



Transformation of the Role of School Superintendents in Implementation of the Independent Curriculum Case Studies (Supervisory Roles Post-Director General GTK 2023)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the transformation of the role of school supervisors in supporting the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum following the issuance of the Regulation of the Director General of Teachers and Education Personnel (Perdirjen GTK) Number 4831/B/HK.03.01/2023 at public junior high schools in Wates District, Kulon Progo. The research also explores the challenges faced by supervisors after the regulation and the efforts made to overcome them. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach, conducted through in-depth interviews, observations, and document studies involving supervisors and principals to understand their experiences and perceptions regarding the new supervisory roles. Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, including data collection, condensation, display, and conclusion drawing, while data validity was ensured through source and technique triangulation. The findings indicate that supervisors face several challenges, such as limited training, inadequate resources, and an imbalance between the number of supervisors and schools under supervision. Despite these constraints, supervisors have adopted collaborative and adaptive strategies to assist principals in designing more innovative and contextual learning programs. The study concludes that the transformation of the supervisory role into that of a facilitator and mentor contributes significantly to achieving more relevant and student-centered educational outcomes.

1. Introduction

Education has a strategic role in shaping high-quality and highly competitive human resources. Through education, individuals not only gain knowledge, but also develop character, social skills, and critical thinking skills needed in dealing with increasingly complex global dynamics (Rahayu et al., 2019; Tiara et al., 2023). In the context of national development, education serves as the main foundation that determines the direction of a nation's social, economic, and cultural progress.

Therefore, improving the quality of education is the main focus of the Indonesian government in creating a society that is adaptive to change and globally competitive (Komara et al., 2023).

In the era of digital transformation and rapid social change, the education system is required to continue to innovate in order to be able to answer the challenges of the times. The change in the global education paradigm that emphasizes competency-based learning, collaboration, and creativity requires Indonesia to update the curriculum to be more relevant and flexible (Rochayati et al., 2023; Zulkarnain, 2022). In response to these needs, the government launched the Independent Learning Policy implemented through the Independent Curriculum, which emphasizes learning that is in favor of students and based on the potential, characteristics, and contextual needs of each educational unit (Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan, 2022)

The Merdeka Curriculum is designed to provide schools and educators with greater freedom in designing learning that suits the context and characteristics of students. This flexibility is expected to create a learning experience that is more meaningful, contextual, and relevant to real life (Saputra & Hernawati, 2024). This approach also provides opportunities for students to learn according to their interests and pace, while encouraging the role of teachers and principals to be more creative and reflective in developing innovative learning programs.

However, the success of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum is highly dependent on the readiness of various elements of education, including school principals, teachers, and especially school supervisors as the front line in ensuring the quality and direction of policies in accordance with the provisions (Rusdayani et al., 2023). School supervisors have an important role in bridging macro education policies with implementable practices at the level of educational units. This role requires supervisors to not only carry out administrative and evaluative functions, but also transform into facilitators, mentors, and strategic partners for principals and teachers in developing adaptive learning strategies that are oriented to the needs of students.

The transformation of the role of school supervisors is formally regulated in the Regulation of the Director General of Teachers and Education Personnel (Perdirjen GTK) Number 4831/B/HK.03.01/2023, which emphasizes the change in the paradigm of education supervision from an inspection approach to a coaching and mentoring approach. This regulation shifts the supervisor's function from just an administrative controller to a driver of improving the quality of learning in the target schools. This change requires supervisors to have competence in providing technical guidance, conducting academic supervision, and developing reflective collaboration with principals and teachers.

However, this change in role also poses new challenges in the field. Based on the results of various previous observations and research, many supervisors still face limitations in understanding the substance of their new role. Most supervisors have not received adequate training to carry out reflective and contextual mentoring

functions. The disparity between the number of supervisors and the number of target schools is also a serious obstacle in the optimal implementation of duties. Difficult geographical conditions in some areas, limited facilities, and high administrative demands weigh on the workload of supervisors and have an impact on the effectiveness of mentoring for school principals and teachers. Previous research has shown that resistance to changing work paradigms is also still found, especially among supervisors who have long been accustomed to conventional approaches that emphasize administrative control (Maylitha et al., 2023; Wahyudin et al., 2024). As a result, the role of supervisors in supporting the implementation of the Independent Curriculum has not been running optimally, and some schools are still experiencing difficulties in adapting the new curriculum into daily learning practices (Mustofa, 2024).

This context shows the urgency of this research, which aims to analyze the transformation of the role of school supervisors in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum after the issuance of the GTK Director General Regulation Number 4831/B/HK.03.01/2023, especially at the State Junior High School (SMP) level in Wates District, Kulon Progo Regency. This study also seeks to identify the obstacles faced by school supervisors in carrying out their new roles and explore strategies and efforts implemented to overcome these obstacles.

Thus, this research is expected to make a theoretical and practical contribution to understanding the dynamics of changing the role of school supervisors in the era of education policies oriented towards independence and learning flexibility. Theoretically, this study enriches the literature on education supervision in the context of curriculum reform in Indonesia. Meanwhile, practically, the results of this research can be a reference for policy makers and educational institutions in designing coaching and training strategies for school supervisors to be able to play an optimal role as facilitators and partners of school principals in realizing sustainable quality education.

2. Methodology

This research uses a qualitative approach with the aim of exploring in depth the transformation of the role of school supervisors after the issuance of the 2023 GTK Perdirjen, including the obstacles faced and the efforts made in carrying out new roles at the Junior High School (SMP) level in Wates District, Kulon Progo Regency (Sugiyono, 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2018). This approach is in line with the view of Moleong (2017) who emphasizes that qualitative research is oriented towards understanding the meaning of social phenomena in depth through participants' narratives, behaviors, and experiences.

The research was carried out in five State Junior High Schools in Wates District, namely State Junior High Schools 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 Wates. The research activities lasted for five months, from February 20 to June 30, 2025. Before data collection, the researcher obtained permission from the Kulon Progo Education Office and the

relevant school principal and coordinated with the school supervisor as the main resource person.

The data sources in this study consist of formal data and informal data. Formal data is obtained through official documents such as school policies, performance evaluation reports of principals and teachers, school strategic plans (Renstra), and supervisory visit reports. Informal data was collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation studies of three school supervisors and principals in the five junior high schools. These two types of data are used to provide a comprehensive picture of the changing role and implementation of supervision after the new policy (Dukalang, 2023).

Data collection techniques were carried out through non-participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. Observation was used to directly observe supervision practices in schools without the active involvement of researchers. Interviews were conducted with supervisors and principals to obtain information related to changes in roles, challenges, and supervisory strategies. Meanwhile, the documentation study is used to complete the data through the search of relevant documents and reports related to education supervision. The validity of the data is maintained through source triangulation and technical triangulation (Sugiyono, 2019). Source triangulation is carried out by comparing the results of interviews between the supervisor and the principal, while technical triangulation is carried out by matching the results of interviews, observations, and official documents such as the school's annual report. The application of these two approaches ensures the validity and reliability of the data, so that research findings can be scientifically accounted for.

Data analysis was carried out interactively based on the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) model, which included four stages: (1) data collection, through interviews, observations, and documentation; (2) data condensation, namely simplification and selection of relevant information; (3) presentation of data, in narrative and thematic form; and (4) drawing conclusions and verification, to test the consistency and credibility of the findings (Miles et al., 2018). This interactive data analysis model is shown in the Figure 1.

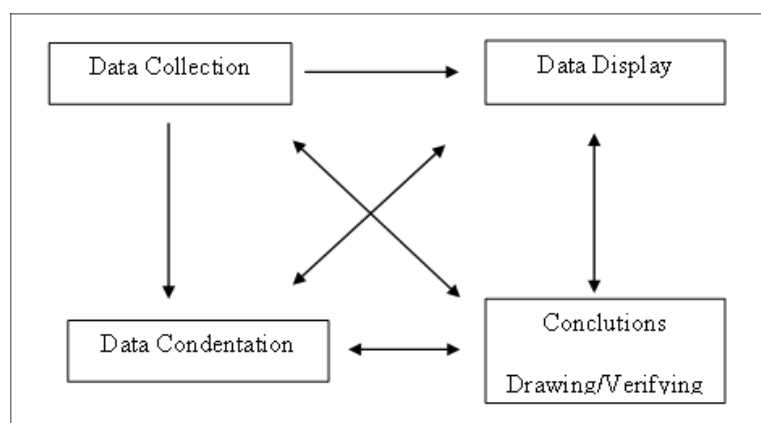


Figure 1. Miles, Huberman & Saldana Interactive Data Analysis Model

3. Results and Discussion

Result

The results of the study show that after the issuance of the GTK Director General Regulation Number 4831/B/HK.03.01/2023, there was a fundamental transformation in the role of school supervisors at the State Junior High School level in Wates District, Kulon Progo Regency. The change is marked by a shift in the role of supervisors from administrative and control functions to the functions of coaching, mentoring, and facilitating principals and teachers. This transformation affirms the role of supervisors as strategic partners in the development of learning and the improvement of the quality of educational units.

The research, which included interviews, observations, and documentation, was conducted in stages according to the supervisors' mentoring schedule at five public junior high schools in Wates District. Interviews were conducted directly in the supervisors' and principals' offices from March to May 2025, concurrently with routine supervision activities. Each interview session lasted between 45 and 90 minutes and focused on gathering information related to the transformation of roles, forms of mentoring, obstacles, and strategies implemented by supervisors in implementing the Independent Curriculum. Observations were conducted by following supervisors as they accompanied principals in learning reflection activities, work program development, and the implementation of Learning Communities (Kombel). Through these observations, researchers gained a direct understanding of communication patterns, coaching techniques, and the dynamics of collaboration between supervisors, principals, and teachers. Meanwhile, documentation activities included collecting official documents such as annual supervision plans, mentoring minutes, principal reflection reports, and evidence of Kombel implementation. These three data sources were used to strengthen the interpretation of the research findings, as presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Results of Interviews, Observations, and Documentation

Interview Questions	Interview Results	Observation Results	Documentation Results
How has the role of school supervisors changed after the 2023 GTK Directorate General?	The supervisor moves from the administrative control function to the facilitator and reflective partner of the principal.	It can be seen that the supervisor leads a reflection session with the principal and teachers without an instructive approach.	The supervision report contains reflection notes and a follow-up plan based on the results of the discussion.
What form of assistance is provided to school principals?	Supervisors conduct socialization, KSP validation, and assist in the preparation of data-based RKAS.	Observations show coaching and mentoring sessions during the preparation of school programs.	The RKAS document contains a column of correction and validation notes from the supervisor.
What obstacles are faced in the	The burden of the fostered school is high, time constraints,	Some school principals seemed passive in the discussion and waited	The minutes of the meeting showed that the assistance agenda was

Interview Questions	Interview Results	Observation Results	Documentation Results
implementation of the new role?	and the principal's resistance to self-reflection.	more for the superintendent's direction.	delayed due to the schedule of the supervisory office.
What strategies are implemented to overcome these barriers?	Supervisors utilize online platforms and collaboration between supervisors for the effectiveness of mentoring.	Observed the use of digital media (Zoom, WhatsApp Group) for coordination of supervision activities.	Documentation in the form of screenshots of online meetings and collaboration reports between supervisors.
What is the impact of changing the role of the supervisor on improving the quality of schools?	Principals are more reflective, teachers are more participatory in learning planning.	Teachers are actively involved in Kombel and reflective discussions with the principal.	The education report card shows an increase in the value of contextual learning indicators.

The findings in the Table 1 show that supervisors now play an active role in helping school principals reflect on school conditions, identify development needs, and develop learning strategies that are relevant to student characteristics and local contexts. The supervisory approach that was previously top-down has now changed to a dialogical and collaborative one, where the supervisor plays the role of a coach and learning partner for the principal. This form of mentoring is carried out through coaching, mentoring, training, and facilitating activities that are oriented towards strengthening instructional leadership. These changes can be seen through the various dimensions of the supervisory function as summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Transformation of the Role of School Supervisors After the 2023 GTK Director General

Aspects of Supervision	Conditions Before the 2023 GTK Director General	Conditions After the 2023 GTK Director General	Evidence/Field Findings
Supervisory Task Focus	Supervision is administrative and document-oriented in nature.	It is oriented towards mentoring, coaching, and facilitating school principals and teachers.	"Previously the supervisor only checked the administration, now we are accompanied in the planning of the school program." (Interview with the Principal of SMPN 2 Wates)
Supervisory Pattern	It tends to be top-down and centered on performance evaluation.	Collaborative and reflective, <i>based on coaching</i> and <i>mentoring</i> .	Observations at SMPN 1 Wates show that supervisors conduct a reflection session with the principal and teachers.
Surveillance Approach	Emphasizing compliance with formal rules and reports.	Prioritizing professional dialogue and learning based on school needs.	The supervision document shows the existence of a follow-up plan based on teachers' reflections and the results of education report cards.
Relationship with Principals and Teachers	Hierarchical and instructive.	Equivalent professional partnership.	"We feel more appreciated because the supervisor is now more of a discussion than a rule." (SMPN 3 Wates Teacher)

Impact on School Quality	Administrative improvements, but have not touched the quality of learning.	There has been an increase in teacher participation and learning innovations based on the Independent Curriculum.	School principals reported an increase in teachers' reflection in designing contextual learning.
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Based on the findings in the Table 2, the transformation of the role of school supervisors has a positive impact on the pattern of professional relationships between supervisors, principals, and teachers. The interaction pattern that was originally hierarchical has now evolved into a more aligned partnership relationship. A collaborative and reflective supervision approach helps principals identify learning problems more deeply, while fostering a culture of discussion and continuous improvement in the school environment.

However, this change process is inseparable from various obstacles. The study identified several main obstacles, including the limited number of supervisors compared to the number of target schools, the lack of relevant training, and geographical challenges that limit the intensity of mentoring. In addition, resistance to change is also still found, especially among principals and teachers who are accustomed to the administrative supervision system. These various obstacles encourage supervisors to develop adaptive strategies so that the implementation of their new role remains effective. The various obstacles and adaptive strategies implemented by school supervisors are summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Obstacles and Strategies of School Supervisors in the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum

Aspects	Obstacles Faced by Supervisors	Strategies and Efforts Implemented	Evidence/Field Findings
Professional Capacity	Many supervisors have not received training relevant to the Independent Curriculum.	Participate in self-training, collaborate with other supervisors, and utilize digital learning resources.	"We learn independently from the Merdeka Mengajar platform and discussions between supervisors." (Supervisor A)
Task Load and Ratio of Target Schools	The number of target schools exceeds the ideal capacity, so the intensity of assistance is limited.	Develop priority supervision schedules and use technology for online coordination.	Observations show the use of <i>WhatsApp groups</i> and <i>Zoom meetings</i> for the development of school principals.
Limited School Resources	Facilities and resources in some schools have not supported the implementation of the Independent Curriculum.	Supervisors help school principals develop adaptive strategies according to school conditions and local potential.	"Our school aligns student profile project activities with available resources." (Principal of SMPN 4 Wates)
Resistance to Change	Some teachers and school principals are still used to the old	Taking a reflective and dialogical approach to change the mindset to	"Now the supervisory approach is more like discussing, not

Geographical and Time Constraints	administrative system. The target schools are scattered in several locations that are difficult to reach, the time for mentoring is limited.	be more open to innovation. Improve the effectiveness of online coordination, and conduct rotational visits in a planned manner.	commanding." (SMPN 3 Wates Teacher) Activity documentation shows a rotation of visits every two weeks at remote schools.
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From the findings, it can be concluded that the success of the transformation of supervisory roles is greatly influenced by their adaptive capacity to adapt to new policy demands. Supervisors who are able to leverage technology, collaborate with peers, and adopt a reflective approach are proven to be more effective in carrying out mentoring functions. These strategies show the ability of supervisors to interpret policies contextually according to field conditions.

Theoretically, these findings support the transformational leadership approach, which emphasizes the importance of visionary and collaborative leadership in driving organizational change (Ahsan, 2024). Supervisors play a role not only as policy implementers but also as change agents who foster a reflective culture in their target schools. Meanwhile, the implementation of coaching and mentoring-based supervision reinforces the principles of Reflective Practice, as seen in a study by Sumanti et al. (2025), which developed an integrative coaching-mentoring model in academic supervision to enhance teacher professionalism. In this context, principals and teachers learn from experience collaboratively to continuously improve professional practice.

In addition to strengthening the competence of school principals, this transformation also has an impact on improving the quality of learning and teacher professionalism. With a more participatory and humanist supervision pattern, teachers feel more valued and encouraged to develop creativity in designing contextual learning. The practical implications of the results of this study show that improving supervisory competence should be a priority in education policy, especially through needs-based continuous training, mastery of technology, and strengthening professional networks between supervisors. Thus, the change in the role of school supervisors after the 2023 GTK Directorate General is not only an administrative adjustment, but also a paradigm transformation towards a supervisory system that is collaborative, reflective, and oriented towards improving the quality of learning.

Discussion

The results of the study show that after the issuance of the GTK Director General Regulation Number 4831/B/HK.03.01/2023, there was a fundamental transformation in the role of school supervisors. Supervisors are now shifting from an inspection function to a role as a companion, facilitator, and strategic partner of school principals (Mulyanto et al., 2023; Mustofa, 2024). This change is consistent with the results of a study that shows that supervisors are now expected to determine mentoring strategies and methods that are more adaptive to the needs of target

schools after the regulation (Komara et al., 2025). Supervisors no longer play the role of administrative evaluators, but rather as learning facilitators for school principals to be able to become learning leaders and agents of change in educational units.

This transformation is reflected in the application of a reflective approach and coaching, where the principal is given space to conduct self-mapping and reflection on the condition of his school. Based on the results of this reflection, the principal prepares a school development program according to the needs and potential of each educational unit. In this stage, supervisors act as discussion partners, provide input and data-based assistance from education report cards, and ensure that program implementation runs as planned. In addition, the application of transformational leadership in educational supervision has been proven to improve teacher performance, learning innovation, and work motivation (Nurrizayani et al., 2024). Similar results were found by (Komara et al., 2025) that the transformational leadership of school principals strengthens a positive and collaborative learning climate in schools.

The implementation of collaborative and clinical supervision (coaching, mentoring, training) was found to be in line with other studies that proved the effectiveness of similar approaches in improving teachers' professional competence through collaborative supervision. For example, a study at SD Negeri 1 Margajaya showed that collaborative supervision is effective in improving teachers' professional proficiency (Darif et al., 2024). Likewise in MI (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah), where clinical supervision is used as a professional development strategy that significantly improves the quality of teaching (Sutrisno, 2021).

However, this transformation cannot be separated from challenges, such as training limitations, high workloads, and unbalanced ratio of target schools (Hanafiah et al., 2023; Lubis, 2021). To overcome this, supervisors apply adaptive strategies such as online supervision, peer collaboration, and professional reflection (Mansyur & Akib, 2024). The strategy shows the ability of supervisors to adapt to the dynamics of education policy and drive sustainable change in target schools (Hariyati et al., 2023). In addition, supervisors still face various obstacles, such as high workloads, time constraints, and variations in the reflective abilities of principals and teachers. Some school principals have shown resistance to change, while teachers still face obstacles in administration, the use of learning technology, and adaptation to the Independent Curriculum. To overcome these challenges, supervisors apply adaptive strategies in the form of systematic time management, coordination between supervisors, and a more personal and humane communication approach.

These efforts show the adaptive ability of supervisors to adjust to new policies and increase the effectiveness of supervision. Supervisors not only function as policy implementers, but also educational transformation agents that encourage sustainable school capacity strengthening. This approach also reflects the application of the principles of instructional leadership and transformational leadership in the context of educational supervision in the era of the Independent Curriculum.

4. Conclusion

This study shows that there has been a significant transformation in the role of school supervisors after the issuance of GTK Regulation Number 4831/B/HK.03.01/2023, from the function of inspecting supervision to assisting and facilitating the development of education quality. Supervisors now act as coaches, mentors, and facilitators for school principals in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, focusing on reflection, collaboration, and strengthening the capacity of principals and teachers.

However, this transformation process faces a number of obstacles, such as time constraints, differences in the level of readiness of principals and teachers, and adaptation to new systems and instruments. To overcome these constraints, supervisors implement various adaptive efforts, including effective time management, collaboration between supervisors, reflective and personal approaches, as well as data-based assistance and contextual needs. Overall, the change in the role of supervisors reflects a paradigm shift in educational supervision towards a more participatory and humanist approach, which is oriented towards school empowerment and sustainable improvement of the quality of education.

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