resources and training to continuously improve teachers' professional competence (Karim et al., 2021).

The supervision process is carried out with the aim of increasing the level of professionalism of educators and related parties in achieving national education targets at all levels of education, including early childhood education institutions (Sari & Najah, 2021). The supervisory approach in the context of education is not only

evaluative or an assessment of deficiencies, but also has the aim of improving the overall quality of education (Babuta & Rahmat, 2019; Mushlih & Novianti, 2022). Therefore, a supervision approach that is oriented towards coaching and development directs inclusive PAUD institutions to become quality places, supports the optimal growth and development of early childhood, and contributes to the achievement of national education goals.

Effective educational supervision focuses on coaching and development, not just problem identification (Saharuddin et al., 2022; Amelia et al., 2023). Educational supervision activities are carried out by a supervisor, who can be a school principal or school supervisor/inspector. The main responsibilities of the supervisor include assessment, monitoring, and guidance, which are carried out by applying the principles of supervision (Fathih, 2022; Harningsih, 2023). The implementation of supervision has a positive impact on improving input variables (students), learning processes, output (graduate competencies), and results in educational institutions (Puspita, 2022). Therefore, the development of supervision models/methods or techniques is basically better if it is carried out continuously.

Research on supervision practices in inclusive PAUD institutions has been conducted but has not been included in one integrated unit. Thus, there is an interest in conducting further research on supervision development strategies in integrated Islamic PAUD institutions that implement inclusive programs. Based on this background, this study aims to describe the strategy for developing educational supervision in integrated Islamic-based PAUD institutions under one roof. It is hoped that this study can provide an overview of specific supervision models, the role of supervisors, development strategies, impacts on the quality of education, and contributions to the development of educational policies, especially in integrated Islamic-based PAUD institutions, more broadly.

## **METHOD**

This study uses a qualitative method with a case study approach design. The method was chosen to explore in depth the supervision development strategy carried out. This study was conducted at an integrated one-roof Islamic early childhood education institution that implements an inclusive program with provisions for the Child Care Center (TPA), Playgroup (KB), and Kindergarten (TK) services. The location of the study was carried out at the 'PAUD Terpadu Aisyiyah 05 Pati'. This early childhood education institution implements an inclusive program with Islamic learning methods. The research data collection period was carried out for 3 months from October to December 2023. The three institutions implemented an inclusive learning program targeting early childhood children who were under one roof of the learning environment with Islamic methods.

The subjects who became key informants in this study were the principals of the three institutions. Data collection techniques in this study were interviews, observations, and documentation. The data analysis process was carried out inductively by detailing empirical facts through direct activities in the field (Timmermans & Tavory, 2022). Meanwhile, the data validity test with four criteria includes: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Miles et al., 2014). The results of the data analysis will identify patterns, themes, and categories that emerge from interview data, observations, and documentation. Thus, obtaining data that builds a deeper understanding of the strategy for developing educational supervision in the early childhood institution.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Supervision of education in PAUD institutions is very important to be carried out as a form of internal quality assurance of education, especially in early childhood education. The content of the context of this research was conducted at an inclusive

PAUD institution with Islamic-based learning in an integrated one-roof scope. The expected results of inclusive education for children with special needs by providing a sense of ownership and membership in the community, positive social relationships and friendships, and personal learning and development (Nishina et al., 2019; Oskarsdottir et al., 2020; Cologon, 2022). The implementation of supervision at the 'PAUD Terpadu Aisyiyah 05 Pati' has been fully implemented in three institutions, namely from the Child Care Center (TPA), Playgroup (KB), and Kindergarten (TK).

### **Implementation of Educational Supervision**

The implementation of educational supervision at the 'PAUD Terpadu Aisyiyah 05 Pati' institution is certainly inseparable from the cooperation between the principal, teachers, staff, and school supervisors. Educational supervision activities are an effort to improve the professional and technical skills of teachers, principals, and other school staff whose goal is to improve the quality of the educational process in the school environment (Suparliadi, 2021). Supervision activities at the PAUD institution are carried out twice in one school year. TPA, KB and TK each have a principal who acts as a leader or manager of each unit. The principal in each unit has an obligation to provide guidance or coaching to teachers and educational staff who are structurally under him. The findings in the field are in line with research by Warmansyah (2020) that the mentoring, guidance, and supervision carried out by the principal as a supervisor aim to ensure that the learning process can run smoothly.

The first stage in the implementation of supervision at 'PAUD Terpadu Aisyiyah 05 Pati' began with the school management together with the principal forming a supervision team consisting of the principal and senior teachers. The supervision team consists of a mixture of teachers from TPA, KB, and TK. This selection aims to make supervision activities more effective in

reaching all integrated PAUD units. Each institution may nominate members of their choice who are considered to have more competence and experience than the others. The main role of the supervision team is to help teachers and other staff in improving the quality of teaching in the classroom, with the hope that it will contribute to improving the quality of student learning (Suparliadi, 2021). In this regard, the diversity in the composition of the supervision team provides rich perspectives and a deep understanding of the unique needs and challenges of each learning environment.

After the team formation, the principal takes the second step by compiling a supervision schedule that involves class observation during learning activities. In this process, the principal and the supervision team are actively involved in observing the teaching methods applied by teachers in each class. This process shows that each supervisor must be able to concentrate on supervising in order to make good input to produce superior output (Turmidzi, 2021). Thus, the main purpose of this observation is not only to assess, but more on identifying strengths and areas of development in the teaching approach. Thus, supervision has a great influence in improving teacher teaching performance (Rohmawati et al., 2023).

The increase in supervisory activities carried out by the principal will have an impact on improving teacher performance (Hasanah & Kristiawan, 2019; Saleh & Mutiani, 2021). This shows that effective supervision not only provides feedback but also encourages teachers to continue learning and innovating. Field interviews show that each teacher has the opportunity to communicate the problems they face to the supervisor during the teaching process. Teachers have the right to convey the problems or challenges they face, provide personal views, or even propose solutions related to the problem. This communication process creates a collaborative dynamic between teachers and the supervision team (Sjolie et al., 2021). The task of the supervision team is not limited to being an

observer, but also as a partner who plays an active role in overcoming any obstacles that may arise in the learning process. By providing space for opinions and solutions from teachers, each teacher feels appreciated and involved in the improvement process.

In the third step, the supervisory team then engages in an in-depth analysis of the problems presented by the teacher. This analysis activity is carried out by considering the various perspectives and experiences of the members of the supervision team. The analysis process involving various perspectives and experiences of the members of the supervision team reflects a collaborative approach to problem solving (McGhee & Stark, 2021). The main goal is to provide solutions that are appropriate to the specific context and needs of the teaching environment. After identifying the right solution, the supervisory team provides answers and recommendations to the teacher. Then, the next step is to implement the corrective actions in future learning activities. This quick and concrete follow-up supports the continuous improvement process and helps the teacher to continue to develop in his/her teaching practice.

Through a collaborative approach, the supervision team provides constructive feedback to the observed teachers, with a focus on improving the quality of learning and developing teaching skills. Especially in terms of teaching students with special needs. Based on field interviews, the implementation of supervision carried out on teachers who teach with inclusive methods is technically almost the same as supervision in other schools. This is because basically each teacher themselves and the supervision team bring unique experiences and expertise, which creates space for the exchange of ideas and best practices between the TPA, KB, and TK levels. Thus, this supervision effort not only acts as an evaluation instrument but also as a learning and collaboration forum to encourage mutual growth in order to improve the quality of education in early childhood education environments, especially those that

implement inclusive learning with an integrated system under one roof and based on Islam.

### **Mentoring Programs**

Supervision is also a form of guidance given to teachers or education personnel at schools (Setia & Nasrudin, 2020). The coaching program is implemented starting from a small internal scope within the school environment itself to the external scope. Several coaching models are carried out by teachers and education personnel at PAUD Terpadu Aisyiyah 05 Pati; the first is internal coaching (briefing). Internal coaching is carried out within the scope of the early childhood education institution itself. This briefing takes place once a week, precisely on Saturdays. The design of the program implementation is to gather all principals and teachers from each unit (TPA, KB, TK). In this internal briefing, all units conduct self-evaluations of their learning process and the problems found in one week. The goal is to improve the learning process in the following week. All briefing participants have the same right to express their opinions, the problems faced, and the solutions and considerations they want to provide.

The results of interviews with the principal revealed that every teacher complained that they felt more easily tired when teaching in inclusive classes containing regular students and students with special needs. Through internal coaching activities or briefings, each teacher can share experiences and solutions to find the right method while teaching. With continuous internal coaching, it is hoped that teachers can reduce their fatigue and improve the quality of teaching in inclusive classes so that all students, both regular and special needs, can receive education that suits their needs.

Second, coaching from PAUD management or management. This program is provided by the manager twice a month or every two weeks. The coaching provided is usually more administrative in nature, so it aims to meet the administrative needs of both

the principal and teachers and staff. All stakeholders can convey complaints or desires regarding the progress of their work. Third, coaching from the local education office. Coaching from this office is different for each unit. The kindergarten unit follows coaching or training from the Indonesian Kindergarten Teachers Association (IGTKI), while the KB and TPA units follow coaching and training activities from the Association of Indonesian Early Childhood Educators and Education Personnel (HIMPAUDI). Coaching or training activities are coordinated by the head of each organization through technical guidance or training by taking expert speakers from external parties. The coaching program from this office is carried out routinely once a month or according to conditions if there is a sudden notification from the government.

Fourth, coaching from the foundation. The form of coaching provided by the foundation is divided into two programs. The first program is coaching from the foundation's branch offices, which is held every Sunday. Furthermore, the second program is coaching provided by the foundation's regional leaders, who are bound by the Aisyiyah Bustanul Athfal Teachers Association (IGABA) organization. Coaching is carried out twice a month. Both programs are given thematically with the aim of providing knowledge and understanding of learning in accordance with the foundation's sharia. In the foundation's coaching activities, each teacher will be given reinforcement to teach with Islamic-based methods that build Muhammadiyah and Aisyiyah character.

The academic supervision approach using mentoring or coaching methods is considered a solution to the challenges faced by teachers previously. This is considered an effective strategy to improve the quality of education (Masliah, 2019; Pakpahan et al., 2021). All coaching programs in PAUD Terpadu Aisyiyah 05 Pati aim to develop the competence of both the principal, teachers, and staff so that they can have a positive impact on the learning process. Several

times, these coaching programs provide knowledge about the inclusive approach to early childhood education while still upholding Islamic values based on foundation regulations.

### **Development of Educational Supervision**

Educational supervision development programs in inclusive PAUD institutions should focus on supporting teachers and staff in creating inclusive learning environments and supporting the development of all children, including those with special needs. Educational supervision development programs in inclusive PAUD institutions should be carefully designed to meet the unique needs of the institution, and these programs should be centered on the principles of inclusion and equity in education (Maemunah et al., 2021). Inclusive learning for early childhood requires an approach that is highly sensitive to the developmental needs and well-being of children (Bartolo et al., 2021; Kuutti et al., 2022). The development of educational supervision in inclusive PAUD institutions requires a strategy that focuses on empowerment, coaching, and support for all school stakeholders.

The first strategy is a deep understanding of inclusion. In order to build effective inclusive school leadership, the principal must collaborate with all stakeholders to develop a mission and share an understanding of inclusion (DeMatthews et al., 2020). Therefore, the principal ensures that every teacher has a deep understanding of the concept of inclusion and the needs of children with special needs. This involves providing a holistic understanding, covering the various types of special needs that children may face in an inclusive PAUD environment. Every teacher must be able to apply the concept of equality to all children, even though there are some children who have special differences.

The principal provides facilities for teachers to participate in various activities such as workshops, training, or education and training related to the implementation of

inclusive learning for the education of children with special needs. The principal encourages teachers to have skills in classroom management that support diversity. Teachers are expected to be able to face challenges and diversity responsively, creating an environment where every child feels accepted and supported. This holistic approach helps teachers develop the competencies needed to provide quality, inclusive education (Maemunah et al., 2021). Thus, every teacher in an inclusive PAUD institution is not only expected to have a theoretical understanding of inclusion but also to have adequate practical skills to implement learning strategies that support the special needs of children in the context of inclusive education.

The second strategy is teacher involvement and training. In supporting efforts to implement inclusive education in early childhood education institutions, school principals play an important role in providing regular training for teachers. This training focuses on developing understanding and skills related to inclusive learning approaches, teaching strategies for children with special needs, and curriculum adaptation techniques. Every educator is aware of their important role in ensuring that all children are involved in learning and playing. Therefore, it is necessary to design appropriate learning strategies to meet the differences of each child (Jusni et al., 2023). Pre-service and in-service training must prepare teachers to carry out supervisory functions together with fellow educators (Frantz et al., 2020). Involving teachers in such activities provides an opportunity to discuss inclusion concepts in depth, exchange experiences, and identify best practices in supporting children's diversity.

The third strategy is the development of an inclusive learning plan. Previously, the principal and curriculum development team had prepared the school's operational curriculum by adjusting the concept of inclusive learning for early childhood. Then, the principal can encourage teachers to develop an inclusive learning plan that

considers the individual needs of each child. A teacher needs to have the ability to adapt the curriculum according to the child's developmental stage and organize learning interactions that involve all students (Kalinina et al., 2021). Therefore, each teacher can develop learning modules according to their own creativity which attracts children's interest in learning not only in class but also outside class.

Every lesson plan must contain an assessment of the child's learning outcomes. The ability to recognize individual differences in students is a basic concept when teachers prepare to teach (Allam & Martin, 2021). By reflecting on the learning process and behavior of children, they gain insights that then help in developing further learning plans (Jusni et al., 2023). In this case, each teacher has the freedom to apply assessment methods to children's learning outcomes, such as anecdotal notes, portfolios, checklists, and photo descriptions. Then the teacher is also not burdened with the same assessment approach for each child. Teachers can adjust the assessment according to the interests and activities that the child does voluntarily.

The fourth strategy is by utilizing resources. Human resources in early childhood education institutions are still a major obstacle because their numbers are still limited. Recruitment of human resources must be carried out intensively to meet the needs of education consumers. The principal applies dual duties to each teacher to be able to help units that are overwhelmed during the learning process. This is with the consideration of TK or KB learning hours, which follow half a day (until 10.00). So that teachers who work half-day hours can help other units that are full days. For example, when there are many students with special needs in TK, teachers from the KB or TPA unit can help condition them; likewise, for the KB and TPA units, if there are many students with special needs or experiencing difficulties in the learning process, they can be assisted by assistant teachers from other units. In addition, the principal also needs to

ensure supporting facilities for the inclusive education program. These facilities include accessibility facilities, supporting equipment, and learning resources that can be accessed by all children.

The fifth or final strategy is continuous monitoring and evaluation. For inclusive education in PAUD institutions to run effectively, the principal is responsible for conducting continuous monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of inclusive practices and the effectiveness of supervision policies. Through this effort, the principal can ensure that inclusive practices are not only written plans but also become a reality that is integrated into everyday life in the PAUD environment. Monitoring and evaluation include direct monitoring of classes, teacher observations, and analysis of children's learning outcome data, with a particular focus on the progress of children with special needs. Feedback provided by teachers, parents, and the supervision team plays a key role in compiling a complete picture of the effectiveness of the inclusive approach.

The feedback then becomes the basis for the principal to make adjustments and continuous improvements. Supervision policies can be adjusted, additional training can be provided, and supporting resources can be increased. This process creates a continuous cycle where each step is directed towards improving and enhancing the quality of inclusive education in the PAUD institution. Thus, by conducting continuous monitoring and evaluation, the principal not only ensures the sustainability of the implementation of inclusive practices but also creates a culture of reflection and learning throughout the institution. This is in line with the goal of providing inclusive, responsive, and quality education for all children, regardless of their diverse needs.

## CONCLUSION

The implementation of educational supervision at the PAUD Terpadu Aisyiyah 05 Pati institution is carried out starting from a small scale for each unit (TK, KB, TPA) to

the entire early childhood education institution. The principal together with the supervision team carries out supervision activities for each teacher by adjusting the schedule and methods that have been agreed upon together. The forms of coaching programs carried out include internal coaching (briefing), coaching from managers, coaching from the office, and coaching from the foundation. The entire coaching process seeks to develop teacher competence in inclusive learning activities at school. The principal develops strategies for developing educational supervision that include a deep understanding of inclusion, teacher involvement and training, development of inclusive learning plans, utilization of resources, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation. These strategies form a solid foundation for optimizing inclusive learning practices. The principal, through a holistic and sustainable approach, makes the PAUD institution an inclusive, responsive, and quality learning environment for all children.

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