

Peer Supervision as Collaborative Professional Learning for Islamic Religious Education Teachers

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59698/kognisi.v4i1.395>

Abstract

Teacher professional development is most likely to influence practice when it is embedded in teachers' daily work, collaborative, reflective, and supported by actionable feedback. Peer supervision is one school-based mechanism that can combine these characteristics, yet its enactment in Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI) remains underexplored. This study examines how peer supervision was implemented to support PAI teachers' professional learning at SMPIT Nurul Islam Tenganan, Semarang Regency, Indonesia; the conditions perceived to shape its effectiveness; and its reported contributions to teaching practice. A qualitative case-study design was employed. The source study used purposive sampling, classroom observation, interviews, and document analysis, with evidence reported from the principal, vice principal for curriculum, a PAI teacher serving as peer supervisor, and a supervised PAI teacher. Data were reduced, organized around the research questions, displayed thematically, and interpreted through source and technique triangulation. Findings show that peer supervision had been institutionalized as a once-per-semester cycle involving supervisor-team formation, pre-observation conferencing, lesson preparation, classroom observation, and post-observation feedback. Its developmental value was associated with collegial relationships, negotiated scheduling, leadership encouragement, visible school-wide participation, and follow-up training. Reported outcomes included greater awareness of instructional strengths and weaknesses, more disciplined preparation of teaching modules, increased reflection, and experimentation with active-learning strategies. However, perceptions of impact were not uniform: the supervised teacher viewed changes in teaching quality more cautiously than the supervising teacher, suggesting that the strongest evidence concerns reflective learning and instructional discipline rather than proven causal improvement. The study positions peer supervision as a promising form of collaborative professional learning when it is framed as developmental rather than punitive and linked to sustained follow-up.

Keywords: *Peer Supervision, Peer Observation, Teacher Professional Development, Islamic Religious Education, Professional Competence, Reflective Practice*

INTRODUCTION

Teacher quality is central to the quality of classroom learning, but professional competence is not a static attribute acquired once through pre-service education. It is continually shaped by teachers' opportunities to examine practice, receive feedback, learn from colleagues, and adapt instruction to changing curricular and learner needs. Research on teacher professional development (TPD) has consequently moved away from viewing professional learning as a sequence of isolated workshops toward understanding it as an ongoing, situated process that is embedded in the organizational and social contexts of schools (Avalos, 2011; Opfer & Pedder, 2011). Desimone (2009) identified content focus,

active learning, coherence, duration, and collective participation as recurring features of productive professional development, while Kennedy (2016) emphasized that the mechanism linking professional development to practice is not simply exposure to new ideas but the way learning experiences help teachers reason about and respond to problems of instruction. Evidence from coaching and collaborative professional learning likewise shows that professional support can improve instructional practice when it provides sustained, practice-based guidance rather than one-off transmission of information (Gore et al., 2017; Kraft et al., 2018).

One way to embed professional learning in routine teaching is peer observation or peer supervision. Although terminology varies across educational systems, peer observation generally refers to a structured process in which teachers observe colleagues' classroom practice and engage in professional dialogue about teaching. In developmental models, the purpose is not primarily to rank teachers but to create evidence for reflection, feedback, experimentation, and mutual learning. Studies in different contexts have linked peer observation with increased awareness of teaching strategies, reflection, collegiality, confidence, and the circulation of instructional knowledge (Bell & Mladenovic, 2008; Hamilton, 2013; Karagiorgi, 2012; Mouraz et al., 2023; Visone, 2022). Experimental and quasi-experimental work also indicates that peer observation can influence teacher practice and, under some conditions, student outcomes. Burgess et al. (2021), for example, found positive effects from a structured teacher peer-observation program in English secondary schools, while Murphy et al. (2021) reported evidence from a large randomized peer-to-peer observation intervention. These findings are consistent with broader evidence that teachers learn not only from formal training but also from the expertise of colleagues in their immediate professional environment (Jackson & Bruegmann, 2009; Sun et al., 2013).

The promise of peer supervision, however, depends strongly on how it is framed and enacted. Observation can become threatening when teachers interpret it as inspection, compliance monitoring, or a high-stakes judgment of individual performance. Shortland (2004) warned that peer observation may oscillate between professional development and compliance, while Adshead et al. (2006) found that uncertainty about the purposes and roles of observers can undermine engagement. More recent reviews similarly stress that trust, clarity of purpose, useful feedback, confidentiality, and teacher agency are central to productive peer observation (Ridge & Lavigne, 2020). The distinction matters because feedback is most likely to support learning when it gives teachers interpretable information about current practice and feasible directions for improvement rather than merely communicating a verdict (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Peer supervision therefore sits at a productive but delicate intersection between accountability and professional learning.

School culture further shapes whether observation becomes a learning opportunity. Professional learning communities are characterized by shared responsibility, collaborative inquiry, de-privatized practice, and sustained attention to teaching and student learning. A review by Vescio et al. (2008) concluded that well-functioning professional learning communities can change teaching practice and improve student learning, although the

evidence base varies in strength. Lesson-study research similarly shows how repeated cycles of collaborative planning, observation, and reflection can contribute to professional culture and teacher self-efficacy when organizational conditions support participation (Cajkler et al., 2015; Schipper et al., 2020). McChesney and Aldridge (2021) argue that professional-development impact is shaped by a trajectory of interacting personal and contextual conditions; thus, even a technically sound supervision model may produce limited learning if teachers do not experience psychological safety, time, relevance, or institutional follow-through.

These issues are particularly significant for Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam, hereafter PAI) in Indonesia. PAI teachers are expected not only to teach religious knowledge but also to connect knowledge, values, worship, character, and everyday conduct. Their work therefore requires subject-matter mastery, pedagogical judgment, ethical modeling, classroom management, and responsiveness to students' social and developmental contexts. Research on Islamic education in Indonesia has repeatedly highlighted the importance of strengthening teachers' pedagogical and professional capacities through structured development and supervision (Miskiah et al., 2019; Muhith, 2021). Studies of PAI supervision also show that professional support can facilitate lesson improvement, teacher competence, and the implementation of educational innovation, while practical constraints may include workload, uneven motivation, limited follow-up, and the tendency for supervision to become administrative (Hakim, 2021; Noor & Wathoni, 2020; Pasha Akhmad, 2022; Sufiani & Putra, 2020). More recent work has emphasized collaborative and reflective supervision in Islamic education as a way of moving from inspection toward professional accompaniment (Kurniaty & Indrayuda, 2024; Posangi et al., 2025).

Peer-based supervision is especially relevant to this shift. Handayani et al. (2021) developed a peer-based academic supervision model for Indonesian junior high schools and found that delegating supervisory roles to peers could broaden participation, respond to school leaders' workload, and support motivation. A case study in an Islamic elementary school in Tengeran also described peer supervision as a cycle of planning, implementation, analysis, and improvement intended to strengthen instructional quality (Musalimah & Husnatuzzahroh, 2024). Internationally, studies have likewise shown that reciprocal or collegial observation can create a lower-threat space for reflection because the observer is not positioned solely as an evaluator (Motallebzadeh et al., 2017; O'Keeffe et al., 2021). Nevertheless, peer status alone does not guarantee developmental learning. Observation can still become ritualized, overly polite, or disconnected from subsequent professional development if feedback remains superficial or if schools do not create mechanisms for follow-up (Quinn et al., 2018; Shortland, 2010).

The case of SMPIT Nurul Islam Tengeran is valuable because peer supervision is not presented as a short-term intervention introduced solely for research purposes. According to the source study, supervision has been part of the school's routine since its establishment in 2007 and is conducted once each semester. It is embedded in school coordination, involves a peer supervisor team, and includes pre-observation discussion, classroom observation,

feedback, and follow-up. This institutionalized form provides an opportunity to examine how a school translates an externally expected supervision requirement into a localized collaborative practice among teachers. It also allows attention to an important tension: school leaders and supervisors described the practice as highly beneficial, while the supervised PAI teacher expressed a more differentiated view of its effect on actual teaching quality. Such variation is analytically useful because it prevents professional development from being evaluated solely through celebratory self-report.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze peer supervision as a school-based professional-learning practice for PAI teachers at SMPIT Nurul Islam Tengeran. It addresses three questions: (1) How is peer supervision implemented in the professional development of PAI teachers? (2) What conditions are perceived to support or constrain its effectiveness? and (3) What contributions to teaching practice are reported by school leaders and PAI teachers? By situating the case within the literature on peer observation, feedback, teacher learning, and Islamic education supervision, the study contributes a context-sensitive account of how collaborative supervision can be organized, experienced, and sustained in an Indonesian Islamic junior secondary school.

METHODS

This study used a qualitative case-study design to examine peer supervision as it was practiced within a single school organization. A case-study approach is appropriate when the phenomenon of interest is inseparable from its institutional context and when the purpose is to understand processes, meanings, and interactions rather than estimate population-level causal effects. The unit of inquiry was the school's peer-supervision practice for PAI teachers at SMPIT Nurul Islam Tengeran, Semarang Regency, Indonesia.

The source study identified school leaders, PAI teachers, and students as relevant participants and used purposive sampling. However, the substantive evidence reported in the findings and retained in this article centers on four role-coded adult informants: the principal (IDH), the vice principal for curriculum (DU), a PAI teacher who served as a peer supervisor (S), and a PAI teacher who was supervised (T). These roles provide complementary perspectives on policy, coordination, supervision practice, and the experience of being observed. The analysis therefore treats claims about teacher learning as perceptions and reported practice rather than as independently measured changes in teacher effectiveness or student achievement.

Data were generated through observation, interviews, and document study/documentation. The interview material addressed the origin and purpose of peer supervision, its scheduling and procedures, teacher preparation, post-observation feedback, factors supporting implementation, and perceived effects on professional practice. Observational and documentary evidence was used to contextualize the reported supervision procedures and school routines. The source manuscript states that the credibility of data was checked through triangulation, including comparison across sources and methods. Methodological triangulation is useful in qualitative inquiry because convergence and

divergence across evidence types can strengthen interpretation without assuming that all sources must produce identical accounts (Heesen et al., 2019).

Analysis followed the three-stage logic reported in the source study: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. For the present article, the evidence was reorganized around the three research questions. First, statements concerning the supervision cycle were grouped into preparation, observation, feedback, and follow-up. Second, statements concerning effectiveness were organized into relational, organizational, and procedural conditions. Third, reported outcomes were differentiated into reflective awareness, planning and administrative discipline, instructional experimentation, and broader claims about teaching quality. Particular attention was paid to differences between informants rather than treating agreement as the only indicator of validity.

The study adopts an interpretive stance toward “effectiveness.” Because the design is qualitative and does not include a comparison group, repeated standardized observations, or student achievement measures, the article does not use effectiveness to imply a causal treatment effect. Instead, it examines the conditions under which participants regarded peer supervision as useful and the kinds of professional-learning outcomes they associated with it. This distinction is consistent with research showing that professional development should be evaluated not only by satisfaction but also by evidence of changes in reasoning, practice, and organizational routines (Kennedy, 2016; McChesney & Aldridge, 2021). It also helps distinguish between perceived improvement and demonstrated instructional impact.

The study follows the school’s broad use of the term “professional competence.” In the Indonesian teacher-competency framework, some outcomes discussed by participants (such as lesson planning, classroom management, and instructional method) also overlap with pedagogical competence. Rather than artificially separating these domains in participants’ accounts, the analysis uses “professional learning” as an umbrella concept and specifies the particular practice being discussed. This provides greater conceptual precision while preserving the terminology of the original study.

RESULTS

Institutionalization and implementation of peer supervision

Peer supervision at SMPIT Nurul Islam Tenganan was described as a long-standing school practice rather than a one-time project. School leaders connected the practice to supervision expectations from the education authority and reported that supervision had been implemented since the school was established in 2007. Within the school, however, the rationale had developed beyond compliance. The principal and vice principal for curriculum associated supervision with maintaining service quality, motivating teachers to innovate, encouraging professional reflection, and helping teachers respond to developments in education. This dual origin—external expectation and internal professional-learning purpose—shaped the way supervision was organized.

The school implemented peer supervision once each semester. The period reported in the source data was October-November. The process began with the formation of a supervisor team and the preparation of a supervision schedule. Scheduling was not presented

as entirely top-down: the supervisor and the teacher to be observed negotiated an agreed time. Before observation, the peer supervisor met the teacher and used a preparation format to discuss the intended learning objectives (Tujuan Pembelajaran), lesson content, teaching preparation, and instructional methods. The supervised teacher then prepared the necessary lesson materials or teaching module and conducted the lesson while the peer supervisor observed classroom practice.

After the lesson, the supervisor communicated strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. Feedback could be delivered directly or through subsequent communication. Where a difficulty was identified, the supervisor attempted to propose a solution or direction for improvement. The source data also indicate that post-supervision discussion included a further interview or conversation in which the teacher could review what occurred in the classroom. Thus, the local model contained recognizable elements of a developmental observation cycle: pre-observation clarification, evidence collection through observation, and post-observation feedback.

The supervised PAI teacher reported a mixed emotional experience. Being observed created nervousness, yet the teacher also welcomed supervision because it clarified expectations and exposed aspects of teaching that might otherwise remain unnoticed. The teacher described an effort to use more varied methods during observed lessons, including active-learning strategies in which students were asked to find or explore material rather than depend entirely on teacher explanation. This suggests that observation can create both performance pressure and a stimulus for instructional experimentation.

Table 1 summarizes the peer-supervision cycle and its professional-learning function as represented in the data.

Table 1. Peer-supervision cycle at SMPIT Nurul Islam Tenganan

Stage	Practice reported in the case	Professional-learning function
Institutional preparation	School forms a supervisor team and communicates the supervision period; supervision is conducted once each semester.	Normalizes participation and distributes responsibility for supervision.
Pre-observation conference	Supervisor and teacher agree on time and discuss learning objectives, lesson content, preparation, and instructional method.	Clarifies lesson intentions and creates a shared focus for observation.
Lesson preparation	Teacher prepares lesson materials/Modul Ajar and planned activities.	Encourages instructional planning and documentation discipline.
Classroom observation	Peer supervisor observes the teacher conducting a real lesson.	Makes normally private practice visible for professional inquiry.

Stage	Practice reported in the case	Professional-learning function
Post-observation feedback	Supervisor identifies strengths and weaknesses and proposes solutions where difficulties are found.	Supports reflection, feedback, and identification of improvement priorities.
Follow-up	Teacher discusses the observation again; recurring weaknesses can inform later teacher training.	Connects individual observation to continuing professional development.

Conditions shaping the perceived usefulness of peer supervision

Participants repeatedly linked the usefulness of peer supervision to the fact that the observer was a colleague. The supervising PAI teacher argued that observation by fellow teachers felt more comfortable and less awkward than a more hierarchical form of supervision. This does not mean that anxiety disappeared; the supervised teacher still reported feeling nervous. Rather, collegial status appeared to reduce interpersonal distance and make feedback easier to accept. The finding is consistent with the broader literature in which reciprocal observation is most productive when participants understand the process as a shared inquiry into teaching rather than as surveillance (Bell & Mladenovic, 2008; Hamilton, 2013; Visone, 2022).

Leadership support was another important condition. The principal and vice principal for curriculum did not simply authorize supervision; they actively framed it as a means of improving learning, reflection, innovation, and service quality. Before the supervision period, teachers were reminded through meetings to prepare for the process. The school also used the teachers' communication group to post updates, including photos or videos when colleagues had completed supervision. In the participants' accounts, this visible progress was intended to motivate other teachers to schedule and complete their own observations. Such practices created a school-wide social norm around participation rather than treating supervision as a private transaction between two individuals.

Flexibility in scheduling also supported implementation. The supervisor and observed teacher made an agreement about the observation time, which may have reduced the sense that supervision was imposed without regard to workload. At the same time, the need to negotiate time indicates a practical dependency: peer supervision requires protected or at least coordinated time. Research on professional learning consistently identifies time and workload as central conditions for sustained teacher collaboration (McChesney & Aldridge, 2021; Visone, 2022). In this case, the once-per-semester schedule made participation feasible, but the data do not establish whether a single observation cycle per semester provides enough intensity for substantial instructional change.

A further enabling condition was the connection between individual feedback and school-level follow-up. The supervising teacher explained that weaknesses identified through supervision could be revisited after observation and used to inform themes for subsequent teacher training. This is significant because one limitation of peer observation is the risk that

feedback remains isolated and does not become part of a broader learning system. When observation data inform professional-development priorities, peer supervision can function as a diagnostic mechanism that connects classroom-level evidence with organizational learning. Similar arguments appear in research on professional learning communities and instructional coaching, where learning is strengthened when individual reflection is embedded in collective routines (Kraft et al., 2018; Vescio et al., 2008).

The participants also emphasized motivational framing. School leaders sought to convince teachers that supervision was intended to improve learning rather than expose failure. This framing is especially important in contexts where supervision has historically been associated with evaluation. Ridge and Lavigne (2020) note that observation and feedback can support instructional improvement when purposes are explicit and feedback is credible, specific, and non-punitive. Conversely, Shortland (2004) shows how compliance-oriented observation can undermine authentic engagement. The case data suggest that SMPIT Nurul Islam Tenggara attempted to manage this tension through peer relationships, negotiated scheduling, and developmental language, although the teacher's nervousness indicates that evaluative pressure remained present at least psychologically.

Reported contributions to PAI teachers' professional learning

Across the accounts, the most consistent contribution of peer supervision was increased awareness of teaching practice. Supervisors and school leaders described the process as enabling teachers to recognize both strengths and weaknesses. The supervised teacher similarly valued the opportunity to learn what the supervisor noticed and to identify areas that could be improved. This reflective function is important because much of teaching is routinized; observation makes otherwise private classroom practice available for professional conversation. Peer observation therefore acts as a form of "de-privatization" of practice, a feature commonly associated with professional learning communities (Quinn et al., 2018; Vescio et al., 2008).

A second contribution concerned planning and instructional discipline. The supervised teacher reported that the use of the teaching module (Modul Ajar) became more orderly because the document was needed for supervision. This is a concrete outcome, but it is also analytically ambiguous. Greater preparation can support instructional coherence; however, if documentation is prepared mainly because it will be inspected, the result may reflect administrative compliance rather than deeper professional learning. The significance of this finding therefore depends on whether the teaching module is subsequently used as a genuine planning and reflection tool. The source data do not allow that distinction to be established conclusively.

A third contribution was experimentation with instructional methods. The supervised teacher described an effort to vary classroom methods and gave active learning as an example. The teacher encouraged students to search for learning material themselves rather than rely exclusively on teacher exposition. This suggests that the observation process may create an occasion for teachers to demonstrate, rehearse, or refine more student-active practices. Professional-development studies show that active learning and opportunities to

test practice are stronger mechanisms for change than passive receipt of information (Desimone, 2009; Gore et al., 2017). Nevertheless, the available evidence is based on participants' accounts and does not include systematic pre- and post-supervision observation scores.

The strongest claim about impact came from the supervising teacher, who characterized the effect on teaching quality as very positive because teachers could become more open about strengths and weaknesses and subsequently improve instruction. The supervised teacher, however, offered a more cautious assessment, stating that teaching quality was broadly similar whether or not supervision occurred, although preparation of the teaching module became more disciplined. This difference is one of the most important findings of the case. It indicates that peer supervision was clearly valued as a reflective and organizational process, but the magnitude of its effect on day-to-day teaching should not be overstated.

Taken together, the evidence supports a layered interpretation. At the most directly supported level, peer supervision structured professional conversation, made teaching visible to colleagues, encouraged lesson preparation, and prompted reflection. At a second level, participants associated the process with instructional experimentation and the intention to improve future lessons. At a third and less directly demonstrated level, some participants inferred broader improvement in teaching quality. The study therefore provides stronger evidence for peer supervision as a professional-learning infrastructure than for a causal effect on teacher performance or student achievement.

Table 2. Conditions shaping the perceived usefulness of peer supervision

Condition	Evidence from the case	Interpretation
Collegial relationship	Teachers reported greater comfort because supervisors were fellow teachers.	Peer status can reduce interpersonal distance and support openness, although observation anxiety may remain.
Leadership framing	Principal and curriculum leader emphasized reflection, innovation, and service quality.	Developmental framing helps shift supervision away from a purely punitive or inspection-oriented meaning.
Negotiated scheduling	Supervisor and teacher agreed on the observation time.	Teacher agency and practical coordination can improve feasibility.
Visible participation	Supervision progress was shared in the teachers' communication group.	Creates a social norm of participation, but should not become completion-focused compliance.
Actionable feedback	Supervisors were expected to identify strengths, weaknesses, and possible solutions.	Feedback quality is a key mechanism linking observation to professional learning.
Organizational follow-up	Weaknesses found during supervision could become themes for later teacher training.	Links classroom evidence with school-level professional-development planning.

Table 3. Reported professional-learning outcomes and interpretive caution

Reported outcome	Supporting evidence	Strength of inference
Reflective awareness	Teachers could identify strengths and weaknesses that were less visible in routine teaching.	Strongest qualitative support; reported across roles.
Planning and documentation discipline	The supervised teacher reported more orderly preparation of the Modul Ajar when supervision occurred.	Directly reported, but may reflect both learning and compliance.
Instructional experimentation	The teacher described using varied methods and active-learning activities during supervised teaching.	Plausible contribution; not measured through repeated observation.
Improved teaching quality	Supervisor and leaders perceived substantial improvement; the supervised teacher was more cautious.	Mixed evidence; causal improvement cannot be established from this design.

DISCUSSION

The findings show that peer supervision at SMPIT Nurul Islam Tengan functions as a localized form of collaborative professional learning. Its importance lies less in the mere presence of classroom observation than in the sequence surrounding observation: preparation, negotiated scheduling, peer observation, feedback, reflection, and follow-up. This sequence corresponds closely to what the TPD literature identifies as practice-embedded learning. Desimone (2009) argues that professional development is more powerful when teachers actively engage with instructional content and participate collectively, while Opfer and Pedder (2011) conceptualize teacher learning as the interaction of individual, school, and learning-activity systems. In the present case, peer supervision links these systems by making an individual teacher's lesson the focus of a collegial process organized and supported by the school.

The school's long-term institutionalization of supervision is also significant. Peer observation is sometimes introduced as an innovation but fails to persist after a project or external facilitator ends. Here, the practice was reported to have existed since 2007 and to recur each semester. Sustainability alone does not prove quality, yet it suggests that supervision has become part of the school's organizational repertoire. This matters because professional learning depends on repeated opportunities to revisit practice. Avalos (2011) emphasizes that teacher development is a continuing process of learning how to learn and transform knowledge into practice, and Kennedy (2016) argues that professional development has to engage teachers' recurring instructional problems. A routinized supervision cycle can create such recurring opportunities if feedback remains substantive rather than ceremonial.

The role of collegiality in the findings is consistent with a large body of peer-observation research. Teachers in this case perceived peer supervision as more comfortable because supervisors were fellow teachers. Bell and Mladenovic (2008) found that peer-observation partnerships can support confidence, reflection, and collegiality, while Hamilton (2013) showed how peer-to-peer observation can make colleagues' instructional knowledge visible and usable. International evidence also indicates that peer learning can produce measurable gains: Jackson and Bruegmann (2009) found that teachers' effectiveness is related to the effectiveness of their peers, and structured peer-observation interventions have shown positive results in large school samples (Burgess et al., 2021; Murphy et al., 2021). The current study does not replicate those causal designs, but its process findings help explain why peer observation may matter: the observed lesson becomes a shared object for professional reasoning rather than a private performance.

At the same time, collegiality should not be romanticized. Peer observation can become overly polite, superficial, or performative. If colleagues avoid difficult feedback to preserve relationships, the developmental value of observation may be limited. Shortland (2010) showed that feedback in peer observation can produce unexpected consequences, and Ridge and Lavigne (2020) note that the quality of post-observation feedback is central to instructional improvement. The current case contains encouraging evidence because supervisors were expected to identify both strengths and weaknesses and offer solutions. However, the data do not provide the actual wording, specificity, or uptake of feedback. Future research should examine the content of feedback conversations, whether teachers set explicit improvement goals, and whether those goals are revisited in subsequent supervision cycles.

The observed teacher's nervousness illustrates the persistent tension between developmental and evaluative functions. Even when the observer is a peer, being watched can heighten self-consciousness and encourage teachers to stage their "best lesson." In one sense, this may be productive because teachers prepare carefully and experiment with varied methods. In another sense, it can reduce ecological validity if the observed lesson differs substantially from routine practice. Adshead et al. (2006) and Shortland (2004) both show that ambiguity about evaluation can affect how teachers experience observation. The case therefore suggests that schools should state explicitly whether peer-supervision evidence is used for personnel appraisal, developmental support, or both. Clear separation of developmental feedback from high-stakes evaluation may increase psychological safety and make teachers more willing to expose genuine problems of practice.

The school's leadership practices appear to have helped create a supportive implementation climate. Leaders framed supervision as reflection and service-quality improvement, encouraged teachers during meetings, monitored progress, and used the teacher communication group to make participation visible. This resembles the organizational conditions associated with professional learning communities, in which teacher learning is sustained by collective responsibility and routines that normalize discussion of practice (Vescio et al., 2008). Sun et al. (2013) further show that professional

learning can diffuse through collegial networks when teachers help one another with instructional matters. In the present case, posting supervision activity in the group may have served a social-network function by signaling that observation is a normal professional activity rather than an exceptional response to poor performance.

However, visibility can operate in two ways. Publicizing participation may motivate teachers, but it can also create compliance pressure if completion becomes more salient than learning quality. The school should therefore balance participation tracking with qualitative attention to what teachers learn. One practical approach is to require a brief post-observation reflection focused on one instructional strength, one problem of practice, one agreed next step, and the support needed. The next observation cycle can then revisit that goal. Such a process would transform supervision from an episodic event into a cumulative learning trajectory. This recommendation is aligned with evidence from coaching research, where sustained cycles of goal setting, observation, and targeted feedback produce larger improvements than generic professional development (Kraft et al., 2018).

The connection between supervision findings and subsequent training is another promising feature. The supervising teacher explained that weaknesses identified in supervision could be followed up and used as themes for teacher training. This creates a bridge between individual diagnostic evidence and school-level professional development. McChesney and Aldridge (2021) argue that TPD impact depends on the alignment between learning activities and the conditions surrounding teachers' implementation. If supervision identifies a common difficulty—such as lesson planning, questioning, classroom management, assessment, or student engagement—the school can design training that responds to an observed need rather than a generic agenda. This also reduces the risk that peer supervision ends with feedback that teachers are expected to act on alone.

The PAI context adds an important dimension. PAI teachers' professional work combines content knowledge, pedagogy, moral example, and the translation of religious values into students' learning experiences. Indonesian research has shown that PAI teacher competence needs continuous strengthening and that supervision can support this process (Miskiah et al., 2019; Muhith, 2021). Noor and Wathoni (2020), Pasha Akhmad (2022), and Sufiani and Putra (2020) similarly describe supervisory support as relevant to PAI teacher competence. Recent studies have emphasized supervision that is collaborative, reflective, and responsive to technological and pedagogical change (Kurniaty & Indrayuda, 2024; Posangi et al., 2025). The current case contributes to this literature by showing how peer supervision can operate within an Islamic junior secondary school as a routine internal mechanism rather than depending solely on external supervisors or principals.

The findings also suggest that professional competence should be interpreted carefully. Participants used the term broadly, but many reported outcomes—lesson planning, classroom management, variation of teaching methods, and active learning—are often classified as pedagogical competence in Indonesian frameworks. The distinction is not merely terminological. If a school wants supervision to strengthen professional competence in the narrower sense, observation should also address PAI-specific content mastery,

accuracy of religious concepts and sources, connections between Qur'anic or hadith material and students' contexts, and the teacher's ability to integrate disciplinary knowledge with pedagogy. A well-designed peer-supervision instrument could therefore include both general pedagogical indicators and PAI-specific professional indicators.

The teacher's report that teaching quality was "the same" with or without supervision, while documentation became more orderly, deserves particular attention. It tempers the more positive assessments from school leaders and the supervisor. One explanation is that the teacher already perceived their routine teaching as competent, making incremental change less visible. Another is that supervision affected preparation and reflection more than immediate classroom behavior. A third possibility is social desirability in the more favorable leadership accounts. The study cannot adjudicate among these explanations, but the divergence demonstrates why multiple perspectives are valuable in qualitative evaluation. It also supports a more modest conclusion: peer supervision was experienced as useful for reflection and preparation, while claims of substantial improvement in teaching quality require stronger evidence.

This caution is supported by the wider literature. While teacher coaching and peer-observation studies provide evidence of instructional impact (Allen et al., 2011; Kraft et al., 2018), effects depend on design quality, intensity, feedback, and implementation. Quinn et al. (2018) found that video-based observation could contribute to de-privatizing instruction, but simply making practice visible does not automatically change it. Schipper et al. (2020) similarly show that collaborative professional learning interacts with school culture and teacher self-efficacy. Consequently, schools should avoid using the existence of a supervision program as evidence that professional learning has occurred. Program quality should be judged by the depth of professional dialogue, specificity of improvement goals, repeated opportunities to practice, and evidence of change over time.

For practice, five implications follow. First, peer supervision should be explicitly framed as developmental. Teachers need clarity about confidentiality, the use of observation notes, and the distinction between supportive feedback and formal appraisal. Second, the pre-observation conference should identify a specific focus chosen jointly by the teacher and supervisor, rather than observing all aspects of teaching superficially. Third, post-observation feedback should be evidence-based and actionable, with the observed teacher participating actively in interpretation rather than receiving a one-way judgment. Fourth, schools should protect time for the cycle and ensure that supervision is not crowded out by teaching workload. Fifth, recurring problems identified across observations should inform school-based professional development, mentoring, or collaborative lesson design.

For PAI specifically, peer supervision could be strengthened by pairing general indicators with subject-sensitive dimensions. Examples include the accuracy and depth of Islamic content, pedagogical treatment of potentially sensitive religious topics, student participation in moral and reflective dialogue, contextualization of religious values, and the alignment of assessment with both knowledge and character-oriented learning goals. Such

dimensions would help ensure that peer supervision supports the distinctive instructional mission of PAI rather than merely administrative completeness.

The study has several limitations. It is a single-school case and therefore prioritizes contextual understanding over statistical generalization. The evidence presented in the source manuscript is dominated by four adult informants; student perspectives are not substantively represented in the reported findings even though students were identified among the study subjects. The study also relies heavily on interviews and descriptive observation, without standardized pre/post classroom measures, independent ratings of teaching quality, or student learning outcomes. In addition, the supervision cycle is described at a procedural level, but the content of observation instruments and feedback conversations is not analyzed in detail. These limitations mean that the study cannot establish a causal effect of peer supervision on professional competence or student achievement.

Future research can address these limitations through longitudinal mixed-method designs. Repeated classroom observations before and after several supervision cycles could examine whether specific instructional practices change. Analysis of observation forms and feedback transcripts could identify which feedback characteristics predict teacher uptake. Teacher reflection journals and follow-up interviews could trace how feedback is interpreted over time. Student engagement or learning measures could be added to examine whether changes in teacher practice are associated with classroom outcomes. Comparative studies across Islamic and public schools could also identify which organizational conditions make peer supervision more developmental, sustainable, and subject-responsive.

The case demonstrates that the value of peer supervision lies in its potential to turn everyday teaching into shared professional evidence. When observation is collegial, structured, linked to feedback, and supported by school leadership, it can create a practical infrastructure for reflection and collective learning. Its promise is greatest when schools resist reducing supervision to documentation or completion and instead use it to sustain cycles of inquiry into teaching.

CONCLUSION

Peer supervision at SMPIT Nurul Islam Tengaran was implemented as an institutionalized, once-per-semester professional-learning cycle consisting of supervisor-team formation, negotiated scheduling, pre-observation discussion, lesson preparation, classroom observation, feedback, and follow-up. Participants associated the practice with greater openness about instructional strengths and weaknesses, more disciplined preparation of teaching modules, reflection on classroom practice, and experimentation with more active teaching strategies. Its perceived usefulness was supported by collegial relationships, leadership encouragement, flexible scheduling, visible participation across the school, and the possibility of converting supervision findings into subsequent teacher training.

The findings nevertheless call for a careful interpretation of impact. The supervising teacher and school leaders described the process very positively, whereas the supervised PAI teacher was more cautious about whether supervision changed teaching quality itself. The strongest conclusion is therefore not that peer supervision has been proven to increase

teacher effectiveness, but that it provides a viable structure for collaborative reflection, feedback, and instructional discipline. For schools seeking to strengthen PAI teacher development, peer supervision is most promising when it is explicitly developmental, focused on authentic problems of practice, connected to PAI-specific professional indicators, and followed by sustained opportunities for improvement. Future studies should examine repeated supervision cycles using richer observational evidence and student outcomes to determine how reflective benefits translate into measurable changes in teaching and learning.

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