HOW WELL COMMUNICATION WORKS IN ACADEMIC SUPERVISION?

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Abstract

This study discussed how well communication worked during academic supervision at MAN 2 Tanah Datar. This research used a qualitative phenomenological method. The data were collected by using unstructured interviews, observations, and documentation studies. Then the informants were chosen by snowball sampling technique. The data analysis by Miles and Huberman model techniques was used in this study, which consisted of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. Meanwhile, the researchers used data triangulation techniques to test the validity of the data. The results of the study showed that to create effective communication during academic supervision, supervisors must have communication skills such as: 1) respecting the supervised teachers; 2) having empathy, that means prioritizing to listen, understand and feel what the teacher feels; 3) being audible, that means that the teacher can properly accept the supervisor’s instruction; 4) giving clear instruction to the teachers; and 5) being friendly and wise in supervising the teacher.

Keywords: Education, Effective communication, Supervision.

INTRODUCTION

Not only quality and competence of employee that have significant impact on the success of the organization, but teamwork also has effect on it. Communication is needed to build cooperation to make organization succeed. According to the technical definition, communication can be defined as an activity in which a person sends a message to another through a particular medium, and after receiving the message, the recipient realizes their limits and sends a response back through a medium similar to the sender of the message (Nurrohim & Anatan, 2009). Thus, communication becomes the most important aspect of any assessment, not just education assessment. In terms of education, the communication method used shows the effectiveness level of the communication (Wisman, 2017). Besides, communication is used as a tool for conveying messages from communicators to communicants to achieve a purpose, whether in groups, individuals or organizations. In line with Sepriadi’s opinion (2020), one of the most important aspects of human life is communication, that is useful for exchanging information correctly (Saputra, 2020). Therefore, it is clear that using certain communication techniques will improve communication significantly. Communication among individuals, as well as between individuals and within groups, must be carried out with consideration for effectiveness. The process of sending and receiving information within a complex organization is called as organizational communication. It includes internal communication that occurs within an organization, both downward and upward vertical communication, as well as horizontal communication between individuals within the same level of authority. In addition, the company is involved in external communication with relevant external publics (Zacharias, 2019). This daily contact occurs through various media and has certain function.
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Communication is considered effective when it can achieve the goals or objectives set by the communicator. Organization believes on the importance of effective communication because it helps to increase output, resolve or prevent problems, helps employees to reach their full potential, and creates a friendly and professional work environment (Hartani, Muljani, Lestari, & Sulindra, 2022). It means that efficient communication brings a conducive environment in education as well, from elementary school to senior high school levels, and even to the university level. It happens because the communication is done appropriately to prevent or resolve conflicts, help develop teacher teaching capacity, and create a friendly school environment.

In education supervision, effective communication is also needed because supervision needs good communication between two parties involved. As an example, effective communication that is implemented between school principal as supervisor and teachers as the supervisee indicates that both parties are open to each other (Kristiawan, Yuniarsih, Fitria, & Refika, 2019). Supervisor needs to be open minded to make decisions that can answer the problem and challenges. Consequently, to achieve successful communication and understanding between the school principal and the teachers, and vice versa, the school principal must have effective communication ability during education supervision.

Effective communication skills of the supervisor can increase the enthusiasm of the teachers in teaching process. The high enthusiasm of the teachers can be seen from their discipline in teaching at schools and interaction with fellow teachers. Basically, teachers’ enthusiasm to teach is very important. With the lack of enthusiasm to teach, there will be many obstacles that can lead to the decrease of the learning quality in the classroom (Prihatin, 2019). Therefore, to achieve the goals of the education institutions, the role of school managers is needed to carry out supervision by using effective communication. In contrast, the result of the observation showed that many teachers who were not enthusiastic of their profession as teachers. One of the reasons was the profession as teachers could not fulfill their basic needs. It indicated that besides observing and finding solution to teaching problems, the supervisor must also try to find the problems of their life other than their lacking skills. The school must also pay attention to the teachers’ social conditions that can interfere with teaching activities at school. With supervisor’s good communication, these problems can be resolved by joint efforts.

Supervision is basically done in an active and participatory level to improve the abilities and skills of teachers and school principal with the aim to increase the quality of learning and education (Azas, 2021). To supervise students effectively, the school manager must have the necessary information, skills, and depth of understanding. Consequently, students can participate in the learning process at school and understand the constraints and challenges experienced by teachers. The perspective of school principal will be directed to the advice given the teachers who face difficulties in teaching and learning process. The school principal is responsible to supervise the teachers in order to increase the quality and professionalism of the teachers in teaching and learning process. The supervision is not only done to the teachers, but also students, learning environment, and teaching and learning. Supervision can indeed increase teacher professionalism when teaching. The task of the supervisor during supervision is to coordinate all school activities, increase teacher experience, promote creative learning, provide continuous evaluation, and help teachers become more knowledgeable and creative (Suchyadi, Karmila, & Safitri, 2019). To ensure that efforts to improve teacher professionalism and the quality of education are carried out as well as possible, school supervision must be prioritized.

With the aim to increase and achieve the effective learning process through improved teaching abilities, the supervision is essentially needed. Supervision, in particular, leads to the
improvement of students’ abilities through quality learning activities in the classroom. In addition, Afriansyah stated that to improve the learning quality, the supervisor provides services and support for teachers to help them improve their quality of teaching, also their personal and professional abilities (Afriansyah, 2019).

As a supervisor, the school manager should have effective communication competence. This is very important because it will support the life of an organization that is influenced by the ability to communicate effectively from superiors to school members. Likewise, the organizations in the school environment, school manager and the related parties who have an interest in realizing the school’s vision and mission must have good communication skills. The effective communication among school personnel will help the implementation of academic supervision at schools to improve the quality of education at schools. This statement is supported by Arikunto in Sanders (2017) who stated that the function of supervision is enhancing the quality of education in teaching activities, because there are many changes and constraints in the learning process that greatly affect the quality of learning, which then this activity also serves as a means to develop the quality of teachers and staffs (Rifai, 2022).

Anwariyah and Rifai’i (2022) conducted a survey in research entitled “Effective Communication of the Supervisor in Academic Supervision as an Effort to Improve Teachers’ Performance in MTs Nurul Fata”, and stated that there are five ways to achieve effective communication in the school supervision, namely: 1) give respect of the teacher’s existence, 2) have empathy, that is the ability to understand the situation, 3) be audible, that is the ability of the school principal to be listened to and understood when giving both online and offline instructions through WhatsApp and Zoom, 4) have clarity when conveying messages, and 5) being humble in conveying information and revisions.

Based on the result of observation on October 7, 2022 in MAN 2 Tanah Datar, there were several obstacles during the supervision. The schedule had been set could not be followed properly because of coincidental students’ activities or teacher’s meeting. Thus, the supervision was rescheduled date. The objective of this research was to study the method used by the school principal for effective communication during academic supervision in MAN 2 Tanah Datar.

RESEARCH METHOD
This research was phenomenological research by using qualitative approach. This method is used to study a phenomenon. Qualitative approach aims to study the condition of the nature by using researcher as the main tool, analyzing the data qualitatively, and focusing the intention to the research result as something meaningful (Sugiyono, 2018). The types of research used was phenomenology, means that the research was based on the current phenomena that takes place.

The informants of this research were the school principal, vice principal, and teachers. The researchers utilized snowball sampling method to choose subject of the study, because interview that was used to collect the data must involve some informants to support the argumentation or opinion of the main informants. This method was chosen because snowball sampling begins with selecting wide range of informants so that it can collect many information to achieve the expected context (Yusuf, 2017).

Observation and unstructured interview were used to collect the data. In the observation, the researchers observed the principal, vice principal, and teachers. The unstructured interview functioned to obtain the perspectives of the informants in the discussion on the research topic, without any pressure and worries from the researchers (Hartono, 2018). The data was the analyzed by Miles and Huberman’s method. The method consists of three steps in analyzing the data that are summarizing important data, presenting the data, and drawing conclusion as
well as verifying the data (Sugiyono, 2018). Finally, triangulations as used to test the validity.

DISCUSSION

Procedure of Academic Supervision in MAN 2 Tanah Datar
The procedure of the supervision, as explain by the principal of MAN 2 Tanah Datar, began with planning, actuating, and controlling (evaluation). The results of this supervision would be used by the principal of MAN 2 Tanah Datar to follow up any problems encountered by the teachers so that they could find the solution. The vice principal for curriculum of MAN 2 Tanah Datar also stated that during the implementation of academic supervision the target was particularly the teachers in at MAN 2 Tanah Datar. According to Ulum (2018) in his article entitled “Urgency of Academic Supervision in Schools”, said that academic supervision is the activity of a school leader in the form of monitoring and evaluating the performance of teachers and staff, starting from planning, implementing, and evaluating aimed to assist teachers and staff in achieving educational goals. The importance of academic supervision was that it would be made as one of the materials for evaluating teacher performance, which activities range from planning, actuating, and controlling.

The results of interview with the vice principal for curriculum of the MAN 2 Tanah Datar showed that the implementation of educational supervision began with “planning” that discussed several indicators such as the schedule of supervision, the instruments, the objectives, the methods, the model of implementation and the follow-up process of the supervision results. This stage is in accordance with Istianah's study (2019) entitled “Implementation of Academic Supervision to Increase Teacher Professionalism at SMAN 1 Cikarang Utara and MAN in Bekasi”. The study showed that academic supervision planning identifies schools and various problems in it, where it will describe the types of activities, objectives, time, costs, and tools for supervision (Istianah, 2019). Planning begins with identifying the problem, determining the program, providing an overview of the supervision, determining the purpose of supervision, determining the schedule, calculating the required costs, determining the devices used and the people who will supervise.

Supervision was carried out at MAN 2 Tanah Datar once every semester. Based on the interview with the principal of MAN 2 Tanah Datar, the academic supervision was carried out to 80 teachers at MAN 2 Tanah Datar. This policy was taken based on the suggestion of the school supervisor that the supervision must be carried out at least once every semester with the predetermined schedule, while the unofficial supervisions would be carried out every day in learning activities at school. This process of supervision in MAN 2 Tanah Datar is in line with Yati’s statement (2022) in her paper entitled “The Implementation of Academic Supervision in the Learning Process”. She stated that the implementation of formal supervision is carried out once in a semester, that is in the beginning of the odd semester or even semester. Meanwhile, non-formal supervision is carried out at any time during the learning process. The supervision must follow the schedule that is determined in advance (Maryati, 2022). Supervision can be carried out once in a semester consistently. The supervision is done by the school manager and senior subject teachers who are considered to be more knowledgeable. Thus, the supervision that is carried out once in a semester is official, while non-formal supervision can be carried out any time.

The principal of MAN 2 Tanah Datar stated that due to large number of the teachers that were 80 teachers, he was supported by senior teachers from each subject to do the supervision. He formed several groups for the subject. Each supervisor, who was the senior teacher, would supervise four to five teachers within the same subject in a certain time by following the schedule. In Mathematics, for example, one senior Mathematics teacher would supervise four to five Mathematics teachers, and so did other subjects. The senior teachers, on the other hand,
were supervised by the principal. This technique is also used in other school as shown in research entitled “The Academic Supervision by School Supervisor as an Effort to Increase Teacher’s Professionalism”. The study showed that academic supervision was carried out to make the teachers realize that they can improve their teaching professionalism, and it was done by the school principal and senior teachers (Messi, Sari, & Murniyati, 2018).

Creating Effective Communication in Academic Supervision in MAN 2 Tanah Datar

Referring to the theory presented by Anwariyah and Rifa’i (2022) in research entitled “Effective Communication of the Supervisor in Academic Supervision as an Effort to Improve Teachers’ Performance in MTs Nurul Fata”, to create effective communication during academic supervision at MAN 2 Tanah Datar, the supervisors had several communication skills such as respecting the supervised teachers, have empathy to the supervised teachers, as well as being audible, clear, and humble. Anwariyah and Rifa’i (2022) explained five ways to build effective communication, which are first, respect means that there is respect between supervisors and those being supervised, and second, empathy means supervisors must be able to feel what is felt by teachers to avoid misunderstanding during supervision. Then third, audible means that the directions given by the supervisor to the supervised teacher can be understood and followed up, and fourth, clarity means the clarity of the information conveyed by the supervisor and the supervised teacher. Finally, fifth, humble means that the supervisor must be friendly and wise to the teacher being supervised.

As the first way to build effective communication, respect means that the supervisor respects the teacher during supervision. Respect is an attitude of admiration and appreciation for the person we are talking to. This attitude needs to be developed by both supervisors and teachers being supervised, so there will be mutual respect between them that leads to the feeling of being valued and important, even for critical words. According to interviews with the school principal, respect for the teachers supervised by the supervisors is the beginning of effective communication during supervision (Fikriah, 2019). Then, the interviews with vice principal of curriculum showed that this mutual respect started from the moment the supervisor agreed on a supervision schedule with the supervised teacher. After the supervision schedule was set, the senior teacher who acted as a supervisor would assist the principal by conducting discussion with the teachers to determine the group schedule. This attitude of respect also showed during the meeting to discuss the teachers’ preparation, such as for the lesson plans and learning tools. The supervisor would also check if the teachers has prepared all the requirements based on the draft of learning tools issued by school.

After agreeing on the schedule, the supervisor of MAN 2 Tanah Datar made agreement on which teaching factors that would be the focus of the supervision, for example in a supervision, the focus was in the teacher’s teaching methods in the classroom. Thus, the supervisor would stay in the classroom to observe the teacher in teaching the lesson. Then the supervisor listened to comments from the supervised teacher about how satisfied the teacher was when teaching and what obstacles the teacher felt. After that, the supervisor provided feedback on obstacles or difficulties during teaching and learning process in the classroom. Therefore, the ability to respect the supervised teachers can build better relationships while implementing academic supervision. This is in accordance with the opinion of Maisaroh (2022) in her study entitled “The Concept of Educational Supervision as a Moral Action” that there will be good interactions between supervisors and teachers, which are shown by mutual trust, openness, and dynamic in the supervision so that they can discuss their duties and functions which encourage them to respect each other. Good interaction will be shown through honesty when discussing teacher problems in teaching the students. Consequently, there will be a sense of mutual openness that leads to the supervision that can be carried out properly (Maisaroh, 2022).
Empathy is the capacity to put oneself in another person’s shoes, and understand their situation. Empathy will make the recipient of the message easier to understand the condition. The caring attribute is empathy. It means to pay attention to subordinates, immediately respond to the needs (ambitions), speak clearly and effectively, provide services in a fun and interesting way, understand subordinates’ aspirations, show empathy, and quickly respond and resolve subordinate complaints (Fikriah, 2019). In addition to communication, empathic dialogue makes it easier for supervisors to accept feedback and be able to communicate messages in a good manner. When the superior shows the anger whenever in an uncomfortable situation, the job will never be finished.

Second, being empathetic means that the supervisor feels both the difficulty and convenience of the teacher when teaching. Empathy is the ability to put ourselves in situations or conditions of others. Empathy will make it easier for the recipient of the message to easily catch and interpret the message. Empathy is a caring trait, which means to pay attention to supervisees, responding quickly to the needs of supervisee (aspirations), communicating properly and correctly, serving in a friendly and interesting manner, understanding supervisee aspirations, being sympathetic, paying attention to supervisees’ complaints and dealing with them (Fikriah, 2019). Empathic dialogue allows the supervisor to convey messages in a positive manner and is ready to accept input openly, besides that the communication also feels “comfortable”. If the supervisor does not feel comfortable and immediately becomes angry or showing sour face, then the supervisee will be uncomfortable too. The communication will stop there, so that the communication will not go well and become unprofessional.

The results of interviews with the vice principal for curriculum stated that since the supervisors were also teachers, they could feel the situation of the teachers who were being supervised. If there was something that needed to be revised, the supervisor would take a note on things that the teacher lacked of during the learning process. Then, after the learning process, the supervisor had a discussion with the teacher. During the discussion, the supervisors would give directions and feedback about the learning process that had been done. The competence of supervisors in the communication, such as empathy, to the supervised teachers plays a very important role. This statement is reinforced by Ramadina (2021) in a study entitled “Actualization of Artistic Supervision in Islamic Education Management”. She stated that challenges in implementing academic supervision can be overcame by understanding the teachers’ feeling and respecting their dignity. During the supervision, supervisors can give support and restore the confidence of the teachers when conducting learning activity. Fulfilling the needs of students and teachers are used as the main basis for this supervision activity (Ramadina, 2021). The supervisor’s sense of empathy in the academic supervision makes the teacher more calm and not afraid to face supervisors.

Third, audible means that the directions given by the supervisor to the supervised teacher can be understood and followed up. Audible means that the message can be heard and understood correctly. People need to be a good listener in order to be understood and heard. When speaking, supervisors should concentrate on important information rather than beat around the bush. Using audible methods to convey your message in an easy-to-understand way. Focus on important information and use illustrations will help to clarify content and message. The people also need to give attention to existing facilities and the environment around as well as be prepared for potential problems (Wisman, 2017). Furthermore, the results of the interview with the principal of MAN 2 Tanah Datar showed that as long as supervision was done, the directions given to teachers by supervisors were acceptable. Then it was clarified by the vice principal of curriculum at MAN 2 Tanah Datar, that the teacher could understand the explanation given by the supervisor because the teacher who became a supervisor came from the same field of study but were more knowledgeable. Then, the supervisor’s explanation openly accepted by the teacher being supervise. The explanation given by the supervisor to
the teacher because the supervisor understood the shortcoming faced by the teacher. Finally, good communication was formed between the supervisor and the teachers being supervised. The description of the audible attitude at MAN 2 Tanah Datar is similar to Anwariyah and Rifa’i’s study (2022) with the title of “Effective Communication of the Supervisor in Academic Supervision as an Effort to Improve Teachers’ Performance in MTs Nurul Fata”, which stated that the message must be received clearly so as not to cause multiple interpretations of the message. In this case, clarity is also interpreted as transparency. In communication ethics, being open to the recipient of the message must be done with the intention of receiving trust from the recipient of the message (Rifai, 2022).

Fourth, clarity means the understandability of the instructions given by the supervisor. Clarity refers to the use of familiar terms and the clarity of voice, in terms of volume and fluency. There are some suggestions to convey messages clearly, that are first, keep the message clear, precise, convincing, and flexible; second, set clear goals; third, take time to organize ideas; and meets the format requirements of the language used. The results of interview with the Civics teacher at MAN 2 Tanah Datar showed that during supervision, the directions given could be understood well because there was openness between the supervised teachers and supervisors about the obstacles encountered during the learning process. Then, good communication skill could manage the supervision effectively. Therefore, the supervisor could provide clear directions about the needs of the supervised teacher. Clarity in conveying information and instruction from the supervisors to the supervised teachers must be carried out so that communication can be done properly during the academic supervision. It is in line with the statement of Purwaningsih, Sugiyo, Masrukan (2016) in a study entitled “Effective Communication-Based Clinical Supervision (SKBKE) to Improve Vocational School Teacher Supervision Services”, that every communication is not necessarily effective, which means that if the supervisor wants to communicate effectively with the supervised teacher, the supervisor must be able to find out the problems and provide the appropriate solution to the teachers. When the supervisors are able to communicate clearly, the solutions provided will be the appropriate solutions to the problems encountered that will be useful for improving learning activities. Accordingly, the supervisor must convey the messages simply, clearly, and precisely during the communication (Purwaningsih, Sugiyo, & Masrukan, 2016). In sum, the supervisors’ clarity in providing instruction and information to the supervised teachers is very important, so that they can make improvements for the learning process in the classroom.

Fifth, humble means that the supervisor must be friendly and wise to the supervised teacher. Avoid saying things that make one person feel better by making fun of the other person. This attitude makes supervisors feel unappreciated and makes it difficult for teachers to pay attention and respond positively. The teacher’s dignity and trust will not be reduced by modesty of the supervisor. Instead, there will be more respect and trust. The results of the interview with the vice principal for curriculum showed that this attitude could be seen from the way the supervisor evaluated the teachers’ learning tools. When the supervisor saw any mistakes in the learning tools, the supervisor immediately gave an explanation to the teacher in a good manner, and provided the best solution so that the teacher did not feel cornered about what they have done. This communication method of the supervisor at MAN 2 Tanah Datar is in line with the method of the supervisor in Okprina’s study (2014) entitled “Communication Strategy for Supervisors of Secondary School in Education Office of Gresik Regency” regarding hospitality of the teachers. It is shown that the friendly attitude to not corner or blame the teacher during supervision is highly prioritized by supervisors at the Education Office of Gresik Regency. It means that they invite teachers to learn together to overcome their difficulties and readjust the learning process that involves planning, implementation and evaluation learning. This humble attitude is needed by the supervisor when conducting academic supervision in schools (Okprina, 2014).
Therefore, the supervision at MAN 2 Tanah Datar could be carried out properly through effective communication. It can be seen from the suggestions given by the supervisor to be applied by the supervised teachers.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion
The academic supervision is very important to provide assistance to the teachers, in order to develop the teaching professionalism. This process starts from planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow up on the results of academic supervision. In conduction academic supervision, effective communication is needed between the supervisor and supervised teachers. There are five ways that are used to implement effective communication during academic supervision. The first is respect, which means that supervisor respects the teachers during supervision. Second is have empathy, means that the supervisor understands both the convenience and difficulty in teaching process. Then, third is audible, means that the suggestion given by the supervisor to the supervised teachers can be well received. Fourth, there is clarity, means the clarity of the way the message conveyed by the supervisor. The fifth is humble, means that the supervisor must be friendly and wise to the supervised teachers. Thus, effective communication during the academic supervision can be established well.

Suggestion
The researchers suggest for future researchers to make more comprehensive research on the effort on creating more effective communication of the academic supervision. Hence, it can contribute to the knowledge in education field, especially in the implementation of supervision at schools through effective communication. It can also become input and assistance to the teacher in related fields, so that the learning process can be well-implemented.

REFERENCES


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