

Monitoring of Education Unit Assistants and Principal Supervision in Improving the Quality of Teachers in State Elementary Schools in Hulu Sungai Tengah Regency

Ulfah, A.*, Yuliansyah, M. & Susanto, D.

Universitas Islam Kalimantan Muhammad Arsyad Al Banjari Banjarmasin, INDONESIA

*Corresponding Author: annisaulfah19@gmail.com

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Abstract: This study aims to examine the role of monitoring by educational unit facilitators and supervision by school principals in improving the quality of teachers' instruction, as well as to identify the challenges encountered in the process. The study was conducted at three elementary schools: SDN 2 Haruyan Seberang, SDN Layuh, and SDN 3 Banua Kupang. A descriptive quantitative approach was employed. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, and triangulation was used to ensure data validity. The findings reveal that school principals and educational unit facilitators employed various strategies, including continuous training, curriculum collaboration, regular meetings, and teacher involvement in decision-making. Limited resources, time constraints, budget limitations, inadequate infrastructure, and resistance from some teachers were identified as major challenges. Implementing learning evaluation systems and increasing teacher involvement in school development were among the solutions adopted to overcome these barriers and improve teaching quality.

Keywords: Monitoring, educational unit facilitators, school principals, teacher teaching quality

1. Introduction

The development of globalization today has had a major impact on many aspects of human life, including the field of education. High-quality, flexible, and highly competitive human resources (HR) are essential in today's intensely competitive world. Responding to these challenges, the education system must have the ability to produce students who are not only cognitively intelligent, but also have strong personalities and 21st-century skills. In a situation like this, basic education is very important as an initial basis in building students' character and abilities.

As stipulated in Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System (Nurhayati, 2020), education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning environment that allows students to develop their best potential. The main goal is to produce students who are faithful, knowledgeable, innovative, and responsible. All elements of education, especially teachers, principals, and supervisors or assistants of educational units, must play a role in achieving these goals.

The latest national policy improves the quality of education by changing the supervision system. Regulation of the Minister for Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform No. 21 of 2024 according to (Yulyani et al., 2024) redefines the role of school supervisors as facilitators for educational institutions. Now, the assistance of educational institutions focuses entirely on the construction and development of educational units rather than the additional task of teaching. They are tasked with helping teachers and principals improve the management of education and learning.

Directorate General of Teachers and Education Personnel Regulation No. 4831 of 2023 according to (Mulyanto et al., 2023) also emphasizes the strategic role of these facilitators, highlighting the transformation of school supervisors' roles from administrative controllers to active partners assisting educational institutions. Companions are not just supervisors, they become colleagues who help the development of teachers and principals to be better. This is in line with the philosophy of Merdeka Belajar, which prioritizes student-centered learning and supported by an innovative and flexible learning environment.

School principals have an important role in improving the quality of learning through academic and administrative supervision. Assistance also includes supervision and evaluation of the implementation of educational programs, strengthening learning planning and implementation, and assistance in developing programs that increase teacher capacity. The purpose of this supervision is to provide useful guidance and feedback to teachers so that they can improve their abilities professionally.

However, in real life, many challenges still stand in the way of the quality of teaching teachers in elementary schools. Some teachers still face challenges in designing and implementing lesson plans based on the Merdeka Curriculum. This requires a scientific approach and a high degree of flexibility. On the other hand, school principals and educational unit assistants face their own challenges in achieving optimal coaching due to limited time, funds, and resources.

In Hulu Sungai Tengah district, preliminary observations showed that three education units, SDN 2 Haruyan Seberang, SDN Layuh, and SDN 3 Banua Kupang, experienced a decline in the quality of learning based on the 2025 education report card. In addition, it was found that teachers face challenges in mastering the curriculum and carrying out learning well.

To improve the quality of teacher teaching, systematic and continuous efforts are needed through supervision and monitoring by education unit assistants and school principal supervision. It is believed that supervision and monitoring carried out collaboratively and participatively can improve teacher professionalism and overall quality of education.

Taking this background into account, the research entitled "Monitoring of Education Unit Companions and Principal Supervision in Improving the Quality of Teachers in State Elementary Schools in Hulu Sungai Tengah Regency" aims to evaluate how the implementation of monitoring education units and principal supervision contributes to improving the quality of teaching teachers in State Elementary Schools in Hulu Sungai Tengah Regency. This research will also identify barriers and solutions that can be used to improve the quality of education.

2. Problem Formulation

Referring to the above background, the formulation of the problem that arises is:

- a. How does the monitoring of educational unit assistants improve the quality of teachers?
- b. How is the supervision of the principal in improving the quality of teachers?
- c. What are the obstacles in improving the quality of teachers through monitoring activities carried out by education unit assistants and school principal supervision?

3. Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- a. To analyze the monitoring of education unit assistants in improving the quality of teachers in State Elementary Schools in Hulu Sungai Tengah Regency.
- b. To analyze the supervision of school principals in improving the quality of teachers in State Elementary Schools in Hulu Sungai Tengah Regency.
- c. To find out the obstacles in improving the quality of teachers through monitoring activities carried out by the assistants of the education unit and the supervision of the principal at the State Elementary School in Hulu Sungai Tengah Regency.

4. Literature Review

4.1 Theological Foundations

Education in Islam has a very important position. In Surah Al-Mujadilah verse 11, Allah SWT says: "Allah will exalt the believers among you and those who have been given knowledge of some degree." (QS. Al-Mujadilah: 11). This shows that improving the quality of teachers through supervision and supervision is part of an effort to use knowledge to improve the status of the people. In addition, the Prophet Muhammad SWT said that: "Each of you is a leader, and every leader will be held accountable for what he leads" (HR. Bukhari and Muslim). Emphasizing that school principals and educational unit assistants bear the same responsibility.

In addition, the Qur'an surah At-Taubah verse 122 and the Qur'an surah Ali-Imran verse 104 affirm that the deepening of knowledge and the delivery of goodness are social and spiritual responsibilities, and in line with the duties of companions and school principals have the responsibility to nurture teachers. It is very important that teachers are professionally trained, as stated in the hadith of the Prophet: "Indeed, Allah likes when one of you does a work, then he does it with itqan" (HR. Al-Baihaqi).

4.2 Philosophical Foundations

Various educational philosophies can be used to assess teacher quality improvement:

4.2.1 Humanism

The humanistic view considers teachers as people who have the potential to develop. Monitoring and supervision help teachers develop humanely and professionally.

4.2.2 Pragmatism

Emphasizing hands-on experience in learning. Supervision helps teachers reflect on their teaching practices for continuous quality improvement.

4.2.3 Progresivism

Affirming that education is a tool to change things. Teachers should be assisted in their role as change with supervision that allows room for innovation and self-development.

4.2.4 Existentialism

Respect the freedom of individuals to make their own choices and acknowledge responsibility for their decisions. Supervision provides direction and strengthens the responsibility and authenticity of teachers in carrying out their duties.

4.3 Theoretical Foundations

4.3.1 Monitoring

(Winantasari & Mustofa, 2024; Thoha, 1994) said that monitoring is a planned action to find out the state of an object. (Rahmawati & Purwanto, 2023) stated that monitoring is carried out to obtain certain information or data. (Rahajeng, 2025; Dunn, 1981) mentions four types of supervision: approval (obedience), auditing (auditing), accounting (reporting), and explanation.

The type of monitoring itself can be preventive, repressive, direct, indirect, formal, informal, administrative, operational, internal, and external. Planning, authority, efficiency, responsibility, future, and organizational adjustment are some of the principles underlying monitoring (Sururama, 2020).

Supervision criteria include planning, implementation, and reporting of results. Estimation of work results, use of funds, and efficiency of tools and resources are the supervisory criteria (Hasoloan et al., 2024).

4.3.2 Assistance of Education Units

PermenPANRB No. 21 of 2024 states that educational unit assistants function as a substitute for school supervisors and carry out assignment duties, not as additions. They concentrate on coaching, supervision, and evaluating the school. According to the Director General of GTK No. 4831 of 2023 in (Mulyanto et al., 2023), the companion functions as a strategic partner for teachers and school principals to support the implementation of Freedom of Learning.

Companions conduct supervision and evaluation, improve the quality of learning, and solve administrative problems. (Yusup, 2017) said that the companion is very important to improve the principal's abilities and create a good learning environment.

4.3.3 School Superintendent

School supervisors, according to PerMenPANRB No. 21 of 2010 in (Aguslani, 2019), are civil servants assigned to supervise school management and academics. Supervisors are professionals who are responsible for the administrative and technical guidance of educational units.

According to (Aji & Vidya, 2023), the purpose of supervision is to ensure the implementation of education as planned and to find and follow up on irregularities. According to (Iskadar, 2016), the main task of the supervisor is to evaluate the program, collaboratively assess results, and foster school quality.

4.3.4 Supervision

(Suryati et al., 2023) states that supervision comes from the words "super" and "vision", which respectively mean "to look from above to foster". Supervision is a professional act rather than administrative control. According to (Hanief, 2016), improving the quality of learning is the main goal of supervision.

Inspection, laissez-faire, coercion, training and guidance, and democratic supervision are all types of supervision. Supervision can be done individually (interviews, classroom observations) or in groups (discussions, training). According to (Wardan, 2019), the principle of supervision must be creative, democratic, scientific, safe, and allow teachers to judge themselves.

4.3.5 Principal

School principals are leaders who are trusted to advance the school, according to (Kadarsih et al., 2020). Based on the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 6 of 2018 and the concept of (Alhabsyi et al., 2022), the role of school principals includes educators, managers, administrators, drivers, leaders, innovators, and motivators.

The principal is responsible for school management, decision-making, and strengthening of educators. Leadership, problem-solving, social skills, and professionalism are the characteristics of a good school principal (Annaafi & Wakhudin, 2024).

5. Methodology

5.1 Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach and a phenomenological approach. The purpose of this study is to explore in depth the subjective experience of education unit assistants and school principals in monitoring and supervision to improve the quality of teacher teaching. This research is descriptive with a focus on social realities in three elementary schools in the Hulu Sungai Tengah Regency area.

This method is in line with the idea of (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018; Sugiyono, 2013), who said that qualitative research is used to conduct research on natural conditions, where researchers are the main tool. (Hadi, 2021) also say that the phenomenological approach interprets experiences based on the meaning given by the person who experiences them.

5.2 Data and Data Sources

The sampling technique used in this study is purposive sampling, which is a method of selecting samples based on certain criteria. Participants were chosen because they were considered to have the highest knowledge and understanding of the research subject. This study involved six subjects: principals and educational unit assistants from three elementary schools in Hulu Sungai Tengah Regency: SDN 2 Haruyan Seberang, SDN Layuh, and SDN 3 Banua Kupang.

The data used in this study comes from two types, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data comes from the results of in-depth interviews with school principals and education unit assistants. Meanwhile, secondary data consists of official documents such as supervision reports, school policies, and data on teachers and school facilities and infrastructure.

5.3 Research Instruments

In quantitative research, the researcher is the main tool. In addition, there are also several supporting instruments used to collect data such as observations, interviews, and documentation, which are used to collect data. Observation instruments were used to directly observe the supervision process, which included the way the principal supervised, the interaction between the supervisor and the teacher, and the change in teacher behavior in teaching were all aspects observed. Meanwhile, the interview instrument will be used to check in-depth information about the role of the supervisor and principal, supervision strategies, obstacles faced, and the impact of supervision on the quality of learning. The documentation instruments are used to collect documents such as reports on supervise activities, teacher teaching plans and evaluations, as well as school policies related to improving the quality of teachers.

All of these instruments are intended to ensure that the data obtained is relevant and also supports the research objectives.

6. Results and Discussion

6.1 Monitoring Strategy by Teaching Units

Education unit assistants play an important role in ensuring the improvement of the quality of teachers through cooperation. The results of observations and interviews show that the approach used includes regular training, active involvement of teachers in learning discussions, and support for the creation of teaching tools. Companions also provide opportunities for principals and teachers to express their opinions, and they hold a joint forum to discuss learning progress. As stipulated in GTK Director General Regulation No. 4831 of 2023 in (Mulyanto et al., 2023), the active partnership approach is at the core of this approach. The results of the analysis show that the education unit companions work not only as administrative supervisors but also help teachers become more professional by becoming facilitators in the process of improving teacher professionalism. When teachers and chaperones work together, schools have a more open atmosphere and are ready to change the curriculum.

6.2 Supervisions Strategy by the Principal

To improve the quality of teacher learning, school principals use various strategies, such as building continuous training programs, implementing learning evaluations, and encouraging collaborative coaching in curriculum development. The principal also acts as a transformational leader, actively looking at how learning activities are carried out and providing helpful criticism.

The data obtained shows that principals not only act as administrators, they also encourage and help build the school culture. Needs-based training, parent involvement, and regular meetings with teachers are effective ways to improve the quality of education. The results reinforce the idea of EMASLIM (Educator, Manager, Administrator, Supervisor, Leader, Innovator, Motivator) as a framework for the role of the principal in leading the school as a whole.

6.3 Challenge in the Implementation of Monitoring and Supervision

The study found that there are many challenges faced by both educational unit companions and principals when carrying out their responsibilities. These challenges include limited human resources, budget limitations, lack of infrastructure, and limited time to carry out optimal supervision are some of the obstacles. On the contrary, some teachers refuse to be supervised or supervised, citing discomfort.

Due to these limitations, teacher quality improvement programs cannot be fully implemented. However, the efforts made by the principal and assistants continue to work to improve the condition of their respective schools by adjusting their approaches.

6.4 Implemented Strategy Solutions

Principals have achieved a number of solutions, including the implementation of a constructive direct feedback strategy, teacher involvement in the decision-making process, a more systematic evaluation of learning, and improvements with direct feedback strategies that build communication between principals, supervisors, and teachers. In addition, the principal has decided to hold regular meetings between teachers to discuss good practices.

The education unit facilitator makes training development that is tailored to local needs to strengthen the relationship between the school and the education office. All of these solutions show that the cooperation and active participation of all people and components in the school is the key to success in improving the quality of teaching.

The monitoring and supervision strategies implemented in three State Elementary Schools in Hulu Sungai Tengah have proven to be successful in improving the quality of teachers and learning by prioritizing the principles of professionalism, collaboration, and continuous evaluation.

7. Discussion

Based on research and discussion, it can be concluded that the assistants of the education unit and the supervision of the principal at SDN 2 Haruyan Seberang, SDN Layuh, and SDN 3 Banua Kupang contribute to improving the quality of teacher teaching.

First, education unit assistants use a collaborative approach, teacher involvement in regular meetings, and periodic training tailored to school needs. Companions not only supervise administration, but also help teachers and principals improve the learning environment.

Second, the principal actively participates in classroom supervision, creates ongoing training programs, provides constructive feedback, and encourages teacher collaboration in building the curriculum. The principal also helps parents communicate with each other through regular meetings that support transparency and community engagement.

Third, this study found several obstacles. This includes limited human resources, budgets, implementation time, and infrastructure. In addition, the disapproval of some teachers towards supervision activities is also a challenge in the process of improving the quality of teaching.

Fourth, there are several solutions that can be implemented. These include improving communication between principals and teachers, more flexible supervision scheduling, active involvement of teachers in decision-making, and the establishment of relevant and ongoing training programs. Principals and chaperones also emphasize that learning evaluation and feedback are the best way to reflect on and improve teacher performance.

8. Conclusion

Overall, the success of monitoring and supervision strategies in improving the quality of teacher learning is highly dependent on effective cooperation between principals, teachers, and supervisors. A participatory approach, ongoing training, and communicative and transformative leadership are essential components of providing a high-quality education in primary schools.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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