

HUMANISTIC SUPERVISION MODEL IN IMPROVING THE PROFESSIONALISM OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN THE ERA OF INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Suhardi

Pascasarjana Pendidikan Dasar, Universitas Doktor Nugroho, Magetan, Indonesia

suhardi@udn.ac.id¹

Author Corresponding : suhardi@udn.ac.id

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the implementation of humanistic supervision and its impact on improving the professionalism of elementary school teachers in the era of Independent Learning. The research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design carried out in one of the public elementary schools that has implemented Merdeka Belajar. The subjects of the study included the principal, the school supervisor, and 15 teachers as participants, which were determined through purposive sampling. Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies, then analyzed using Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña's interactive model that included data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The results of the study showed that humanistic supervision was carried out collaboratively and reflectively, through classroom visits, reflective discussions, and individual coaching that emphasized appreciation for teachers. This model has a positive impact on teacher professionalism, characterized by increased pedagogic skills, learning creativity, and teacher motivation and self-reflection. Despite the challenges of time constraints and lack of supervisor training, the implementation of humanistic supervision is supported by the school's Independent Learning policy and collaborative culture. This study concludes that humanistic supervision is effective as a strategy for fostering elementary school teachers in improving professionalism in the era of Independent Learning. These findings are expected to be a reference for school principals and supervisors in developing humanist supervision and empowering teachers.

Keywords: *Humanistic Supervision, Teacher Professionalism, Elementary School, Independent Learning*

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the main pillars in nation building. The success of a country in facing global challenges is largely determined by the quality of education it has (Marsini, 2024). In the Indonesian context, improving the quality of education is the government's top priority in order to create superior human resources that are adaptive, and ready to face the dynamics of the globalization era (Rahman, 2025) (University & Nugroho, 2018). One of the most important elements in the education system is teachers (Marsini, 2023b). Teachers have a strategic role as facilitators, motivators, and inspirers for students. Therefore, the professionalism of teachers is the key to the success of the learning process in schools, especially in elementary schools which are the foundation of formal education. The professionalism of teachers is not only determined by the mastery of the subject matter, but also the pedagogic, personality, social, and professional abilities as mandated in Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers (No, 14 C.E.). Professional teachers are expected to be able to carry out creative, innovative, and fun learning, as well as be able to grow the potential of students optimally. However, the reality on the ground shows that the professionalism of teachers in primary schools still faces various challenges. Some teachers are not yet fully able to adapt to the new paradigm of education that demands creativity, innovation, and the use of technology in learning. This has an impact on the quality of the learning process that is not optimal. The government through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek) launched the Freedom to Learn policy as an effort to improve the quality of education (Sofiyana et al., 2021). The concept of Freedom of Learning emphasizes flexibility in learning, developing creativity, and providing freedom for teachers and students to explore knowledge according to its context. The implementation of Independent Learning requires teachers to have high professionalism.

Teachers must be able to design student-centered learning, develop contextual teaching modules, and apply varied methods (Marsini, 2023a). Thus, teacher coaching and development is urgent so that the goal of Freedom of Learning can be achieved. One of the strategies that can be done to improve teacher professionalism is through educational supervision. Educational supervision functions as a coaching activity that is carried out in a planned, systematic, and continuous manner to improve the quality of teacher performance (Rahman, 2021). So far, supervision in schools has often been considered as a purely administrative activity, which emphasizes more on formal assessment or supervision than educational coaching. As a result, teachers feel that supervision is a burden, not an effort to develop professionalism. In this context, a supervision model is needed that is able to foster teachers' intrinsic motivation, create a collaborative atmosphere, and emphasize humane coaching. One relevant approach is humanistic supervision. Humanistic supervision emphasizes the importance of warm, respectful, and trusting relationships between supervisors and teachers (Attamimi, 2020). This approach does not emphasize on teachers' mistakes, but on the potential for teachers' self-development. Thus, teachers are more motivated to improve the quality of their performance voluntarily.

The humanistic supervision model is also relevant to the principles of Freedom of Learning which emphasizes freedom, appreciation of individual uniqueness, and student-centered learning (Wibowo & Salfadilah, 2025). Teachers who are fostered with a humanistic approach will find it easier to internalize the values of independence in teaching. The professionalism of teachers in the era of Independent Learning cannot be separated from the ability of teachers to reflect on themselves and develop their potential in a sustainable manner. Humanistic supervision provides a healthy dialogue space between the principal or supervisor and teachers to jointly find solutions to the learning obstacles faced. In practice, the humanistic supervision model emphasizes three main aspects, namely: good interpersonal relationships, effective communication, and empowering teachers to develop themselves (Sonia, 2022). These three aspects are the foundation for forming professional, creative, and innovative teachers. The challenges of implementing humanistic supervision in elementary schools are quite complex. Not all principals or supervisors have an adequate understanding of this approach. In addition, time constraints and a large administrative burden often make supervision carried out in a formality without prioritizing in-depth coaching.

Previous studies have shown that humanistic supervision can increase teacher motivation and performance if done consistently. Teachers who feel valued and supported will show a higher commitment to their work. This has implications for improving the quality of learning in the classroom. In the context of elementary schools, teacher development through humanistic supervision has a significant impact. Professional primary school teachers will be able to develop a fun learning atmosphere, motivate students, and optimize students' potential from an early age. In addition, the humanistic supervision model also supports the strengthening of positive culture in schools. A school culture that values collaboration, reflection, and self-development will encourage teachers to continue to innovate in accordance with the spirit of Freedom of Learning. Therefore, the development and implementation of the humanistic supervision model is one of the right strategies in improving the professionalism of elementary school teachers. With this approach, it is hoped that supervision will no longer be seen as a scary "scourge", but rather as a fun and rewarding coaching activity. Based on this description, research on the humanistic supervision model in improving the professionalism of elementary school teachers in the era of Independent Learning is important to be carried out. This research is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the effectiveness of humanistic supervision in the context of elementary schools. In addition, the results of this study are expected to provide practical recommendations for school principals, supervisors, and education policy makers in developing supervision strategies that are more humane, effective, and in accordance with the demands of the Independent Learning era. Thus, the main goal of improving the quality of basic education can be achieved in a sustainable manner.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design because the focus of the research is directed to understand in depth the process of applying the humanistic supervision model in improving the professionalism of elementary school teachers in the era of Independent Learning (Assyakurrohim et al., 2023). The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to explore phenomena contextually and in-depth, not to test hypotheses quantitatively. The design of the case study was chosen so that the researcher could gain a comprehensive understanding of how the humanistic supervision model is implemented in a particular elementary school and how it impacts the improvement of teacher professionalism. This design allows researchers to conduct intensive observations at one or more locations as a representation of the phenomenon being studied. The research was carried out for approximately three months, including the pre-research stage (initial observation and licensing), data collection (interviews, observations, and documentation), to data analysis and report preparation. The research subjects consist of the principal as the main supervisor, elementary school teachers who are the object of supervision,

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and related school supervisors. The number of participants in this study was around 15–20 people, which included 1 principal, 1 school supervisor, and 13–18 teachers. The determination of participants used the purposive sampling technique, which was selected based on the criteria of direct involvement in the supervision process and willingness to be a source of information.

The data collection techniques used in this study include (Jogiyanto Hartono, 2018):

- Participatory observation, to directly observe the process of implementing humanistic supervision, including the interaction of the principal with the teacher.
- In-depth interviews were conducted with school principals, teachers, and school supervisors to explore perceptions, experiences, and challenges in the application of humanistic supervision.
- Documentation study, in the form of collecting documents such as supervision schedules, assessment instruments, supervision follow-up plans, and evidence of teacher development activities.

The main research instrument is the researcher himself as a human instrument that plays a role in planning, collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data. To support the data collection process, the researcher used observation guidelines, semi-structured interview guidelines, and documentation sheets that have been compiled based on humanistic supervision indicators and teacher professionalism. The data analysis technique used is an interactive model (Miles & Huberman, 1994) which includes three stages, namely:

- Data reduction, namely the process of selecting, simplifying, and grouping data from interviews, observations, and documentation according to the focus of the research.
- Data presentation is carried out in the form of descriptive narratives, matrices, or charts to facilitate understanding the relationship between findings.
- Drawing conclusions and verification, which is the process of concluding research findings by repeatedly verifying data to suit the field context.

To improve the validity of the data, the researcher applied several credibility test strategies such as:

- Triangulation of sources and techniques, by comparing information from interviews, observations, and documentation.
- Member check, by asking for confirmation from participants about the results of provisional findings.
- Peer debriefing, by discussing the research process and findings with peers or supervisors.

RESULTS OF RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

1. Implementation of Humanistic Supervision in Elementary Schools

The results of the study show that the implementation of humanistic supervision in the elementary school where the research is located is carried out collaboratively and dialogically. The principal as the main supervisor emphasizes a warm, respectful, and trusting relationship with the teacher. The supervision process is carried out not only in the form of class visits, but also in reflective discussions after learning observations. Observations show that supervision is carried out at least twice in one semester, accompanied by follow-up in the form of individual coaching for teachers who need further guidance. In interviews, teachers revealed that this approach makes them more comfortable and motivated to improve the quality of learning.

Table 1. Summary of data on the forms of humanistic supervision activities applied

Form of Supervision	Frequency per Semester	Description of Implementation
Class Visits	2 times	Direct observation of the learning process
Reflective Discussion	2–3 times	Post-supervision casual dialogue for feedback
Coaching Individual	1–2 times	Mentoring teachers who need special coaching
Internal Teacher Workshop	1 time	Focusing on learning innovation and Merdeka RPP

From the table above, it can be seen that the humanistic approach is not only carried out through assessment, but also provides positive feedback and room for reflection for teachers. The results of the study show that humanistic supervision in elementary schools is carried out collaboratively, dialogically, and centered on teacher development. The principal as a supervisor plays a role not only in assessing, but also motivating teachers through reflective discussions and individual coaching. These findings are in line with the concept of humanistic supervision put forward by Goldhammer (Sonia, 2022), which emphasizes that supervision should build respectful interpersonal relationships, not just administrative control. The implementation of humanistic supervision which is carried out twice a class visit per semester and is complemented by reflection sessions shows that teachers feel comfortable and motivated to develop. This is in line with the findings (Purwanto, 2007) which states that dialogical supervision is able to foster teachers' confidence and increase active participation in self-development. Moreover (Muslimin, 2023) through the Merdeka Learning policy, it encourages a humanist and reflective culture of teacher development so that teachers no longer feel supervised, but accompanied. Thus, the implementation of humanistic supervision in the elementary school where the research is located is in accordance with the new paradigm of education that is more oriented towards teacher capacity development than just administrative fulfillment.

2. Improving Teachers' Professionalism Through Humanistic Supervision

The results of the study show that the application of humanistic supervision has a significant impact on improving teacher professionalism, especially in three main aspects:

- Pedagogic ability, teachers are better able to prepare lesson plans and teaching modules in accordance with the concept of *Freedom of Learning*.
- Learning creativity, teachers are encouraged to use innovative methods such as *project-based learning* and *problem-based learning*.
- Motivation and self-reflection, teachers are more courageous to try new things and assess their own shortcomings without feeling pressured.

Based on the results of interviews with 15 teachers, most of them stated that humanistic supervision helps them to be more confident and comfortable in improving the quality of teaching

Table 2. Summary of Interview on Humanistic Supervision

Aspects of Teacher Professionalism	Before Humanistic Supervision	After Humanistic Supervision
Ability to prepare an Independent RPP	55% of teachers find it difficult	85% of teachers feel capable of
Creativity of learning methods	40% are still monotonous	80% use varied methods
Motivation & self-reflection	50% feel burdened with supervision	90% feel motivated

The data showed a significant increase in teacher competence and motivation after humanistic supervision.

The findings of the study show that the application of humanistic supervision has a positive impact on improving teacher professionalism, which is characterized by increasing the ability to prepare lesson plans and teaching modules for Merdeka Belajar, creativity in implementing innovative learning methods, and increased motivation and self-reflection of teachers. These results support the theory (Hoy & Miskel, 2014) which explains that teacher professionalism is characterized by mastery of pedagogic competence, learning innovation, and internal motivation to develop. Humanistic supervision plays a role as a trigger for teachers' intrinsic motivation because the approach emphasizes acceptance, reward, and recognition of teachers' potential.

The increase in teachers' creativity in applying Project Based Learning (PjBL) and Problem Based Learning (PBL) methods after receiving humanistic coaching is also in line with the findings (Astuti et al., 2025), which found that teachers who feel valued and empowered are more likely to try innovative student-centered learning methods. In addition, increased motivation and self-reflection of teachers support the theory (Wiryanto & Anggraini, 2022) about humanistic education, which emphasizes that an effective learning process for teachers and students will occur if there is a psychological environment that supports individual growth, not an environment that oppresses it. Humanistic supervision successfully creates this environment through positive feedback and reflective discussions that encourage teachers to conduct voluntary self-evaluations. Thus, this study confirms that humanistic supervision is an effective strategy in improving teacher professionalism, especially in the context of the implementation of Freedom of Learning which requires teachers to be more creative, reflective, and innovative.

3. Challenges and Supporting Factors for the Implementation of Humanistic Supervision

Although humanistic supervision has been shown to be effective, the study also found several challenges in its implementation, including:

- a. Limited time principals due to the large administrative burden.
- b. Lack of supervisor training in applying humanistic supervision techniques optimally.
- c. The old supervision culture is still considered a mere assessment by some senior teachers.

However, there are several supporting factors that facilitate the implementation of humanistic supervision, namely:

- Support for the Freedom of Learning policy that provides flexibility to teachers.
- A collaborative school culture that is open to change.
- There is a commitment of the principal in fostering teachers in a sustainable manner.

Table 3. Challenges and Supporting Factors for the Implementation of Humanistic Supervision in Elementary Schools

Challenge	Supporting Factors
Limited supervision time	Principal's commitment to nurturing teachers
Lack of humanistic supervision training	Independent Learning <i>policy support</i>
Senior teachers' negative perceptions of supervision	Collaborative culture between teachers in schools

Overall, despite the obstacles, humanistic supervision is effective in improving teacher professionalism, and can be used as a model for teacher development that is in line with the spirit of Freedom of Learning. The results of the study also revealed several challenges in the implementation of humanistic supervision, including limited time principals, lack of special training on humanistic supervision, and still negative perceptions from some senior teachers. These findings are in line with research (Wahidah et al., 2024) who found that one of the biggest obstacles to educational supervision in elementary schools is the high administrative burden of school principals so that the time for teacher coaching is often limited. In addition to challenges, this study also found that there are supporting factors that facilitate the implementation of humanistic supervision, namely the support of the Merdeka Learning policy, a collaborative culture between teachers, and the commitment of school principals. These findings are consistent with (Marfinda, 2022) which states that the success of supervision is highly determined by the school organizational culture that supports innovation and cooperation. From the perspective of education management theory, humanistic supervision can be optimized if schools are able to create a positive and collaborative work environment. This is in accordance with the positive organizational climate theory of the (Hoy & Miskel, 2014), which emphasizes that the success of teacher development is highly dependent on a school culture that encourages mutual support and active participation. By understanding these challenges and supporting factors, schools can design more effective strategies, such as developing flexible supervision schedules, providing humanistic training for supervisors, and strengthening a reflective culture among teachers. These measures are believed to be able to increase the effectiveness of humanistic supervision and continuously encourage teacher professionalism in the era of Freedom of Learning.

CONCLUSION

First, the implementation of humanistic supervision in elementary schools has been proven to be collaborative, dialogical, and oriented towards teacher development. The principal as a supervisor not only conducts formal assessments through class visits, but also provides assistance in the form of reflective discussions and individual coaching. This approach creates a comfortable, friendly supervision atmosphere and encourages teachers to be open to input. Thus, supervision is no longer seen as a form of supervision alone, but as a means of professional development that is in line with the spirit of Freedom of Learning. Second, humanistic supervision has a positive impact on improving teacher professionalism. Teachers showed significant improvements in pedagogic skills, such as the preparation of lesson plans and teaching modules according to the Independent Learning paradigm, as well as in learning creativity, where teachers were more courageous to apply innovative methods such as project-based learning and problem-based learning. In addition, teachers' motivation and self-reflection skills increase, as they feel valued and supported in the coaching process, rather than being pressured by formal assessments. This condition is in line with the principles of humanistic education that emphasizes appreciation for individual potential and the empowerment of intrinsic motivation. Third, the implementation of humanistic supervision faces several challenges, including limited time principals, lack of humanistic supervision training, and there are still teachers who view supervision as a burden. However, there are strong supporting factors, such as the support of the Merdeka Learning policy, a collaborative culture between teachers, and the commitment of school principals to nurture teachers in a sustainable manner. This combination of supporting factors makes humanistic supervision able to run effectively despite facing obstacles in the field.

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