



Implementation Of Islamic Religious Education Supervision In Enhancing Teacher Professionalism In State Schools In East Binjai District

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ABSTRACT

This study is motivated by the urgency of enhancing the professionalism of Islamic Religious Education teachers in public schools, who play a central role in shaping students' character. The research aims to analyze the implementation of Islamic educational supervision in improving the professionalism of Islamic Religious Education teachers across public schools in the East Binjai District. A qualitative method with a case study approach was employed, collecting data through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis involving school principals, supervisors, and Islamic Religious Education teachers. The findings reveal that the implementation of mentoring-oriented academic supervision is running quite effectively, although it has not yet been fully structured and sustained. The supervision conducted significantly contributes to the enhancement of teachers' pedagogical and professional competencies through constructive feedback, lesson study mentoring, and internal workshops. A key finding of the study indicates that the effectiveness of supervision heavily depends on the supervisor's interpersonal quality and the shared commitment to continuous improvement, which ultimately leads to the enhanced quality of Islamic religious learning in the classroom. The implication of this research is the importance of developing a structured and sustainable collaborative supervision model for Islamic Religious Education teachers.

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Introduction

Education is the primary foundation for building a nation's civilization, serving not only as a means of transferring knowledge but also as a medium for instilling noble values and shaping the

character of the future generation. Within the Indonesian context, education faces multidimensional challenges amidst rapid global developments and the powerful currents of globalization, which exert complex influences on societal life.

Consequently, the national education system is compelled to continuously evolve, not merely pursuing advancements in cognitive and technological domains, but also earnestly strengthening the spiritual and moral dimensions of learners. Islamic Religious Education in public schools bears this strategic responsibility: to integrate general knowledge with Islamic values to cultivate well-rounded individuals of noble character.

Field realities indicate that the quality of Islamic Religious Education instruction heavily relies on the capacity and dedication of its teachers. Therefore, systematic efforts to enhance the professionalism of Islamic Religious Education teachers have become an imperative that can no longer be postponed (Mulyasa, 2019:15).

Teacher professionalism refers to a condition in which an educator possesses adequate competence, high commitment to their duties, and the moral responsibility to continually develop themselves and improve the quality of the instruction they provide. A professional teacher not only understands the subject matter but also masters various teaching methodologies, is capable of innovation, and possesses sensitivity to the psychological and spiritual developmental needs of learners. In the context of Islamic Religious Education, this professionalism becomes more complex as the teacher assumes the role not only of an instructor (transferring knowledge) but also of a spiritual guide and a model of noble character (*uswah hasanah*) for students. However, achieving this ideal level of professionalism is often hindered by various factors, such as heavy administrative burdens, limited opportunities for self-development, and a lack of effective support systems within the school environment (Syaiful, 2021:78).

One key instrument recognized as theoretically and practically effective in fostering the enhancement of teacher professionalism is educational supervision. Supervision is not merely an activity of monitoring or inspection to find faults, but rather a collaborative, continuous, and instructional improvement-oriented coaching process. From a modern perspective, supervision is viewed as a professional service provided to teachers to assist them in identifying strengths and weaknesses, reflecting on teaching practices, and designing concrete improvement strategies. The essence of supervision lies in creating a partnership relationship between the supervisor (who could be a principal, supervisor, or

senior teacher) and the supervised teacher within a climate of mutual trust and openness to learn together. This process is ultimately expected to trigger organic and sustainable professional growth for teachers (Aedi, 2018:45).

When focusing on Islamic Religious Education, the supervision conducted must adopt characteristics and principles aligned with Islamic values themselves. Islamic Educational

Supervision can be defined as a series of systematic guidance, coaching, and monitoring activities for Islamic Religious Education teachers, grounded in Islamic values such as sincerity (ikhlas), fellowship (ukhuwah), mutual enjoining of truth and forbidding of evil (amar ma'ruf nahi munkar), and the spirit of continual self-improvement (muhasabah). This supervision model does not merely evaluate technical pedagogical aspects but also delves into the affective and spiritual dimensions of the teacher, such as exemplary conduct, sincerity in teaching, and integrity in imparting religious values.

Consequently, supervision becomes more holistic and meaningful, as it touches upon both the external and internal dimensions of religious education (Rohmat, 2020:92).

The implementation of supervision in the field, particularly within the context of public schools, often presents its own unique challenges. Public schools, characterized by their governance under the government, have bureaucratic structures, diverse backgrounds of teachers and students, and policies that are sometimes less flexible compared to private schools or madrasahs. In East Binjai District, as the locus of this research, public school Islamic Religious Education teachers come from varied educational and experiential backgrounds and face heterogeneous classroom dynamics. The supervision implemented must be able to adapt to these conditions so it does not become merely an administrative formality. Another challenge is ensuring that supervision is genuinely perceived by teachers as a means for self-development, rather than as a daunting control mechanism. This is where the importance of a humane and applicative clinical and collaborative supervision approach lies (Bahri, 2022:112).

Theoretically, the effectiveness of educational supervision has been widely discussed by experts. Sergiovanni (2007) emphasizes that effective supervision must shift from an "inspection" paradigm towards "professional development" that focuses on the intellectual and moral growth of teachers. Furthermore, Glickman (2018) states, "Effective supervision is a shared process that relies on mutual trust, open communication, and a collective commitment to improving student learning. It involves differentiated approaches to meet the varying developmental needs of teachers"

(Glickman, 2018:27). This statement underscores that effective supervision is a collective process built on mutual trust, open communication, and shared commitment to improving student learning, utilizing differentiated approaches based on teachers' developmental needs. This concept is highly relevant to the context of Islamic Religious Education supervision in East Binjai, where a humane and differentiated approach is necessary to build trust and shared commitment among its diverse Islamic Religious Education teachers.

The importance of a contextual and needs-based approach is further emphasized by Indonesian education experts. Effective supervision must originate from the real needs of teachers in the field, not from a unilateral agenda set by superiors. By understanding the daily challenges faced by Islamic Religious Education teachers such as unengaging teaching methods or difficulties in instilling values in students from diverse religious backgrounds supervisors can design targeted coaching programs. The supervision process then transforms into a kind of professional dialogue to seek the best solutions, where teachers feel supported and valued. This approach aligns with the Islamic principle emphasizing consultation (syura) and mutual advising (taushiyah) in goodness. Therefore, the implementation of Islamic Religious Education supervision must be designed as a sustainable cycle, encompassing planning, observation, analysis, and follow-up through joint reflection (Kunandar, 2021:156).

At the micro-level within schools, the principal holds a central role as a supervisor for teachers, including Islamic Religious Education teachers. The principal's ability to conduct educative academic supervision significantly determines the atmosphere and outcomes of the process. Unfortunately, not all principals possess the adequate competence or time to conduct intensive and high-quality supervision, especially supervision specific to Islamic Religious Education instruction. Often, supervision tends to focus more on administrative aspects and curriculum compliance, while the substantive and deeper methodological aspects of religious teaching remain unaddressed. In fact, according to the Law on Teachers and Lecturers, the coaching and professional development of teachers is a shared responsibility of the government, regional authorities, and educational institutions.

This study focuses on East Binjai District, selected for its representation of an urban context with considerable social diversity, where public schools serve as melting pots for students from various backgrounds. Islamic Religious Education teachers in this area are required not only to master religious content but also to possess multicultural

competence and innovative methods so that their instruction is acceptable to all students. The implementation of supervision is expected to serve as a driving force for enhancing teachers' capacity to respond to these challenges. Therefore, this study aims to conduct an in-depth examination of how Islamic Religious Education supervision is implemented in public schools across East Binjai District and the extent of its contribution to improving teacher professionalism.

In concluding this introduction, it can be summarized that enhancing the professionalism of Islamic Religious Education teachers is an urgent necessity to maintain the relevance and effectiveness of religious education in public schools. Educational supervision, particularly Islamic Educational Supervision conducted with coaching principles and Islamic values, offers a potential mechanism to achieve this objective. By examining its implementation in East Binjai District, this study aims to provide a comprehensive empirical overview of the dynamics, strategies, supporting factors, and challenges within the supervision process. The findings are expected to not only contribute academically to the body of Islamic education knowledge but also offer practical insights for stakeholders in the field from the school level to local education authorities to continuously refine the teacher development system towards an ideal standard of professionalism (Jailani, 2022:201).

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design to conduct an in-depth and holistic exploration of the implementation of Islamic Religious Education supervision in enhancing teacher professionalism across public schools in East Binjai District. The qualitative approach was selected for its suitability in achieving the research objective of understanding the meanings, processes, and social interactions occurring within the natural context of the field. The subjects of this research are actively teaching Islamic Religious Education teachers, school principals, and district-level school supervisors. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, based on the consideration that they possess direct experience and rich information relevant to the research focus. Data collection was conducted using triangulation techniques, primarily through semi-structured in-depth interviews designed to elicit participants' perceptions, experiences, and evaluations. This study also adhered to principles of credibility by employing source and method triangulation, persistent observation, and member checks to ensure data validity. As emphasized by Sugiyono (2019:15) in his work on qualitative

research methods, "The qualitative data analysis process is interactive and continues iteratively until completion, reaching a point of data saturation."

Result And Discussion

Result

1. The Concept and Basic Principles of Islamic Religious Education Supervision

Islamic Religious Education Supervision is a specialized form of academic supervision that integrates Islamic values and paradigms into the teacher development process. Essentially, this supervision is oriented not only towards enhancing technical-pedagogical competencies but also towards strengthening the spiritual and moral dimensions of the teacher as the primary role model in religious instruction. In this context, supervision is understood as a process of providing professional assistance that is collaborative, continuous, and based on a partnership relationship (*ukhuwah islamiyah*) between the supervisor and the teacher. Its goal is to create a conducive learning environment for the teacher's professional growth, which ultimately leads to the improvement of the quality of Islamic Religious Education instruction itself. Unlike conventional supervision, which may tend to be mechanistic, Islamic Religious Education Supervision emphasizes a humanistic- religious approach. In this approach, aspects of exemplary conduct (*qudwah*), sincere counsel (*mau'izhah hasanah*), and a spirit of mutual enjoining of truth (*taushiyah*) form the foundation of the interaction (Mujtahid, 2021:58).

The main principle underlying Islamic Religious Education Supervision is the principle of nurturing (*tarbiyah*) and development (*tanmiyah*), rather than repressive oversight. This principle requires the supervisor to position themselves as a guide and facilitator who assists the teacher in identifying and overcoming their own weaknesses through deep reflection. From an Islamic perspective, this process can be analogized to the concept of *muhasabah* or self-introspection, facilitated by a more knowledgeable individual (the supervisor). The second principle is openness (*inkisyaf*) and honesty (*shidq*) in communication. Supervisory dialogue must occur in a safe atmosphere of mutual trust, where teachers feel free to express their

difficulties without fear of judgment. The third principle is sincerity (*ikhlas*), required from both the supervisor who genuinely desires to help and the teacher who is willing to accept feedback for self-improvement. Without sincerity, supervision would merely become a formal ritual devoid of meaning (Rohman, 2020:102).

Furthermore, Nata (2022) that supervision in Islam also encompasses the dimension of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* (enjoining good and forbidding evil). This means the supervisor bears the responsibility to invite teachers towards good teaching practices (*ma'ruf*) and to prevent deviations or negligence in teaching duties (*munkar*). However, the implementation of this principle must be carried out with wisdom (*hikmah*) and good counsel (*mau'izhah hasanah*), as mentioned in the Qur'an. Therefore, Islamic Religious Education Supervision is not an authoritarian act but an educative effort full of compassion. This approach aligns with modern supervision theories emphasizing developmental and collaborative supervision, yet it is enriched with spiritual motivation. The implementation of these principles in the context of public schools in East Binjai presents an intriguing subject for study, considering the potentially diverse backgrounds of supervisors and teachers in their levels of understanding and practice of Islamic values (Nata, 2022:89).

2. Professionalism of Islamic Religious Education Teachers: Indicators and Contemporary Challenges

The professionalism of Islamic Religious Education teachers is a multidimensional construct encompassing a profound mastery of religious knowledge (professional competence), methodological skills in delivering material (pedagogical competence), a personality that serves as a role model (personal competence), and the ability to socialize and communicate effectively with students and the environment (social competence). A professional Islamic Religious Education teacher is required not only to understand fiqh (jurisprudence), (creed), (ethics), and Islamic history but

also to be able to transform these abstract values into concrete behaviors in the lives of heterogeneous students. They must be capable of designing learning that is contextual, engaging, and relevant to the lives of Generation Z in the digital era, without losing the essence of the religious teachings themselves.

The indicators of an IRE teacher's success are not solely measured by students' academic scores, but more importantly, by observable changes in their daily attitudes and behaviors (*akhlakul karimah*) (Satori, 2021:134). However, achieving this ideal level of professionalism faces a number of complex contemporary challenges. Internal challenges primarily stem from variations in teachers' educational backgrounds and motivations. Not all Islamic Religious Education teachers in public schools have a specialized background in religious sciences; some may come from general education streams who later specialized in Islamic Religious Education. This potentially creates a gap in the depth of content mastery.

External challenges arise from the school and societal environment. In public schools with students of diverse religious backgrounds, Islamic Religious Education teachers must be extra cautious and wise in delivering material to avoid being perceived as imposing beliefs. Furthermore, the phenomena of globalization and social media have created intense "competition" for students' attention, where conventional lecture methods often lose appeal compared to instant digital content. Islamic Religious Education teachers are compelled to be creatively innovative without abandoning substance (Rifa'i, 2023:77).

Another significant challenge is the high administrative burden, which often consumes teachers' time and energy, thereby reducing the opportunity for creative lesson preparation and self-reflection. In the context of East Binjai District, an urban area, IRE teachers also face the social reality of a diverse student body, ranging from highly religious families to those less concerned with religious education. This necessitates differentiated instructional approaches, which undoubtedly require greater

expertise. Islamic Religious Education Supervision is expected to serve as a strategic solution to address these various challenges. It does so by assisting teachers in problem identification, sourcing solution references, developing teaching media, and strengthening spiritual resilience in facing complex classroom dynamics. In other words, supervision functions as a support system that enhances teachers' capacities from multiple dimensions (Djamarah, 2020:165).

3. Effective Supervision Models and Techniques for Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Public Schools

Implementing effective supervision for Islamic Religious Education teachers in public schools requires selecting models and techniques suited to the unique characteristics of religious education and the specific conditions of the teachers. The clinical supervision model, pioneered by Cogan, remains highly relevant. Its cyclical stages pre-observation conference, classroom observation, and post-observation feedback conference provide a structured framework. Within the Islamic Religious Education context, the observation stage should extend beyond mere teaching techniques. It must also assess how the teacher integrates moral values, models appropriate behavior (*uswah hasanah*), and cultivates a spiritual atmosphere in the classroom. Observation techniques can vary, including anecdotal records, checklists, or video recordings (with permission) to facilitate more objective reflection.

Collaborative models are strongly encouraged, fostering an equal partnership where the supervisor and teacher jointly analyze teaching practices and design improvements. Techniques like lesson study, peer supervision, and instructional coaching can be adopted to cultivate a culture of sharing and mutual learning among Islamic Religious Education teachers (Sa'ud, 2019:143). In addition to clinical supervision, a performance-based supervision approach can be integrated. This approach focuses supervision on achieving defined teacher competency standards and their impact on student learning outcomes— cognitive, affective, and

psychomotor. The supervisor assists the teacher in setting measurable professional development goals, monitoring progress, and providing constructive feedback. Non-observational supervision techniques are also crucial. These include:

- 1) Analysis of Lesson Plans: For IRE teachers, this analysis can focus on the appropriateness of chosen methods for conveying specific values, the alignment of content with students' developmental stages, and the integration of universal values like honesty, tolerance, and discipline.
- 2) Review of Teacher Portfolios.
- 3) Reflective Interviews: These interviews can explore the teacher's intrinsic motivation, perceived spiritual challenges, and aspirations for self-development (Aryanti, 2021:98).

It is crucial to emphasize that the effectiveness of any model is fundamentally dependent on the interpersonal skills of the supervisor. The supervisor whether a principal, district supervisor, or senior teacher must possess strong communication techniques, the ability to deliver non-confrontational feedback, and sufficient authority as well as religious knowledge to provide substantive input. In the context of public schools in East Binjai, where the primary supervisor may not be an Islamic Religious Education specialist, collaboration with experienced Islamic Religious Education teachers or involvement of Islamic Religious Education supervisors from the Ministry of Religious Affairs becomes imperative.

Furthermore, it is essential to establish a supervision system that is continuous and programmatic, rather than incidental or solely tied to performance appraisals. Supervision must be integrated into an ongoing cycle of professional development, supported by follow-up activities such as workshops, microteaching sessions, or inter-school benchmarking. This approach ensures that supervision genuinely becomes a transformative vehicle for the holistic improvement of Islamic Religious Education teachers' quality (Asrori, 2022:120).

Discussion

Based on the theoretical review and established conceptual framework, the

discussion will focus on analyzing the implementation of Islamic Religious Education supervision in East Binjai District and its relationship to enhancing teacher professionalism. Observations and interviews in the field reveal that the implementation of supervision varies across a spectrum depending on the principal's understanding and commitment as the primary supervisor. In several schools, supervision has been carried out with a relatively collaborative approach. The principals hold pre-observation meetings with Islamic Religious Education teachers to discuss lesson plans, conduct classroom observations focusing on teacher-student interactions and methods of instilling values, and conclude with joint reflection sessions to discuss strengths and areas for improvement.

Although this process is not yet fully structured according to the ideal clinical model, it demonstrates the essence of supervision as professional development. Teachers in such schools reported feeling supported by concrete suggestions, such as using video media on prophets' stories or applying project-based learning models for themes like zakat (alms-giving) or cleanliness. Conversely, in some other schools, supervisory practices remain largely formalistic and administrative. Supervision is often conducted as brief, unplanned classroom visits, with feedback limited to administrative aspects like the completeness of lesson plans, alignment of materials with the syllabus, and classroom management.

More substantive aspects, such as the depth of religious understanding conveyed, the appropriateness of value-instilling methods, or students' emotional-spiritual responses, receive less attention. Islamic Religious Education teachers in these environments tend to view supervision as a routine obligation rather than a self-development opportunity. This disparity in implementation quality is significantly influenced by the principal's capacity to understand the characteristics of Islamic Religious Education instruction and their skills in conducting educative academic supervision. Some principals admit to lacking confidence in providing in-depth feedback on religious teaching methodologies due to their non-religious educational backgrounds.

Another significant finding is the role of the Islamic Religious Education supervisor from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which holds strategic potential yet, in practice, coordination with public schools is often suboptimal. These Islamic Religious Education supervisors tend to focus more on fostering madrasahs, while supervision for Islamic Religious Education teachers in public schools generally falls under the full responsibility of the education department through school principals. This creates a development gap, as public school IRE teachers may lack feedback from figures who are genuine experts in Islamic education.

Consequently, an initiative has emerged from several Islamic Religious Education teachers to independently form a cross-school professional learning community (community of practice). They periodically gather to discuss instructional challenges, share innovative lesson plans, and conduct peer classroom observations. This bottom-up initiative demonstrates significant potential and the teachers' professional spirit, even without formal directives. Peer supervision within this community operates more fluidly, is built on trust, and is highly practical.

From the perspective of impact on professionalism, the implemented supervision whether formal from the school or teacher-led initiatives has proven to contribute positively. Teachers who regularly receive collaborative supervision show improvement in designing more thorough lesson plans focused on character development.

They become more critically self-reflective and are more willing to experiment with new methods, such as role-playing prophetic stories or using digital platforms for interactive quizzes on creed topics. Their pedagogical competence grows due to receiving direct feedback on how to make abstract concepts more tangible.

Furthermore, personal and social competencies are also addressed. Supervision reflection sessions often discuss the importance of exemplary behavior, patience in dealing with disengaged students, and effective communication with parents regarding their child's moral development. This

holistic feedback mechanism, facilitated by a supportive environment, ultimately drives comprehensive professional growth for Islamic Religious Education teachers, aligning instructional practice with the deeper objectives of Islamic education.

Nevertheless, the primary challenge that continues to hinder the optimal impact of supervision is the issue of consistency and sustainability. Many supervision programs run intensively during specific periods (for instance, leading up to accreditation) but subsequently lose momentum. There is no clear system for monitoring teacher development after supervision sessions. Furthermore, time constraints remain a classic obstacle for principals who are also burdened with demanding managerial duties.

To address this, a school-level policy that prioritizes academic supervision as a core responsibility of the principal is required. This could involve allocating dedicated time for supervision and reducing non-essential administrative burdens. At the district level, the Education Office can facilitate training for principals on supervision techniques specific to Islamic Religious Education. Additionally, creating regular networking forums or workshops that bring together public school Islamic Religious Education teachers and Islamic Religious Education supervisors from the Ministry of Religious Affairs would be beneficial.

In conclusion, this discussion finds that the implementation of Islamic Religious Education supervision in public schools across East Binjai District shows a positive trajectory, albeit with varying degrees of depth and consistency. The key to success lies in a paradigm shift: viewing supervision not as mere inspection, but as ongoing professional development mentorship. Strengthening synergy among school stakeholders (principals and teachers), the Education Office, and the Ministry of Religious Affairs is crucial to creating a holistic and sustainable coaching ecosystem. When supervision is conducted with Islamic principles characterized by compassion, sincere counsel (*mau'izhah hasanah*), and sincerity (*ikhlas*), it becomes a powerful instrument. It not only enhances teacher competency but also fortifies the spiritual essence

of the Islamic religious education process within public schools

Conclusion

Based on the comprehensive discussion outlined, it can be concluded that the implementation of Islamic Religious Education supervision plays a significant and strategic role in efforts to enhance the professionalism of Islamic Religious Education teachers in public schools across East Binjai District. Effective supervision characterized by collaborative principles, continuous coaching, and imbued with Islamic values such as sincerity (*ikhlas*), openness (*inkisyaf*), and a spirit of mutual advising (*taushiyah*) has proven to be a catalyst for teacher competency development.

The supervision process extends beyond technical-pedagogical aspects like lesson planning and teaching methods; it also strengthens the personal and spiritual dimensions of teachers as role models. Field findings indicate that in schools where supervision is conducted using an educative and dialogic approach, Islamic Religious Education teachers demonstrate increased motivation to innovate, improved self-reflection capabilities, and a greater willingness to explore more contextual and engaging teaching methods relevant to today's students. However, this implementation has not yet been fully optimal or evenly distributed across all schools. Challenges such as varying levels of understanding and capacity among principals as supervisors, high administrative burdens, a lack of synergistic coordination with specialist IRE supervisors from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and the absence of structured follow-up programs post-supervision continue to act as impediments.

Therefore, enhancing the professionalism of IRE teachers through supervision cannot rely solely on individual initiative; it requires systemic support from school-level policies and local government. Moving forward, a shared commitment is necessary to transform supervision into a structured, continuous, and adequately resourced professional development process. This will enable it to accelerate the achievement of ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher professionalism standards and positively impact the overall quality of Islamic religious education. In more detail, the conclusions of this research can

be formulated in the following points:

1. The implementation of Islamic Religious Education supervision in East Binjai District has shifted from an inspection paradigm toward a developmental approach, although its depth and consistency still vary across schools.
2. The implementation of supervision contributes positively to enhancing the pedagogical and professional competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers, particularly in the areas of thorough lesson planning, selection of innovative methods, and the ability to reflect on teaching practices.
3. The determining factors for successful supervision are the interpersonal quality of the supervisor (especially the principal), a collaborative approach, and the creation of a safe and trusting supervisory environment.
4. The main obstacles include limited supervisor capacity, the persistence of incidental and administrative supervision practices in some areas, and suboptimal synergy with Islamic Religious Education supervisors from the Ministry of Religious Affairs.
5. The emergence of professional learning communities (*community of practice*) and peer supervision initiatives by the Islamic Religious Education teachers themselves represents significant potential that needs to be supported and facilitated by school authorities and the education office.

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