

The implementation of principal's supervisory style in improving teachers' job satisfaction at SMK Negeri 1 Gowa

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ABSTRACT

Principals play a strategic role in improving the quality of teaching and teacher performance through supervisory practices. This study aims to describe the implementation of the principal's supervisory style in enhancing teachers' job satisfaction at SMK Negeri 1 Gowa. This research employed a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The participants included the principal, six vice principals, senior teachers, and teachers who were the subjects of supervision. The findings indicate that the principal implemented an integrated, structured, and participatory supervisory style. This approach can be categorized as guided leadership, which emphasizes mentoring, support, and teacher involvement in decision-making. The implementation of supervision was not merely focused on administrative evaluation but functioned as a medium of empowerment through constructive feedback, continuous mentoring, and collective reflection. Teachers reported feeling valued and supported, which positively influenced their motivation, professionalism, work discipline, teaching readiness, and overall job satisfaction. Furthermore, the supervisory practices were closely linked to teacher performance appraisal (PKG) and work target assessments (SKP), contributing to the strengthening of career development and performance-based recognition. These results highlight that a humanistic, educational, and participatory supervisory style fosters a positive school climate, promotes collaboration, and enhances the quality of teaching and learning in vocational education settings.

Keywords: Principal Supervision, Leadership Style, Teacher Job Satisfaction

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is widely recognized as a key factor in shaping human resources and driving a nation's development. Improving the quality of education cannot rely solely on curriculum reform or infrastructure development; it also depends heavily on the performance of teachers and the effectiveness of school management. In this regard, the principal's role is crucial. Beyond being an administrator, the principal acts as an instructional leader and supervisor responsible for fostering, guiding, and empowering teachers. Supervision is not merely about assessing teacher performance administratively but should serve as a developmental tool to enhance teachers' competence, motivation, and job satisfaction.

Effective supervision contributes to creating a supportive professional climate that encourages teachers to improve their performance. Conversely, supervision that is rigid, hierarchical, or limited to paperwork often reduces teachers' motivation and may lead to job dissatisfaction. Thus, the supervisory style applied by principals is a determining factor in shaping the extent to which teachers feel valued, supported, and motivated to enhance their professionalization.

Teacher job satisfaction is critical to ensuring quality education. Teachers who are satisfied with their work tend to demonstrate higher levels of discipline, motivation and commitment to their teaching responsibilities. They are also more likely to foster engaging classroom environments that benefit students' learning outcomes. Several factors influence teachers' job satisfaction, including working conditions, leadership style, recognition, and supervisory practices. Therefore, principals' supervision is not only a managerial obligation but also a strategic approach to strengthening teachers' psychological well-being and professional commitment.

Recent empirical studies have confirmed the significance of principal supervision in relation to teacher job satisfaction. [Maryanti, Arafat, and Eddy \(2022\)](#) found that principal supervision significantly influences teacher job satisfaction in elementary schools. Similarly, [Winaliyah, Harapan, and Kesumawati \(2021\)](#) reported that participatory academic supervision fosters a positive work climate, which in turn enhances teachers' satisfaction. More recently, [Santi et al. \(2024\)](#) emphasized that the combination of principal supervision and teacher motivation significantly impacts improving the quality of learning in schools. These studies collectively reinforce the notion that principal supervision plays a pivotal role in advancing teacher professionalism and sustaining educational quality.

However, despite the growing body of literature on supervision, most existing studies have been conducted in elementary or general secondary school contexts and have predominantly used quantitative methods. There is a lack of qualitative investigations exploring how principals implement specific supervisory styles in vocational high schools (SMKs). This is an important gap because vocational schools possess unique characteristics compared with general schools. Vocational teachers are required to master pedagogical skills and technical and professional competencies relevant to the needs of the industry. Therefore, supervision in vocational schools must be more adaptive, participatory, and contextual to address these challenges effectively.

In addition to providing theoretical and practical contributions, this study emphasizes the importance of a principal's supervisory style that focuses on teacher empowerment. Supervision that highlights reflective dialogue and active teacher involvement has been proven to increase the sense of ownership of instructional quality. In the long term, this has the potential to build a collaborative school culture in which teachers support each other, share experiences, and develop innovations in teaching strategies. Thus, adaptive supervision not only impacts individual performance but also strengthens the school's collective capacity as a learning organization.

Furthermore, the relevance of this study also lies in the context of vocational education, which is currently required to produce graduates who are job-ready with competencies aligned with industry demands. Effective principal supervision can bridge the gap between labor market expectations and the learning process in schools. Through supervision integrated with Teacher Performance Appraisal (PKG) and Employee Performance Targets (SKP), principals not only ensure compliance with academic standards but also support teachers in delivering contextual and industry-relevant learning. This is consistent with the findings of [Mutmainah and Nurhayati \(2023\)](#), who emphasized that academic

supervision based on continuous coaching is more effective in enhancing teacher professionalism and job satisfaction, particularly in vocational school contexts.

Preliminary observations conducted at SMK Negeri 1 Gowa provide evidence of these practices. The principal of this school applies an integrated, structured, and participatory supervisory style. Supervision is carried out through the establishment of supervisory teams that involve vice principals and senior teachers, focusing primarily on lesson plans and teachers' readiness for the academic year. More importantly, supervision goes beyond evaluation; it emphasizes reflective dialogue, constructive feedback and continuous mentoring. Teachers perceive supervision not as a burden or a top-down directive but as a supportive process that empowers them to grow professionally. Teachers reported feeling appreciated, supported, and guided, which in turn fostered greater motivation, professionalism, and satisfaction.

This study is therefore significant as it seeks to provide an in-depth description of the implementation of the principal's supervisory style in enhancing teacher job satisfaction at SMK Negeri 1 Gowa. By employing a qualitative approach, this study captures the lived experiences, perceptions, and reflections of teachers and school leaders, offering insights that are often overlooked in quantitative analysis. The findings are expected to make two contributions. Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature on educational leadership and supervision, particularly in the underexplored context of vocational high schools. Practically, this study provides valuable insights for principals and policymakers to implement more humanistic, participatory, and effective supervisory practices that can foster teacher satisfaction and improve the quality of teaching and learning.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive, qualitative approach. This design was chosen because it is considered the most appropriate to explore in-depth the implementation of the principal's supervisory style in enhancing teachers' job satisfaction. A qualitative approach allows researchers to understand the meaning, experiences, and practices of supervision as they occur naturally in the school context (Creswell, 2014). The research was conducted at SMK Negeri 1 Gowa, South Sulawesi, which was purposively selected because of its structured implementation of academic supervision through an internal supervisory team. The study was conducted from March to April 2025, coinciding with the beginning of the academic year when teaching document supervision was routinely implemented.

Participants were determined using a purposive sampling technique, selecting informants who were considered most relevant and knowledgeable about supervisory practices in schools. The participants included the school principal as the main supervisor, six vice-principals, four senior teachers who acted as supervisory team members, and several teachers as the subjects of supervision.

Data collection was carried out using three main techniques. First, in-depth interviews were conducted with the principal, supervisory team members, and teachers using semi-structured interview guides, which allowed for flexibility and provided rich contextual data. Second, participant observation was conducted during the implementation of supervision to capture the real interactions between principals and teachers. Third, documentation was used to complement the data, including the principal's decree on the formation of the supervisory team, supervision formats, and evaluation records.

The data were analyzed using the interactive analysis model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014). The process involved three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Data reduction was conducted by selecting and simplifying the relevant data, data display was presented in a systematic descriptive narrative, and conclusion drawing was conducted inductively by interpreting the patterns that emerged in the field. To ensure data validity, the triangulation of sources and methods was applied by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation. In addition, member checking was conducted by confirming the findings with the participants to ensure that the interpretations accurately reflected the actual conditions in the field.

In addition, several strategies were applied to strengthen the rigor of this research. Credibility was maintained through prolonged engagement in the field, allowing the researcher to gain a deep understanding of the school's context and supervisory dynamics. Transferability was supported by

providing thick descriptions of the setting, participants, and supervisory practices, enabling other researchers or practitioners to adapt the findings to similar contexts. Dependability and confirmability were ensured by maintaining an audit trail consisting of interview transcripts, observation notes, and official documents used during the analysis.

Ethical considerations were carefully addressed. Prior to data collection, the researcher obtained formal permission from the school principal and informed consent from all the participants. Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity, and pseudonyms were used to protect their identity. They were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time, without consequence. These ethical measures were designed to uphold professional research standards and protect the participants' rights throughout the study. Ensuring validity and ethical integrity is a crucial foundation for the credibility of this study. This aligns with [Sugiyono \(2020\)](#), who emphasized that qualitative research must prioritize the credibility of data and academic honesty to provide meaningful contributions to both theory and educational practice.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings revealed that the principal of SMK Negeri 1 Gowa applied an integrated, structured, and participatory supervisory style. Integrated supervision is reflected in the interconnectedness of various school components, including the principal, vice-principal, senior teachers, and supervised teachers. Supervision was not conducted in isolation but was linked to school programs, teacher performance appraisals (PKG), and employee performance targets (SKP). This integration ensured that every supervisory activity was aligned with the school's broader goals of quality improvement. Thus, supervision was not merely about evaluating individual teacher performance but was part of a collective effort to enhance the school's overall quality. This finding is consistent with [Maryanti, Arafat, and Eddy \(2022\)](#), who emphasized that well-directed and systematic supervision has a positive effect on teachers' job satisfaction.

The supervisory practice was also structured, as shown by the formal mechanisms through the issuance of a principal's decree (Surat Keputusan) establishing a supervisory team. The process followed clear stages, starting from planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up. The principal assigned six vice principals and four senior teachers to assist in supervising teaching documents, particularly lesson plans (RPP). Teachers who encountered difficulties were provided with special mentoring until their documents met the required standards. This structured model illustrates careful planning, a clear distribution of roles, and an organized system of work. Such findings support [Winaliyah, Harapan, and Kesumawati \(2021\)](#), who highlighted the importance of systematic academic supervision in creating a positive working climate for teachers.

In addition, the principal's supervisory style was participatory, actively involving teachers in the process through reflective dialogues and constructive feedback. Teachers were given the opportunity to share challenges, needs, and innovative ideas related to teaching. Consequently, supervision was not unidirectional but became a two-way interaction that fostered a partnership between the principal and teachers. Teachers felt valued, supported, and empowered in the supervisory process, which strengthened their ownership of the quality of instruction. This participatory style proved effective in enhancing teachers' job satisfaction, as teachers were positioned not only as objects of supervision but also as subjects in professional development. [Santi et al. \(2024\)](#), asserted that participatory supervision, when combined with teacher motivation, can significantly improve instructional quality.

Another important finding was that the supervision at SMK Negeri 1 Gowa emphasized capacity building rather than mere administration. Continuous mentoring was prioritized to help teachers improve without feeling overburdened. This approach is consistent with the findings of [Mutmainah and Nurhayati \(2023\)](#), who stressed the importance of supervisory practices that emphasize coaching and professional development to improve both teacher performance and job satisfaction. By adopting an integrated, structured, and participatory style, supervision at SMK Negeri 1 Gowa provided teachers with both

technical guidance and psychological support, thereby reinforcing their motivation and commitment to their teaching roles.

Despite its benefits, this study identified several challenges in supervisory implementation. Not all teachers demonstrated the same readiness to prepare teaching documents or accept feedback from the principal. Some teachers still perceived supervision as a stressful process, especially if previous experiences were more evaluative than developmental. However, the principal's participatory and humanistic approach gradually reduced this resistance to women's leadership. This highlights that supervisory effectiveness is highly dependent on the principal's communication skills in building trust with teachers. These findings are in line with [Hasanah, Hidayat, and Firmansyah \(2020\)](#), who noted that the success of supervision is strongly influenced by the quality of interpersonal relationships between supervisors and teachers.

Furthermore, the supervisory style adopted by the principal had a strong impact on teachers' intrinsic motivation. Teachers who feel listened to, valued, and involved show higher levels of enthusiasm, innovation in teaching, and commitment to their responsibilities. Supervision that allowed for reflection and discussion not only addressed weaknesses but also fostered teachers' confidence and sense of achievement. Therefore, job satisfaction was not solely derived from meeting administrative standards but from the creation of a supportive work climate that nurtured self-actualization. These findings resonate with [Pratiwi and Sunaryo \(2022\)](#), who argued that supervision combined with motivation and recognition can enhance both performance and teachers' psychological wellbeing.

Supervision at SMK Negeri 1 Gowa can also be regarded as part of a sustainable-school-improvement strategy. Through its integrated, structured, and participatory approach, supervision impacted not only individual teachers but also the school's organizational culture as a whole. Collaborative and reflective supervisory practices fostered the development of a teacher learning community in which educators supported one another and shared best practices. In the long run, such practices are expected to improve the quality of vocational school graduates by equipping them with both academic competence and industry-relevant skills. These findings reinforce the notion that principal supervision is a strategic instrument for school development, in line with recent national policies that emphasize educational quality enhancement.

Beyond these findings, the study highlights that instructional leadership through supervision contributes to strengthening the engagement of teachers. Supervision that integrates coaching and mentoring strategies allows teachers to internalize professional standards while maintaining the motivation to achieve their targets. [Nugroho and Sulastri \(2020\)](#) emphasized that principals who apply instructional leadership in supervision increase teachers' willingness to innovate and collaborate, ultimately improving school performance. This reflects that supervision at SMK Negeri 1 Gowa is not only evaluative but also transformative in nature.

The participatory nature of supervision also helped create a sense of ownership among teachers regarding the school's vision. Teachers were encouraged to provide input and collaborate in designing solutions to address pedagogical challenges. [Dewi and Riyanto \(2021\)](#) argue that participatory supervision builds trust and enhances teacher creativity, which are essential for developing innovative teaching practices. In this way, supervision became a platform for empowerment rather than control, promoting shared responsibility for the quality of education in schools.

The structured system of supervision further reduced uncertainty and anxiety among teachers, as they understood the stages and criteria applied in the process of evaluation. [Putra, Rahmat, and Fitri \(2019\)](#) found that structured supervision contributes to teacher motivation by offering clarity and fairness in evaluation. This mechanism provides a strong sense of accountability and encourages teachers to consistently improve their teaching documentation and classroom practices.

Communication also emerged as a crucial factor in minimizing resistance to supervision in the study. Teachers who had previously experienced supervision as stressful gradually changed their perceptions when the principal demonstrated empathy and openness to their suggestions. [Yuliani and Setiawan \(2022\)](#) highlighted that effective interpersonal communication reduces tension in supervision and fosters a culture of dialogue between principals and teachers. Thus, communication skills can be considered as important as technical supervisory procedures in ensuring success. Finally, the study illustrates how integrated and

participatory supervision contributes to vocational education reform. By linking supervision with industry-relevant competencies, the school ensures that its graduates meet the labor market's expectations. Sari dan Anugrah (2023) note that supervision aligned with national quality standards enhances both teacher readiness and student employability.

Overall, this study confirms that a supervisory style that integrates integration, structure, and participation can create a conducive working climate, enhance job satisfaction, and strengthen professionalism. Such supervision goes beyond administrative control, functioning as a strategy for teacher empowerment to improve educational quality. Within the context of vocational schools, this supervisory style is particularly relevant, as it addresses dual demands, ensuring academic quality while supporting teachers' readiness to meet industry challenges. Consequently, the supervisory practices observed at SMK Negeri 1 Gowa may serve as a model for adaptive, humanistic, and contextual school leadership in the contemporary era.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the principal of SMK Negeri 1 Gowa has successfully implemented an integrated, structured, and participatory supervisory style, which has had a positive impact on teachers' job satisfaction. Integrated supervision was reflected in its alignment with broader school programs, including the Teacher Performance Appraisal (PKG) and Employee Performance Targets (SKP), ensuring that every supervisory activity was connected to efforts to improve the quality of education. Structured supervision was demonstrated through the establishment of a supervisory team under an official principal's decree, implementation of clear stages ranging from planning, execution, evaluation, to follow-up, and systematic distribution of roles. Meanwhile, participatory supervision was evident in the active involvement of teachers through reflective dialogue, constructive feedback, and opportunities to express challenges and ideas.

The combination of these three dimensions of supervision creates a conducive work climate, enhances teachers' motivation and job satisfaction, and strengthens professionalism in carrying out their duties. In the context of vocational high schools, this supervisory style is particularly relevant because it ensures academic quality and supports teachers' readiness to meet the demands of the business and industrial sectors. Therefore, the supervisory practices of the principal at SMK Negeri 1 Gowa can serve as a model of educational leadership that is humanistic, adaptive, and contextual in the pursuit of sustainable improvement in educational quality.

In addition, this study highlights the importance of strengthening principals' supervisory competencies through continuous professional development programs. Policymakers and educational stakeholders should design training modules that emphasize participatory, reflective, and capacity-building approaches to supervision. By institutionalizing such practices, schools can ensure that supervision does not merely function as an administrative control but becomes a strategic instrument for empowering teachers and achieving sustainable educational quality.

Finally, this study provides theoretical contributions by enriching the literature on educational leadership and supervision in vocational school contexts, which remain underexplored compared to general schools. Future research could extend this study by comparing supervisory practices across different regions or by examining the long-term effects of participatory supervision on student learning outcomes. Such efforts will broaden understanding and strengthen the development of effective, context-sensitive supervisory models in education.

Ethical Approval

Not Applicable

Informed Consent Statement

Not Applicable

Authors' Contributions

AAYA contributed to the conceptualization and research design and served as the corresponding author. AA contributed to the theoretical framework development and the data analysis. MJ contributed to the data collection, literature review, and preparation of the final manuscript.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Data Availability Statement

The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author due to privacy reasons.

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