Academic Supervision Management for Enhancing Teacher Competence

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Abstract. Enhancing teacher competence is a crucial factor for achieving effective learning quality in elementary schools. However, the implementation of academic supervision by principals as a primary coaching instrument often faces various challenges, ranging from time constraints to less impactful methods. This gap between the ideal role of supervision and the reality in the field motivates this research. Therefore, this study aims to describe and analyze in-depth the management of academic supervision at SDN 274 Cempaka Arum and SDN 052 Cisaranten Wetan in an effort to improve teacher competence. This research employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical method and applies George R. Terry's management framework (POAC) as its theoretical basis. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation studies. The research findings reveal two different yet equally effective management models. (1) SDN 274 Cempaka Arum implements a formal-structured model, characterized by systematic planning, team-based organization, implementation through clinical coaching, and documented evaluation. (2) Conversely, SDN 052 Cisaranten Wetan utilizes an informal-personal model, featuring flexible planning, principal-centered organization, a humanistic implementation, and direct, personal evaluation. The study also identifies the main constraint at SDN 274 as time limitation, which was addressed through delegation, while at SDN 052, it was potential subjectivity, which was overcome by prioritizing dialogue and trust. The conclusion of this study confirms that the management of academic supervision, planned and executed adaptively through either a formal-structured or an informal-personal model, is an essential function proven to enhance teacher competence, thereby directly impacting the improvement of learning quality in elementary schools.

Keywords: Academic Supervision Management, Teacher Competence, Learning Quality, Principal, Educational Supervision.

1   Introduction

The improvement of teacher competency is a crucial factor in achieving effective learning quality, particularly at the basic education level, which forms the fundamental foundation for the formation of the nation's next generation [1] In line with the mandate of Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, the education process aims to holistically develop the potential of students, encompassing aspects of faith, noble character, knowledge, creativity, and independence [2], [3]. To achieve this goal, the role of the school principal as a leader, manager, and supervisor becomes highly vital [4]. Academic supervision, as

one of the essential functions of the principal, is a planned and systematic instrument designed to assist teachers in enhancing the quality of learning planning, implementation, and evaluation [5].

The role of academic supervision within the educational ecosystem cannot be overstated; it serves as a critical mechanism for quality assurance and continuous professional development. However, although the role of academic supervision is recognized as crucial, Rosa. A [6] suggest that its implementation in the field often faces various challenges, creating a gap between ideal expectations and the existing reality. In many educational institutions, supervision is frequently reduced to a mere administrative formality—a periodic ritual where supervisors fill out checklists without engaging in meaningful pedagogical dialogue. This disconnect often stems from a lack of systematic management, where supervision is perceived by teachers as a punitive inspection rather than a supportive process designed to enhance their teaching capabilities. Consequently, instead of fostering a culture of improvement, supervision can sometimes breed anxiety and resistance among teaching staff, hindering the very growth it aims to promote.

To bridge this gap, a paradigm shift is required in how supervision is conceptualized and executed. Various studies and policy documents on instructional supervision also emphasize that supervision will be effective only when it is managed, scheduled, and oriented toward teacher professional development rather than mere inspection [6], [7]. Effective supervision must be transformed from a bureaucratic burden into a dynamic, developmental process. It requires a strategic approach where the focus shifts from finding faults to identifying potential and nurturing talent. This situation indicates an urgent need to deeply analyze how the management of academic supervision is conducted to effectively function as a means of enhancing teacher competency. Without a robust management structure, supervision initiatives are likely to be sporadic, inconsistent, and ultimately ineffective in improving student learning outcomes.

Addressing this critical need, this research aims to comprehensively describe and analyze the management of academic supervision implemented to enhance teacher competency, taking a case study approach at SDN 274 Cempaka Arum and SDN 052 Cisaranten Wetan, Bandung City. These two institutions were selected to provide a granular view of how supervision policies translate into practice within the elementary school context, which is the foundational level of the education system. To dissect this managerial process, the study applies the management function framework of George R. Terry, which includes Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling (POAC) [8]. This framework is used as the analytical tool to examine how principals plan programs, organize resources, implement supervision techniques, and evaluate and follow up on the results.

By utilizing the POAC framework, the research dissects the supervision process into actionable components. In the *Planning* phase, the study investigates how principals analyze teacher needs and schedule activities. In *Organizing*, it looks at how tasks are delegated and teams are structured to support supervision. The *Actuating* phase explores the actual execution of supervision—whether through classroom observations, individual conferences, or peer coaching—and the leadership styles employed to motivate teachers. Finally, *Controlling* examines how the

effectiveness of the supervision is measured and what follow-up actions are taken to ensure continuous improvement [9], [10].

While the theoretical benefits of supervision are well-documented, the practical application varies significantly. Various previous studies have affirmed the positive impact of academic supervision on improving the quality of teaching and teacher competency, but many of them do not compare different managerial styles in similar school levels [6], [7]. Existing literature often generalizes supervision practices without accounting for the unique organizational cultures that influence their success. The novelty of this research lies in its comparative case study approach, which not only identifies supervision practices but also compares two different management models—one formal-structured and the other informal-personal—to provide rich empirical insights into the factors influencing the success of supervision in diverse environments.

This comparison is vital because it acknowledges that there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to educational management. SDN 274 Cempaka Arum may exhibit a more structured, hierarchical approach to supervision, while SDN 052 Cisaranten Wetan might rely on collegial, informal interactions. By contrasting these styles, the study aims to uncover how different managerial nuances affect teacher receptivity and competency growth. Therefore, this research is designed to answer the main question: How do the planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling management of academic supervision by school principals at SDN 274 Cempaka Arum and SDN 052 Cisaranten Wetan contribute to the improvement of teacher competency? Through this inquiry, the study aspires to offer practical recommendations for principals and policymakers on optimizing supervision management to create a more empowered and competent teaching force.

2   Method

This study adopted a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design to comprehensively portray the phenomenon of academic supervision management in its natural setting and interpret its meaning systematically [11]. This specific methodology was chosen to gain a deep, holistic understanding of how the managerial functions of Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling (POAC) are executed, viewing the process directly through the subjects' perspectives [12]. The research was conducted in 2025 at SDN 274 Cempaka Arum and SDN 052 Cisaranten Wetan in Bandung City. These locations were purposively selected as comparative cases based on their active supervision practices and representative characteristics. Key participants included School Principals, who served as main planners, and Teachers, who were the primary recipients.

To gather rich data, the researcher employed three simultaneous techniques. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted to delve into the principals' and teachers' experiences, understandings, and challenges regarding supervision [13]. Complementing this, non-participant observation captured the real-time execution of supervision activities and classroom dynamics. Furthermore, a documentation study of relevant files, including schedules, assessment instruments, and Lesson Plans (RPP), was performed to support verification. The data analysis followed the

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interactive model by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. To ensure the validity and trustworthiness of the findings, the study applied source and method triangulation as well as member checking [14].

3 Result

3.1 The Formal-Structured Management Model

At SDN 274 Cempaka Arum, the management of academic supervision is characterized by a high degree of formality, adherence to administrative protocols, and a systemic approach to quality assurance. The principal views supervision not merely as a routine duty but as a strategic mechanism for institutional improvement.

The planning phase at SDN 274 Cempaka Arum is conducted with rigor and precision at the beginning of the academic year. The principal initiates a dedicated working meeting (Raker) specifically to draft the academic supervision program. During this phase, the principal conducts a needs analysis based on the previous year's teacher performance data. This ensures that the planning is data-driven rather than arbitrary. A comprehensive "Supervision Guidebook" is developed, which includes a detailed timeline for the entire semester, specific observation targets (e.g., classroom management, use of IT, or assessment strategies), and standardized assessment instruments based on national standards.

Interviews with teachers confirmed that this schedule is transparently shared at the start of the semester and physically posted on the staff room announcement board. One teacher noted, "We are never surprised by a visit. The schedule is clear months in advance, allowing us ample time to prepare our lesson plans and teaching media." This finding is strongly supported by the documentation study, which revealed physical evidence of the *Program Tahunan* (Annual Program) and *Program Semester* (Semester Program) for supervision, signed and stamped by the principal. This aligns with the principle that effective supervision must be scheduled and managed systematically [7].

The organizing function is visible through the structural delegation of authority. Recognizing the span of control limitations, the principal forms a specialized "Academic Supervision Team." This team is composed of senior teachers who have achieved high ranks or have been certified as master teachers. The principal issues a formal decree (SK) to legitimize their roles. The division of labor is clear: junior teachers are often paired with these senior mentors for peer observation, while the principal handles the final assessment. Resource allocation is also explicitly managed; the school allocates a specific budget in the School Activity and Budget Plan (RKAS) for printing instruments, conducting pre-supervision workshops, and providing consumption for feedback sessions. This structured organizing ensures that supervision is not a one-man show but a collective organizational effort.

In the implementation phase, the school strictly applies the "Clinical Supervision" cycle. This involves three distinct stages: the pre-observation conference, the observation, and the post-observation conference. During the pre-

conference, the principal and teacher discuss the Lesson Plan (RPP) and agree on the specific focus of the observation. During the observation, the principal acts as a silent observer, taking detailed notes on the standardized instrument.

Crucially, the actuating phase at this school emphasizes objectivity. The principal does not immediately judge but uses the post-observation conference to present data. For example, instead of saying "You were too fast," the principal might show the timestamped notes indicating the pacing. This creates a professional atmosphere where teachers feel guided rather than inspected.

The controlling and evaluation process is continuous and well-documented. Every supervision cycle concludes with a formal "Supervision Result Report." This document contains the quantitative score of the teacher's performance, qualitative feedback, and specific recommendations for improvement. These reports are filed in the teacher's personal portfolio. Furthermore, the principal uses this aggregate data to determine follow-up actions. If the data shows that 60% of teachers struggle with digital media, the principal organizes a specific IT workshop. This closes the management loop, ensuring that evaluation leads to tangible development.

The primary constraint identified in this model is the "Time vs. Administration" conflict. The rigid structure generates a significant amount of paperwork and requires strict adherence to schedules, which often clashes with the principal's sudden external duties or administrative load. To solve this, the principal relies heavily on the delegation strategy within the *Organizing* function. By empowering senior teachers to conduct preliminary observations, the supervision schedule remains uninterrupted even when the principal is away.

3.2 The Informal-Personal Management Model

In contrast to the structured approach of the previous school, SDN 052 Cisaranten Wetan employs a management model that is deeply rooted in collegiality, flexibility, and humanistic values. The principal prioritizes the psychological comfort of the teachers over administrative rigidity, believing that teacher competency grows best in a low-stress environment.

Supervision planning at SDN 052 Cisaranten Wetan is characterized by its flexibility and situational nature. While the school has a basic academic calendar, the supervision schedule is not rigidly fixed at the start of the year. Instead, the principal adopts an "open-door" planning strategy. Planning is often verbal and agreed upon through informal consensus during morning briefings or casual conversations. The principal determines the focus of supervision based on direct, daily observations of the school climate rather than formal data analysis.

For instance, if the principal notices that students seem disengaged during recess, he might decide to focus the next week's supervision on "student engagement strategies." This "Rolling Plan" allows the school to be highly responsive to immediate problems. While this lacks the long-term visibility of the structured model, teachers expressed appreciation for this flexibility, noting that it reduces the anxiety of "the big inspection day."

The organizing function in this school is highly centralized around the principal. There is no formal "Supervision Team" or complex hierarchy of senior teachers delegated with supervisory tasks. The principal acts as the sole supervisor. This

decision is intentional; the principal aims to build a direct, personal bond with every staff member. By not delegating, the principal ensures that every teacher receives equal attention and that the feedback comes directly from the leader.

The resources organized for supervision are less about budget and materials and more about "time allocation." The principal organizes his daily routine to ensure he spends significant time walking the hallways and visiting classrooms informally. This structure implies a flat organizational chart regarding supervision, promoting a sense of family (*kekeluargaan*) where the principal is viewed as a father figure rather than a distant administrator.

The implementation of supervision is conducted through a humanistic and artistic approach. Formal classroom observations with checklists are rare. Instead, the principal prefers "Walk-Throughs" and "Sit-Ins." He might enter a class, sit at the back for 15 minutes, and smile at the teacher. The actuating phase is often blended with daily interactions.

Feedback is rarely given in a formal office setting. Instead, the principal utilizes "Coffee Morning" sessions or chats in the pantry to provide input. The language used is persuasive rather than instructive. For example, rather than saying "Your method was wrong," the principal might say, "I saw the students were really active, but maybe next time we can try this game to make them even happier." This approach significantly lowers resistance. Teachers reported feeling that the principal was a partner in solving classroom problems rather than an evaluator.

Evaluation and control are direct, personal, and predominantly oral. There are few formal reports or scorecards filed in cabinets. The "control" mechanism relies on the moral authority of the principal and the intrinsic motivation of the teacher. The principal tracks progress through memory and subsequent daily observations. If a teacher was advised to use more props, the principal checks a few days later to see if it was applied. The follow-up is immediate and practical—often involving the principal directly modeling the teaching method in the classroom to show how it's done.

The major constraint of this model is the potential for subjectivity and lack of standardized metrics. Without formal instruments, assessment relies heavily on the principal's personal perception, which can be biased. Furthermore, the lack of documentation makes it hard to track long-term progress. The solution adopted by the school is to prioritize "Trust" as the main instrument. To mitigate bias, the principal maintains intense two-way communication, ensuring teachers can explain their methods. They solve the lack of data by focusing on "Cultural Control"—building a culture where teachers feel embarrassed if they do not improve, rather than fearing a low score.

3.2 Comparative Analysis: Synthesis of Constraints and Managerial Solutions

The implementation of academic supervision in both schools, despite their contrasting models, reveals a common set of underlying managerial dynamics. Analyzing these through a comparative lens highlights how different organizational cultures necessitate different problem-solving strategies within the POAC framework.

SDN 274 Cempaka Arum faces "Technical Constraints." The complexity of their planning and organizing creates a heavy administrative burden. The challenge is

logistical: how to coordinate schedules between the principal, the senior team, and the teachers without disrupting classes. Their solution is structural—delegation and budgeting. By formally empowering senior teachers, they distribute the workload. Conversely, SDN 052 Cisaranten Wetan faces "Adaptive Constraints." Their challenge is ensuring that the flexibility of their planning does not lead to complacency. Without a schedule, supervision can easily be postponed indefinitely. Their solution is cultural—the principal's intense personal commitment and physical presence. The centralized organization works only because the principal is highly visible and accessible.

In the Actuating phase, the structured model of SDN 274 risks becoming mechanical. Teachers might perform well only when observed ("stage performance"). The school addresses this by using the "Clinical Supervision" cycle, where the pre- and post-conferences are deep and reflective, ensuring the performance is grounded in actual understanding. In SDN 052, the Actuating risk is lack of depth. A 15-minute informal visit might miss the nuances of a 60-minute lesson. However, the school counters this with frequency. Because the supervision is low-stakes and frequent, the principal gets a realistic picture of daily teaching, not just a rehearsed show.

A critical finding is the trade-off between objectivity and psychological safety. SDN 274 prioritizes objectivity through standardized instruments. This reduces bias but creates higher anxiety. Teachers know they are being scored. SDN 052 prioritizes safety through informal feedback. This reduces anxiety but increases subjectivity. The solution found in both schools lies in the Follow-Up (Activity within Controlling). Regardless of how the data was gathered (formally or informally), both principals focus the follow-up on *support*. At SDN 274, support comes in the form of formal training workshops. At SDN 052, support comes in the form of direct coaching and modeling.

Finally, the findings highlight different resource management strategies. The formal model utilizes financial resources (RKAS) to support the system (buying paper, printing, snacks for meetings). The informal model utilizes "Social Capital." The principal of SDN 052 invests heavily in relationships. This suggests that while budget is important [7], social capital and trust can serve as a powerful alternative resource in supervision management, especially in schools with limited funds. Both schools demonstrate that the ultimate constraint is not the method itself, but the consistency of its execution.

4   Discussion

The research findings from SDN 274 Cempaka Arum and SDN 052 Cisaranten Wetan provide a rich empirical landscape for discussing the management of academic supervision. By analyzing these two distinct models through the lens of George R. Terry's management functions (POAC) [8] and contemporary educational leadership theories, this study illuminates that effectiveness in enhancing teacher competency is not tied to a singular rigid methodology, but rather to the coherence between the management style and the school's organizational context.

The study reaffirms the fundamental theory by Terry [8] that management processes—Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling—are universal

requisites for organizational success. Both schools, despite their differing outward appearances, rigorously fulfilled these functions. SDN 274 Cempaka Arum demonstrated that a Formal-Structured Model aligns closely with the principles of *administrative management*, where efficiency is achieved through standardization, hierarchy, and clear division of labor. This echoes the views of Hoy and Miskel [15] regarding the bureaucratic structure of schools, where formalization can reduce role ambiguity and clarify expectations for teachers.

Conversely, SDN 052 Cisaranten Wetan illustrates that the Informal-Personal Model is also a legitimate form of management, often described as *organic management*. Here, the "Planning" is mental and situational, and "Organizing" is flat. This aligns with Sergiovanni's concept of "Moral Leadership" [16], where the glue holding the organization together is not rules or hierarchies, but shared values and relational trust. The discussion here suggests that the "gap" between ideal and reality mentioned by Rosa [6] often occurs not because schools fail to supervise, but because they apply a management style that clashes with their specific school culture. SDN 052 succeeded because its informal style matched its close-knit, collegial culture.

The findings from SDN 274 strongly reflect the "Clinical Supervision" approach advocated by Glickman et al. [17]. The structured pre-conference, observation, and post-conference cycle is designed to move teachers from dependency to professional autonomy. This model is effective because it treats teaching as a science that can be measured, analyzed, and improved through data. The use of standardized instruments at SDN 274 provides the objective metric necessary for this scientific approach.

However, the findings from SDN 052 challenge the notion that supervision must always be data-heavy to be effective. The principal's "humanistic" approach suggests that supervision can also be an art. By focusing on "casual chats" and "personal approaches," the principal addresses the emotional and psychological needs of the teachers. This supports the argument that teacher competency is not just about technical skills, but also about morale and motivation [16]. When teachers feel safe and supported (as seen in SDN 052), they are more open to experimentation and growth, even without formal rubrics. This highlights that *Actuating* in supervision is fundamentally about influencing human behavior, which can be done through structural authority or personal influence.

The study highlights that every management choice comes with inherent trade-offs. The formal model's constraint of "time vs. administration" is a classic symptom of bureaucratic organizations. The solution of delegation employed by SDN 274 is a textbook management response to increase capacity. However, this relies on the availability of competent senior teachers to delegate to. On the other hand, the informal model's constraint of "subjectivity" highlights the risks of relational leadership. Without data, assessment can become a popularity contest. SDN 052's reliance on "trust" is effective but fragile; it depends entirely on the integrity of the principal. This relates to the broader discourse on educational quality assurance [7], [18], which generally favors measurable standards to ensure accountability.

Ultimately, the goal of supervision management is to improve teacher competency. Both schools achieved this, but through different mechanisms. In the structured model, competency is improved through correction and training. The cycle identifies a deficit (e.g., lack of media use) and prescribes a remedy (workshop). This is highly effective for technical skills. In the informal model, competency is improved

through reflection and modeling. The principal models the behavior, and the teacher reflects on it in a safe space. This is often more effective for soft skills and classroom climate management.

The comparison of these two cases suggests a "Contingency Approach" to academic supervision. There is no "one best way" to manage supervision. A principal in a large, complex school with high staff turnover might find the structured model of SDN 274 essential for maintaining order and standards [19]. A principal in a smaller school, or one requiring culture building, might find the informal model of SDN 052 more effective in building the trust required for deep learning [16].

Therefore, the study concludes that the "Actuating" function is the variable most sensitive to context. While Planning and Controlling must happen, *how* they are actuated—whether through a clipboard or a coffee conversation—must be attuned to the human element. Effective principals are those who can diagnose their school's readiness and choose the management model that minimizes resistance and maximizes professional growth. The rigid application of POAC without cultural sensitivity leads to the inspection-oriented supervision that teachers dread [17], whereas the adaptive application of POAC leads to the empowerment that characterizes true educational leadership.

5   Conclusion

Based on the research results and discussion, it can be concluded that the management of academic supervision at SDN 274 Cempaka Arum and SDN 052 Cisaranten Wetan has been successfully implemented to enhance teacher competency, despite utilizing two very different models. SDN 274 Cempaka Arum applies a formal-structured model characterized by systematic planning, team-based organizing, implementation through clinical coaching, and detailed documented evaluation. Conversely, SDN 052 Cisaranten Wetan adopts an informal-personal model with flexible planning, organizing centralized on the figure of the school principal, a humanistic implementation approach, and direct and personal evaluation. This finding affirms that the effectiveness of academic supervision management is not determined by a single approach, but rather by the school principal's ability to adapt in implementing strategies that are most suitable for the unique context, culture, and needs of each respective school.

More specifically: (1) planning at SDN 274 is formal and structured, while at SDN 052 it is flexible; (2) organizing at SDN 274 involves a special team, while at SDN 052 it is centralized; (3) implementation at SDN 274 uses clinical coaching, while at SDN 052 it uses a humanistic and collaborative approach; (4) evaluation at SDN 274 is systematic and documented, while at SDN 052 it is oral and direct; and (5) each school solved its main constraint with a solution consistent with its management model.

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