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The Implementation Of Curriculum Supervision By The Education And Culture Office Of Elementary Schools In Subang Regency

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ABSTRACT

Curriculum supervision by the education office is crucial for keeping curriculum implementation in elementary schools consistent with its planning, particularly during the transition to the Merdeka Curriculum. However, studies of supervision conducted by the Education and Culture Office as an external agency at the regency level remain limited. This study aims to describe the planning, implementation, evaluation and follow-up, and obstacles of curriculum supervision by the Education and Culture Office of Subang Regency in elementary schools. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed, with data collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation studies involving supervisors, school principals, and office staff. The data were analyzed using the interactive model of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, and their trustworthiness was examined through source and technique triangulation. The results show that supervision is planned annually through an Annual Supervision Work Plan (RKPT), implemented through at least four school visits per year, individual supervision, and the Teacher Working Group (KKG) and Principals' Working Conference (MKKS) forums, and followed up through written recommendations, technical coaching, and a digital reporting system. Four main obstacles were identified: an imbalanced supervisor-to-school ratio, limited budget and operational facilities, varied competence of principals and teachers, and the replication of curriculum documents across schools. The study concludes that effective supervision depends not only on administrative completeness but also on adequate resources, continuous coaching, and a collaborative approach that is sensitive to the conditions of each school. The study contributes an empirical account of curriculum supervision by a regency-level Education and Culture Office and recommends differentiated supervision planning, redistribution of supervisors with adequate operational

funding, structured coaching for principals and teachers, and contextual curriculum assistance.

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Introduction

Basic education constitutes the main foundation of the national education system, as it is at this level that learners are equipped with fundamental cognitive, affective, and psychomotor abilities that underpin subsequent stages of education. The success of basic education is largely determined by the quality of the curriculum implemented, since the curriculum serves as a guideline for determining the objectives, content, methods, and evaluation of learning (Yusniarti & Herosian, 2023). The curriculum functions not merely as an administrative document but also as a direction for the teaching-learning process so that it remains aligned with national education goals, contemporary developments, and learners' needs. Consequently, curriculum implementation needs to be optimally supervised so that educational goals can be achieved effectively, particularly during the transition toward the Merdeka Curriculum, which demands the readiness of teachers, school principals, supervisors, and the Education and Culture Office (Isa et al., 2022).

Supervision of curriculum implementation is an effort to maintain consistency between planning and the actual delivery of learning in schools. Kurniyanti et al. (2024) emphasize that academic supervision plays an important role in strengthening a culture of quality within the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools, Isniasih et al. (2026), through a systematic literature review, found that academic supervision contributes to improving teacher competence and learning effectiveness. Through supervision, the Education and Culture Office is able to monitor curriculum implementation, identify obstacles faced by schools, and provide guidance and follow-up on the various problems encountered. Effective supervision has become an urgent necessity because curriculum implementation in the field continues to face numerous challenges, such as teachers' limited understanding of the new curriculum (Widiansyah et al., 2025), inadequate facilities and infrastructure, and weak coordination among education stakeholders.

Subang Regency, as one of the regencies in West Java Province, exhibits varied educational conditions. Differences in social, economic, and resource conditions have given rise to disparities between regions, consistent with the findings of Sucipto et al. (2026) that the education gap between urban and rural areas in Indonesia is still influenced by infrastructure limitations, the quality of teaching staff, and the equitable distribution of resources. Some elementary schools in

Subang Regency possess adequate facilities and qualified teaching staff, whereas others still face limitations in learning facilities. This condition becomes more complex with changes in curriculum policy, such as the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, which requires the readiness of all education stakeholders to adjust the learning process in elementary schools.

Numerous prior studies have examined the role of supervisors and academic supervision in curriculum implementation. Langie (2023) demonstrated that the role of school supervisors from the Education Office significantly affects the improvement of education quality in elementary schools through the consistent performance of academic and managerial supervisory duties. Nevertheless, most of these studies have focused on internal supervision conducted by school principals or on learning evaluation at the school-unit level, while studies specifically examining the implementation of curriculum supervision by the Education and Culture Office as an external agency at the regency level remain limited. Thus, a research gap exists in understanding how the Education and Culture Office plans, implements, identifies obstacles in, and follows up on the results of curriculum supervision in elementary schools, particularly in Subang Regency, which is characterized by diverse educational conditions between urban and rural areas.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to: (1) describe the planning of curriculum supervision by the Education and Culture Office of Subang Regency; (2) describe the implementation of curriculum supervision in elementary schools; (3) describe the evaluation and follow-up actions taken by the Education and Culture Office based on the results of curriculum supervision; and (4) identify the obstacles encountered in curriculum supervision. This study employs a qualitative method with a descriptive approach (Sugiyono, 2016) to portray the implementation of curriculum supervision, with data obtained through interviews and observations of parties involved in curriculum supervision in elementary schools. The findings are expected to provide an academic contribution to the development of studies on educational supervision at the regional level, as well as to serve as input for the Education and Culture Office of Subang Regency in improving the effectiveness of curriculum implementation supervision in elementary schools, so that the quality of learning can be continuously enhanced.

Method

This study employs a qualitative type of research with a descriptive approach in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of curriculum supervision by the Education and Culture Office of Subang Regency, as this approach is considered appropriate for uncovering the meaning, process, and context of a social phenomenon naturally, without manipulating variables (Moleong, 2009). A qualitative approach was also chosen because it allows the researcher to understand participants' perspectives on educational supervision practices as they themselves experience them (Bogdan & Biklen, 1997). The data used consist of primary data obtained directly from informants in the field and secondary data in the form of policy documents, supervision reports, and archives related to curriculum implementation in elementary schools (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Data were collected through three techniques, namely in-depth interviews with supervisors, school principals, and staff of the Education and Culture Office, direct observation of supervisory activities in the field, and documentation studies of supervision instruments and reports (Yin, 2018). The collected data were then analyzed using an interactive analysis model comprising data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification, carried out continuously until the data reached

a point of saturation (Miles et al., 2013). The trustworthiness of the data was examined through source and technique triangulation to ensure the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the research findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1988), so that the resulting conclusions accurately depict the planning, implementation, evaluation, follow-up actions, and obstacles of curriculum supervision in elementary schools in Subang Regency (Denzin & Lincoln, 1996).

Results and Discussion

1. Planning of Curriculum Supervision by the Education and Culture Office of Elementary Schools in Subang Regency

Curriculum supervision is an inseparable part of educational management that functions to maintain alignment among the planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning. Supervision planning constitutes a crucial stage because it determines the direction, strategy, and priorities of supervision to be carried out throughout the academic year. Utari (2023) describes supervision planning as a staged process consisting of compiling the program, scheduling its implementation, and preparing supervision instruments. Halmaida et al. (2022) add that a supervision program becomes more relevant when it is built on the problems identified in the previous year's supervision results.

Interviews with the Head of the Elementary School Development Division revealed that curriculum supervision planning in Subang Regency is prepared annually with reference to the academic calendar, central policy directives, and the results of the previous year's supervision evaluation. At the beginning of the academic year, the Elementary School Development Division coordinates with the Curriculum Section and school supervisors to draw up an Annual Supervision Work Plan (*Rencana Kerja Pengawasan Tahunan*, RKPT) as a technical guideline for conducting both academic and managerial supervision. The Head of the Curriculum Section added that policies from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology serve as the primary foundation for preparing the RKPT, which is subsequently translated into regional programs through socialization and coordination with schools. This step matters because teachers' understanding of the Merdeka Curriculum remains a recurring challenge in primary schools, so policymakers need to communicate effectively with teachers (Yunitasari et al., 2023).

Supervision planning also takes into account the results of the previous year's supervision evaluation; schools that were still weak in preparing curriculum documents or implementing learning are made a coaching priority for the following year based on school quality indicators, regulatory changes, human resource readiness, and the availability of supporting facilities. The multilevel coordination among the Elementary School Development Division as the main coordinator, the Curriculum Section as the technical policy executor, and school supervisors as field-level implementers of supervision indicates a systematic and data-driven planning mechanism. This mechanism is in line with the developmental view of supervision (Glickman et al., 2001), which treats supervision as a deliberate and structured process that is adjusted to the developmental needs of teachers.

Nevertheless, field findings indicate that the diversity of school characteristics in Subang Regency has not been fully accommodated in determining supervision priorities. Schools in remote areas with limited human resources and facilities do not always receive special attention within the RKPT. A comparable situation was reported in Bengkayang Regency, where 21 supervisors were responsible for 301 schools and an information system was developed so that supervision could still reach schools that were difficult to access (Sanoto et al., 2022). This condition points to the need for a more flexible and differentiated planning approach, for example through special coaching schedules or the use of online supervision for hard-to-reach schools, so that curriculum supervision planning is genuinely responsive to the needs of each educational unit.

2. Implementation of Curriculum Supervision by the Education and Culture Office of Elementary Schools in Subang Regency

The implementation of curriculum supervision represents the operational stage of the educational supervision cycle, emphasizing how planned strategies are concretely applied in schools. Supervision functions not merely as an administrative control mechanism but also as a form of professional coaching for teachers and principals (Sullivan & Glanz, 2009).

Interviews with elementary school supervisors indicate that the implementation of supervision in Subang Regency is carried out in a structured and tiered manner in accordance with the prepared RKPT. Each supervisor is assigned a coverage area comprising several elementary schools and is required to conduct at least four visits per year, adjusted to the stage of curriculum implementation in each school, ranging from the preparation of learning tools to the year-end evaluation. The Head of the Curriculum Section explained that supervisors not only check the completeness of documents such as lesson plans, teaching modules, and assessment analyses, but also provide direct feedback on the quality of the teaching-learning process, for instance by helping teachers translate learning outcomes into operational indicators. This combination of document review, school visits, and direct feedback is comparable to the individual techniques of class visits, observation, and individual meetings described by Suriati et al. (2022).

In addition to individual supervision, implementation is also carried out through the Teacher Working Group (*Kelompok Kerja Guru*, KKG) and the Principals' Working Conference (*Musyawarah Kerja Kepala Sekolah*, MKKS), in which supervisors act as facilitators in disseminating the latest curriculum policies while discussing implementation strategies. Kusumawati (2023), in a study of kindergarten supervisors, likewise reports the use of both individual and group techniques, including coaching for teachers who have not yet met competency standards. This finding is consistent with Saleh et al. (2021), who found that academic supervision and participation in the Teacher Working Group each made a positive and significant contribution to the pedagogical competence of elementary school teachers. The collaborative character of these activities is also reflected in the supervision model developed by Prasetia et al. (2022), which stresses listening and responding skills in the relationship between supervisors and teachers. In addition, Singerin (2021) showed that collaboration-based academic supervision with a peer evaluation approach contributed to improving teachers' pedagogical competence.

Cross-unit coordination is also an important aspect of supervision implementation. Field supervision results are routinely reported and discussed in monthly meetings attended by supervisors, section heads, and curriculum staff as a formative monitoring forum used to formulate follow-up actions and improvement recommendations. Nevertheless, supervisors acknowledge constraints such as limited time and the wide coverage area, leaving a number of schools not yet reached by intensive supervision. As an adaptive response, supervisors in Subang have begun applying technology-based supervision models, such as online reporting and coaching through Google Forms and WhatsApp groups. Purwati and Hakim (2021) found that Google Forms made it easier to review teachers' teaching files, Rupiah (2021) reported that school supervisors combined tools such as WhatsApp, Zoom, and Google Forms but noted that signal availability in rural areas remains a prerequisite. Digital media therefore appear to be most useful when they extend the reach of supervision while complementing, rather than replacing, collaborative coaching between supervisors and teachers.

3. Evaluation and Follow-Up of Curriculum Supervision Results by the Education and Culture Office of Elementary Schools in Subang Regency

Follow-up on supervision results is an essential element within the framework of educational supervision because it ensures that recommendations arising from the supervision process are genuinely implemented by educational units. Without systematically designed follow-up, supervisory activities tend to stop at the evaluation stage alone and fail to drive real change in learning practices (Zepeda, 2003).

Interviews with the Head of the Elementary School Development Division and supervisors indicate that once supervision results are compiled, the Education and Culture Office analyzes supervisors' reports to identify areas still weak in curriculum implementation, such as inconsistencies between lesson planning and classroom implementation, and teachers' limited understanding of changes to the curriculum structure. Based on these findings, the Development Division follows up through technical coaching and continuous in-service training for teachers and principals, focused on developing teaching tools in line with recent policies such as the Merdeka Curriculum and the Pancasila Student Profile. This pattern is consistent with Hou (2023), who describes follow-up to academic supervision as coaching, training, and personal dialogue carried out until teachers meet the specified performance standards.

Every supervision result is also documented in a formal written recommendation containing notes on findings, improvement suggestions, and a follow-up deadline, the implementation of which is subsequently monitored by the supervisor during the next visit. This pattern confirms that supervision does not end at the observation stage but continues through coaching and verification of improvements, consistent with Sullivan and Glanz's (2009) view that the success of supervision depends heavily on the consistent provision of feedback and continued monitoring of how recommendations are implemented by teachers and principals.

As an effort to strengthen the effectiveness of follow-up, the Education and Culture Office of Subang Regency has begun developing a digital reporting system that allows

supervisors to upload supervision results directly for verification by the Curriculum Section. This effort is important because a study of teacher professional development reforms in Indonesia identified the absence of feedback and follow-up as one of the key factors behind stakeholders' dissatisfaction (Revina et al., 2023). Although the follow-up pattern in Subang is already fairly systematic in that it involves multiple parties, challenges such as supervisors' limited time for follow-up visits and incomplete follow-up documentation in a number of schools still require attention so that the constructive supervision cycle can operate optimally. Incomplete documentation of supervision has likewise been reported in Bengkayang Regency (Sanoto et al., 2022).

4. Obstacles in Curriculum Supervision by the Education and Culture Office of Elementary Schools in Subang Regency

The effectiveness of curriculum supervision depends heavily on institutional capacity, supervisor competence, and adequate budgetary and facility support. In the Malaysian context, Hoque et al. (2020) note that school supervision remains underdeveloped and receives limited attention from school management. Structural constraints of a different kind, namely a shortage of supervisors and limited operational funding, have been documented in Indonesian regencies with wide geographic coverage (Sanoto et al., 2022).

Interviews with the Head of the Elementary School Development Division, the Head of the Curriculum Section, elementary school supervisors, and Curriculum Section staff identified four main obstacles in the implementation of curriculum supervision in Subang Regency, as summarized in Table 1. First, an imbalanced ratio of supervisors to their working areas. Ideally, one supervisor is responsible for one sub-district, but in Subang Regency a number of supervisors must instead cover two sub-districts at once due to a shortage of personnel. This situation is compounded by the fact that the recruitment of new supervisors falls entirely under the authority of the central government, meaning the Education and Culture Office of Subang Regency cannot independently add or redistribute supervisors according to field needs. Supervisors reported feeling burdened by this dual coverage, as their workload increased sharply while the time and energy available to them did not, leaving some schools with only one visit per year or, in some cases, only administrative supervision through online document submission. Second, limited budget and operational facilities, particularly for visits to mountainous and remote areas that require higher transportation costs, causing some supervisory activities to shift to online or collective sub-district-level forums. Murniati et al. (2019) similarly identified inadequate facilities and financing as obstacles to Teacher Working Group activities in Aceh Province.

Third, variation in the competence of principals and teachers in understanding the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, particularly among newly appointed principals or those serving in an acting capacity, who lack experience in preparing school curriculum documents in accordance with the latest guidelines. Mobonggi et al. (2024) found that principals' managerial ability was significantly related to how effectively educators implemented the independent curriculum, and Yusniarti and Herosian (2023) identified teachers' comprehension and preparedness as major challenges in primary

schools. Effendi and Bumbungan (2023) also argue that weak academic supervision by principals limits the empowerment of teachers' teaching potential. Fourth, a practice of replicating curriculum documents across schools without adaptation to each school's context was identified, indicating that curriculum document preparation has not fully reflected the actual needs and characteristics of learners. This contrasts with the view that the school operational curriculum should be designed according to the uniqueness of each school and its supporting facilities, with intensive assistance (Muckromin et al., 2023).

Table 1. Main Obstacles in the Supervision of Curriculum Implementation by the Education and Culture Office of Subang Regency

No.	Obstacle	Field findings	Consequence for supervision
1	Imbalanced ratio of supervisors to working areas	Ideally one supervisor covers one sub-district, but several supervisors must cover two sub-districts because of a personnel shortage. Recruitment of supervisors is under central government authority, so the Office cannot add or redistribute supervisors independently.	Sharply increased workload; some schools receive only one visit per year or only administrative supervision through online document submission.
2	Limited budget and operational facilities	Visits to mountainous and remote areas require higher transportation costs.	Some supervisory activities shift to online or collective sub-district-level forums.
3	Variation in principals' and teachers' competence in the Merdeka Curriculum	Newly appointed principals and principals serving in an acting capacity lack experience in preparing school curriculum documents according to the latest guidelines.	Curriculum documents are not always prepared in accordance with current guidelines.
4	Replication of curriculum documents across schools	Curriculum documents are copied between schools without adaptation to each school's context.	Documents do not fully reflect the actual needs and characteristics of learners.

Source: Interviews with the Head of the Elementary School Development Division, the Head of the Curriculum Section, elementary school supervisors, and Curriculum Section staff.

These obstacles reveal a gap between ideal policy and actual implementation capacity at the regional level. The imbalanced ratio of supervisors to schools causes supervision to lean toward an administrative orientation, which is in line with the OECD (2020) analysis of school-level policies that treats the human, financial, and time resources allocated to

teaching and learning as key conditions for effective schools. Meanwhile, reliance on remote supervision due to budget constraints also points to a digital infrastructure gap between regions. Fatimah et al. (2023) note that growing internet access in Indonesia has not been matched by digital capability and that geographic conditions influence the divide, while Kibirige (2023) documents similar infrastructure and connectivity barriers for primary school teachers in Uganda. Antoninis et al. (2023) accordingly recommend that technology be introduced on the basis of evidence that it is appropriate, equitable, scalable, and sustainable, and that it complement face-to-face interaction with teachers, a condition that is particularly relevant for areas with limited infrastructure such as much of Subang Regency.

Strengthening curriculum supervision in Subang Regency therefore requires strategic measures, including adding and redistributing supervisors, providing adequate operational budget support, systematically improving the competence of principals and teachers, and offering intensive assistance in preparing curricula that are contextual to the needs of each school.

Overall, the findings indicate that curriculum supervision by the Education and Culture Office of Subang Regency has proceeded through relatively systematic stages of planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up involving cross-unit coordination. Nevertheless, the success of this supervision remains constrained by structural limitations, including a disproportionate supervisor-to-school ratio, budget constraints, gaps in human resource competence, and curriculum documentation practices that are not yet fully contextual. These findings confirm that the success of curriculum supervision is determined not only by the completeness of administrative procedures but also by the continuity of coaching, a collaborative approach, and sensitivity to the actual conditions of each educational unit. Berhanu (2024) similarly showed that teachers' attitudes toward supervision mediate the relationship between supervisory practice and job performance, underscoring that the quality of supervisory practice matters as much as its administrative completeness.

Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion presented above, it can be concluded that curriculum supervision by the Education and Culture Office of Subang Regency in elementary schools has proceeded through relatively systematic stages of planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up, although it is still constrained by several obstacles. First, supervision planning is prepared annually through an Annual Supervision Work Plan (RKPT) involving the Elementary School Development Division, the Curriculum Section, and school supervisors, with reference to the academic calendar, central policy, and the results of the previous year's evaluation, although the diversity of school characteristics across regions has not been fully accommodated in determining coaching priorities. Second, supervision implementation is carried out in a structured and tiered manner through school visits conducted at least four times a year, individual supervision, the Teacher Working Group (KKG) and Principals' Working Conference (MKKS) forums, and the use of digital technology as an adaptive innovation to address supervisors' limited

reach. Third, follow-up on supervision results is carried out through written recommendations, technical coaching and continuous training, and monitoring during subsequent visits, an approach increasingly reinforced by a digital reporting system, although supervisors' limited time and incomplete follow-up documentation remain challenges. Fourth, curriculum supervision in Subang Regency still faces four main obstacles, namely an imbalanced ratio of supervisors to their working areas resulting from a recruitment mechanism entirely under central government authority, limited budget and operational facilities, variation in the competence of principals and teachers, and the practice of replicating curriculum documents across schools.

Overall, these findings answer the research objectives while confirming that the effectiveness of curriculum supervision is determined not only by the completeness of administrative procedures but also by the adequacy of resources, the continuity of coaching, and a collaborative approach that is sensitive to the actual conditions of each school.

The main contribution of this study lies in three aspects. Empirically, it provides a detailed account of curriculum supervision carried out by a regency-level Education and Culture Office as an external agency, a level that has received far less attention than supervision by school principals. Conceptually, it shows that the Office follows a complete cycle of planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up, yet the effectiveness of that cycle is shaped less by administrative completeness than by structural conditions beyond the schools, namely the allocation of supervisors under central recruitment, operational funding, and the competence of principals. Practically, it pinpoints where the cycle weakens: supervision priorities that are not differentiated for remote schools, visits that fall below the planned frequency, and curriculum documents replicated without contextual adaptation. These points give the Office a concrete basis for targeted improvement.

Based on these findings, five practical recommendations are proposed for improving curriculum supervision in elementary schools. First, the Education and Culture Office should revise the RKPT so that supervision priorities are differentiated, for example by classifying schools according to accessibility, the experience of the principal, and previous supervision results, and by scheduling more intensive coaching for remote and low-capacity schools. Second, because the recruitment of supervisors is under central authority, the Office should submit data on the supervisor-to-school ratio to the provincial and central governments to propose additional supervisors, while redistributing coverage areas internally according to workload and travel distance rather than by sub-district alone. Third, the Office should allocate transport and operational funds for visits to mountainous and remote areas so that the minimum of four visits per year is maintained, and should use online supervision through Google Forms and WhatsApp groups as a complement to, not a replacement for, face-to-face coaching, particularly where connectivity allows. Fourth, the Office should provide structured and continuous coaching for newly appointed and acting principals and for teachers, such as mentoring by experienced principals and KKG and MKKS sessions focused on preparing school curriculum documents. Fifth, supervisors should review curriculum documents for contextual adaptation, using a checklist that asks

schools to show how learner characteristics, local resources, and facilities are reflected, and should require follow-up documentation to be completed in the digital reporting system before the next round of visits.

As a qualitative study in a single regency, its findings are transferable mainly to contexts with comparable characteristics. Future research is recommended to quantitatively examine the effect of the supervisor-to-school ratio on the effectiveness of Merdeka Curriculum implementation across regencies with varying geographic characteristics, and to evaluate whether the differentiated and hybrid supervision approaches proposed here improve the quality of curriculum implementation in schools.

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