Research Article

PAUD TEACHER PERFORMANCE THROUGH ACADEMIC SUPERVISION IN PLAYGROUPS (KB) IN ACEH TAMIANG REGENCY

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Abstract

A phenomenon observed among several Early Childhood Education (PAUD) teachers in Aceh Tamiang Regency indicates that service performance in playgroups (KB) is relatively low. This low performance is evidenced by a lack of understanding regarding play-based learning, weak proficiency in developing Daily Lesson Plans (RPPH), and minimal innovation in the use of instructional media. This study aims to examine the implementation of academic supervision—encompassing the stages of planning, implementation, and follow-up—designed and implemented to enhance the performance of playgroup teachers in Aceh Tamiang Regency. This research offers a new perspective on how reflective and collaborative supervision structures can serve as a capacity-building mechanism for PAUD teachers at the local level.

A qualitative descriptive approach was employed. Data collection techniques included interviews, observations, and documentation. The research subjects consisted of school principals, teachers, and school committee members. The findings indicate that the academic supervision process has incorporated elements of planning, implementation, and follow-up, although its application is not yet fully systematic. During the planning stage, the coaching focus was directed toward improving teachers' abilities in drafting RPPH, developing learning strategies, and conducting child development assessments. Supervision was carried out through classroom observations and reflective dialogues, while follow-up actions were realized through joint reflection and corrective guidance. However, the sustainability of monitoring and coaching activities still requires stronger policy frameworks and institutional support. This study asserts that structured and sustainable academic supervision is determined not only by procedures but also by the positive contribution toward increasing the willingness and capability of both supervisors and teachers in fulfilling their professional duties.

Keywords: Academic Supervision, Teacher Performance, Playgroups (KB), Early Childhood Education (PAUD), Planning, Aceh Tamiang.

INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is a crucial stage in individual development that has a long-term impact on the quality of a nation's human resources (Andrews et al., 2014). PAUD is not merely a childcare center but an initial space to foster children's values, character, and comprehensive basic competencies. Therefore, the quality of education at this level is heavily determined by teacher performance, as teachers are the primary actors in the learning process. Teacher performance, which results from executing professional duties and responsibilities, reflects the ability, commitment, and competence in organizing learning processes effectively and efficiently to achieve established educational goals (Boulton & Ackroyd, 2013). This performance encompasses both the quality and quantity of work and is determined by factors such as role clarity, professionalism, creativity, and the ability to innovate as an educator. National regulations stipulate that a teacher's performance standards in fulfilling professional duties include lesson planning, implementing quality instruction, and conducting assessments and evaluations of student learning outcomes.

The quality of teacher performance in instruction can be enhanced through academic supervision. Academic supervision aims to improve teacher performance, assist them in overcoming instructional challenges, encourage innovation and creativity, ensure the optimal implementation of curricula and learning standards, and enhance learning quality, which positively impacts student development (Fleer et al., 2019). Furthermore, teacher performance contributes to the "3Cs" of professionalism: Willingness to perform, Capacity to perform, and Opportunity to perform.

Teacher Performance in Playgroups (KB) in Aceh Tamiang Regency In Aceh Tamiang Regency, attention toward the development of PAUD institutions, particularly Playgroups (KB), continues to increase in line with national policies promoting equitable access to early childhood education (Brinkman et al., 2017). However, the quantitative growth of these institutions has not been fully matched by an increase in quality, including teacher performance. Initial observations in several playgroups in this region indicate that some teachers still lack an understanding of play-based learning principles. Additionally, there is a deficiency in the ability to develop child-centered daily lesson plans and a lack of innovation in using instructional media that align with the diverse characteristics and intelligences of early childhood.

This phenomenon in Aceh Tamiang occurs because most playgroup teachers have not received continuous academic supervision. The mentoring process tends to be administrative—such as checking documents or filling out forms—rather than pedagogical mentoring focused on teaching practices (Trump, 1990). Given the importance of PAUD teacher performance in supporting the quality of early education and the urgency of academic supervision as an improvement strategy, a study is needed to examine how the implementation of academic supervision can contribute to enhancing teacher performance in playgroups in Aceh Tamiang Regency.

The Importance of Academic Supervision to Enhance Teacher Performance To develop teacher professionalism, the stages of academic supervision include planning, implementation, and follow-up (McFarland et al., 2012). In the planning stage, the school principal as a supervisor systematically designs the supervision program with clear and measurable goals, focusing on coaching areas such as lesson plans, learning strategies, or child assessments, and scheduling visits based on teacher needs. During the implementation stage, activities are conducted through direct observation of the learning process using appropriate instruments, followed by discussions or interviews with teachers, providing objective and constructive feedback, and collecting data in the form of observation notes or teacher portfolios (Griggs & Mikami, 2011). The final stage, follow-up, involves joint reflection, drafting recommendations for improvement, monitoring progress, and providing further support through coaching or mentoring.

Academic supervision serves not only as a monitoring tool but as a developmental strategy that directly impacts instructional quality (Zajec et al., 2012). When implemented in a planned, objective, and sustainable manner, teacher performance improves. Continuous academic supervision can become an essential instrument in driving the quality of early childhood education, ultimately supporting the achievement of optimal educational goals in Aceh Tamiang Regency.

Research Urgency and Contribution to Literature The urgency of this research lies in the critical need to improve PAUD teacher performance, particularly in playgroups in Aceh Tamiang, which still face obstacles in understanding play-based learning, drafting lesson plans, and innovating instructional media (Sheppard et al., 2022). This situation demands planned, structured, and sustainable academic supervision to strengthen teacher professionalism. This study is significant as it fills a gap in empirical research regarding academic supervision at the PAUD level, especially within a regional context. Its contribution lies in developing a conceptual and practical understanding of how the stages of planning, implementation, and follow-up in academic supervision influence performance (Fagot & Kavanagh, 1990). Furthermore, the findings enrich educational management literature by providing an adaptive application model for teachers' needs in the field, making it relevant for educational policy and professional practice.

Research Objectives and Benefits The objective of this study is to comprehensively analyze the implementation of academic supervision in efforts to improve teacher performance in playgroup services in Aceh Tamiang Regency (Wolfendale, 1987). This research focuses on three main aspects: first, analyzing the planning of academic supervision; second, analyzing the implementation of supervision including strategies, methods, and interactions; and third, analyzing the follow-up actions to evaluate the effectiveness of coaching and design further professional development steps.

PAUD teacher performance is defined as the work outcome achieved by teachers in fulfilling professional tasks, including planning, implementation, evaluation, and the responsibility of guiding and shaping student character (Hughett et al., 2013). Performance in instructional activities encompasses competencies such as designing the learning process, leading educational activities, and evaluating progress.

Supervision includes all efforts made by officials to guide teachers and other educational staff to improve instruction (Fagot & Leve, 1998). Improving instructional quality involves motivating teachers, fostering growth in teaching positions, revising educational goals and materials, improving teaching methods, and evaluating instruction.

Studies indicate a significant correlation between the quality of academic supervision and the improvement of PAUD teacher performance (Barblett et al., 2020). Teachers who receive targeted academic mentoring show improvements in designing play-based activities, observing child development, and systematically reporting progress. Research further suggests that a principal's academic supervision has a positive influence on PAUD teacher performance. However, the implementation of academic supervision has faced significant challenges since the global pandemic (Delamain & Spring, 2017). Some teachers were unable to fully utilize technology for online learning, and the instructional process did not always align with the planned designs.

In certain regions, implementation shows that classroom supervision can significantly improve teacher quality. Through structured supervision cycles, teacher performance and student activity levels have shown marked increases (Foote & Debrick, 2015). This indicates that organized academic supervision can positively impact teacher performance and student engagement. However, in reality, implementation still faces obstacles. Primary barriers include limited supervisor competence, a lack of clear implementation standards, and a weak reflective culture among teachers.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a descriptive method with a qualitative approach to obtain a comprehensive and contextual overview of academic supervision practices in the field. Data collection is conducted through three primary methods: observation, interviews, and documentation (Fabrizi & Tilman, 2024). The data gathered from these field activities are processed and analyzed as an integral part of the research process. The study was conducted in September 2025 at the following locations:

1. KB Jie Win, located on Jln. Sei Serba, Wono Sari Village, Tamiang Hulu District, Aceh Tamiang Regency, Aceh.
2. KB Peduli, located in Alur Tani I Village, Mulya Hamlet, Tamiang Hulu District, Aceh Tamiang Regency, Aceh.
3. KB Al-Mardiyah, located in Kaloy Village, Tamiang Hulu District, Aceh Tamiang Regency, Aceh.

These three locations were selected because they represent diverse characteristics in terms of management, resources, and the implementation of academic supervision (Karreman et al., 2010). This diversity is expected to provide a more holistic picture of teacher performance through the academic supervision process. The research instrument grid, which focuses on PAUD teacher performance through academic supervision in playgroups within Aceh Tamiang Regency, is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Research Instrument Grid

Dimensi	Perencanaan	Pelaksanaan	Tindak Lanjut
Indikator	1. Penyusunan program supervisi yang sistematis dan terencana. 2. Penetapan tujuan supervisi yang jelas dan terukur. 3. Penetapan fokus pembinaan (misalnya RPPH, strategi pembelajaran, asesmen anak). 4. Penjadwalan	1. Observasi kegiatan pembelajaran (menggunakan instrumen observasi). 2. Wawancara atau diskusi dengan guru terkait proses pembelajaran. 3. Pemberian umpan balik (feedback) secara objektif dan membangun. 4. Penggunaan data atau bukti empiris hasil supervisi (catatan observasi, portofolio guru, dll).	1. Refleksi bersama antara supervisor dan guru 2. Penyusunan rekomendasi untuk perbaikan kinerja 3. Pemantauan perkembangan guru setelah supervise 4. Pemberian layanan lanjutan (*coaching/mentoring*)

	supervisi berdasarkan kebutuhan guru.		

The subjects of this study consist of several parties related to the research variables: school principals acting as supervisors, PAUD teachers who are the subjects of supervision, and school committees who oversee and conduct supervision, both specifically for PAUD teachers and for the institution as a whole.

Data Validity and Trustworthiness, this study employs several data validity techniques, including triangulation, prolonged engagement (increased persistence), and member checking (Glowrey & Plowright, 2019). Triangulation in this study, triangulation is conducted by cross-referencing and comparing results from interviews, observations, and documentation regarding the implementation of academic supervision and PAUD teacher performance (Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020). Prolonged Engagement, this technique is applied through the researcher's consistent observation and detailed recording of every process occurring in the field. Member Checking, the final technique, member checking, is performed to re-confirm the data or information obtained with the respective informants (Denham et al., 2001). By applying these techniques, the data collected in this study are expected to be valid, reliable, and serve as a sound basis for drawing credible conclusions.
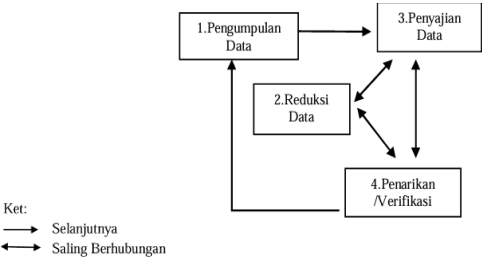

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Figure 1. Data Analysis Techniques

Based on Figure 1, the data analysis technique in this study utilizes the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994), which consists of three main components: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. These three processes occur simultaneously and are interconnected throughout the duration of the research activities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research, focused on academic supervision to enhance teacher performance in Playgroups (KB) in Aceh Tamiang Regency, examines three primary aspects: planning, implementation, and follow-up. Based on findings obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation, the following results describe the actual conditions in the field. Preliminary observations indicate that the academic supervision processes at KB Jie Win, KB Al-Mardiyah, and KB Peduli possess distinct characteristics tailored to the needs and conditions of each institution.

Academic supervision planning at KB Al-Mardiyah has not yet functioned optimally due to the absence of written program documents and measurable goals. This condition stems from the principal's limited understanding of systematic supervision formats and procedures. Nevertheless, there is a collaborative effort between the principal and teachers. Coaching focus is directed toward essential aspects such as Daily Lesson Plans (RPPH), teaching strategies, and assessment; however, teachers still face technical obstacles in drafting these documents. While scheduling is arranged before the academic year begins, planning at this institution requires significant strengthening in formal documentation and clear goal formulation.

In contrast, KB Jie Win demonstrates a more advanced awareness in designing academic supervision through a participatory and collaborative approach, even involving other educational units under the same foundation. Teachers are actively involved in program development, and supervision objectives are stated in written documents understood by all parties (Roberts, 2023). Although scheduling is flexible and supported by written evidence, the primary weakness lies in the lack of a systematic master planning document (such as an annual supervision program) and minimal involvement from the school committee.

Meanwhile, planning at KB Peduli shows a high dependency on external collective activities, such as routine training under HIMPAUDI and working groups (PKG), rather than designing systematic internal programs (Lestari & Kartadinata, 2020). Consequently, no specific planning documents, instruments, or schedules were found for this unit. Informal discussions occur, but observations show that coaching has not yet addressed deep technical aspects. There is also a misalignment of information regarding scheduling between the principal and teachers, indicating a weak internal planning system.

Comparative Analysis of Planning: Comparatively, KB Jie Win is the most advanced with participatory planning, while KB Al-Mardiyah is in the early stages of development, and KB Peduli remains basic and reactive to external programs. The common challenge is the transition from informal/oral supervision to a documented, measurable, and systematic planning system.
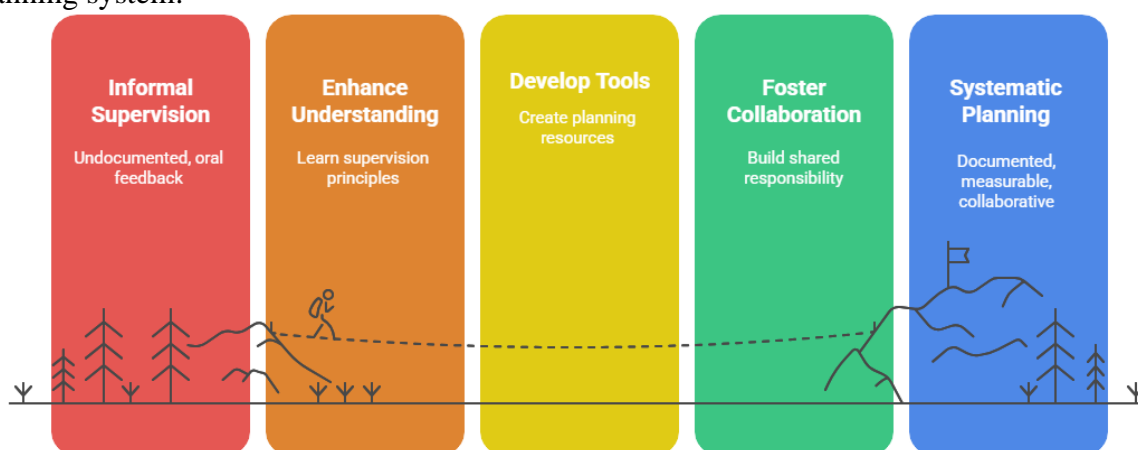

Figure 1. Transforming Supervision Practices

The implementation at KB Al-Mardiyah centers on direct classroom observation and dialogic feedback. Although efforts to document observations exist, they are hindered by the use of instruments that are non-specific to the playgroup level, instead referring to

Kindergarten (TK) standards (Pratami et al., 2024). While feedback is constructive, there is a need for standardized procedures.

At KB Jie Win, implementation is more advanced, utilizing direct observation followed by reflective discussion sessions (Perren et al., 2019). The principal actively documents observations using checklists, photos, and learning videos, which serve as an empirical basis for evaluation. Teachers demonstrate a high willingness to perform, and feedback includes "modeling" (direct teaching demonstrations by the principal). Despite using independently developed observation sheets, KB Jie Win applies key elements of ideal supervision, such as two-way interaction and data utilization.

In contrast, KB Peduli relies on direct observation but is weakest in formality and documentation. Feedback is provided orally as motivation and advice (Whitehead, 2024). The most significant weakness is the total absence of formal observation documents, indicating a lack of a performance tracking system. Supervision here remains largely informal and unstructured.

Comparative Analysis of Implementation: All three institutions show commitment to direct observation but differ in systematization (Keary et al., 2025). KB Jie Win is the most advanced due to its documentation and modeling efforts. The general challenge includes a limited understanding of supervision (often viewed only as observation) and a lack of specialized training for principals.

Follow-up at KB Al-Mardiyah involves routine joint reflection where improvement steps are agreed upon, focusing on the use of environment and technology (Solovova, 2019). However, documentation remains personal (the principal's private notes), and structured programs like coaching or mentoring are absent.

The follow-up at KB Jie Win is the weakest and least systematic. Joint reflections are not formally conducted or documented. There is a discrepancy in focus: the principal prioritizes physical facilities, while teachers focus on pedagogical approaches (Page et al., 2022). Crucially, professional support in the form of coaching or mentoring is entirely non-existent.

Similarly, at KB Peduli, follow-up is informal with a gap in perception between the principal and teachers. Improvement steps are not systematically arranged and consist mostly of oral motivation (Bagnall, 2025). Like the other institutions, further professional development through coaching or mentoring is absent due to limited conceptual understanding.

Comparative Analysis of Follow-up: This phase is the weakest across all three institutions (Mikami & Lorenzi, 2011). The most critical universal failure is the absence of coaching and mentoring. None of the three principals implemented individual professional assistance, highlighting a large gap between the theoretical ideal of supervision and the reality of oral feedback without programmed follow-up.

The novelty of this research lies in identifying the gap between academic supervision theory and field practice in playgroup services (Tunnicliffe & Kennedy, 2022). The findings confirm that supervision in these units is not yet fully aligned with ideal theoretical principles. Therefore, the primary novelty of this study is the assertion of the need for a documented, systematic, sustainable, and contextual academic supervision model (Boulton & Ackroyd, 2012). This model should function not merely as an administrative activity but as an effective professional development tool. The renewal scheme of this research is illustrated as follows:
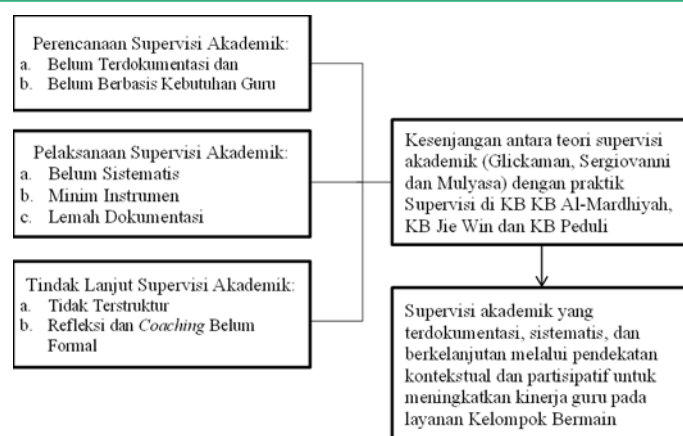
Figure 2. Academic Supervision Innovation Framework

CONCLUSION

The academic supervision framework at KB Al-Mardiyah, KB Jie Win, and KB Peduli is indirectly built upon three main pillars: planning, implementation, and follow-up. In the planning stage, coaching is specifically directed toward enhancing teacher competence in developing Daily Lesson Plans (RPPH), instructional strategies, and child development assessments. Implementation is carried out through classroom observation methods combined with reflective dialogues to trigger self-analysis. Meanwhile, the follow-up phase is realized through joint reflection activities and the provision of constructive guidance.

However, academic supervision in these three playgroups does not yet function optimally or systematically. The process is hindered at every stage: planning is often misunderstood by teachers, implementation tends to be a mere formality lacking deep reflection, and follow-up is limited to oral guidance without sustained professional programs. Furthermore, there is a total absence of coaching and mentoring facilities for teachers. Consequently, ineffective academic supervision remains a primary barrier to enhancing the professionalism and performance of PAUD teachers in the studied region. While the mechanism is operational, optimizing its effectiveness requires strengthening the aspects of continuous monitoring and supportive coaching programs.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.
Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; In-vestigation.
Author 3: Data curation; Investigation.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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