

CONTRIBUTION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH ON SUPERVISION IN CROATIA

ABSTRACT

The motivation for this text are the outcomes of the First research days on supervision that were organized by the Doctoral Program "Social Work and Social Policy" (PDS SWSP) and the Postgraduate University Specialist Study Program "Supervision in Psychosocial Work" in April, 2023.

The plenary lecture on the conceptualization of qualitative research on the doctoral level and two panel discussions with doctoral students and their mentors showed that the process of preparation of doctoral theses on supervision is an intense process during which a transition of the roles from supervisors into researchers occurs, with a gradual integration of these two roles into a new, expanded professional identity. Apart from that, the preparation of a qualitative doctoral thesis is often a lonely process accompanied by numerous insecurities, and therefore it is necessary to develop new forms of support for doctoral students that would enable a creative space and time for doctoral students to reflect on the development of their supervisory and scientific-research identity.

The analysis of methodological aspects and outcomes of specialist final papers, as well as a panel discussion

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among supervisors, decision-makers and users of supervision in different systems (e.g. social welfare education, penal system) pointed out the need for further improvements, for example designing more complex research projects in which a team of postgraduate students and their mentors would take part. To maintain the quality of specialist final papers and doctoral theses, methodological workshops for students and mentors are needed.

INTRODUCTION

The motivation for this text is to analyze the present research on supervision in Croatia done for the First research days on supervision³ that were held in the organization of the Doctoral Study Program “Social Work and Social Policy” (PDS SWSP) and the Postgraduate University Specialist Study Program “Supervision in Psychosocial Work”⁴ held on April 21-22, 2023 at the Department for Social Work, Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb. The text that follows does not intend to provide a systematic survey of research on supervision in Croatia, but it is a reflection of the needs of our contemporary educational and research context, and a starting point from which we will be able to estimate how research on supervision might develop some ten years from now.

The scientific discussions about research on supervision in the EU countries are, at least to our knowledge, very rare and practically non-existent. The framework of the dialogue on supervision is provided by the Association of National Organisations for Supervision and Coaching in Europe (ANSE). As an umbrella organization, the ANSE has recognized the need for the development of evidence-based supervisory practice to enhance credibility, reliability and legitimacy, as well as the advancement of European supervisory practice.

For that purpose, ANSE organized several important conferences, among which was the 1st Research Conference that was held in Budapest in 2015 to create a platform to exchange their experience and discuss their findings in different European countries to enhance the existing knowledge base of research on supervision and coaching, and to enable participants to network. Researchers from 14 countries participated in the conference, and the conference conclusions emphasized the connection between research and supervisory process given their common goals. Both processes aim to encourage critical (self) reflection, innovativeness in application and, in general, a change for the better in the sense of promoting quality service for users. The topics that were in the research focus included the connection

3 For the readers who are not acquainted in detail with the concept of supervision, we recommend the following sources: Ajduković and Cajvert (2004.), Ajduković (2009.), Ajduković (2018.), Ajduković (2020.), Urbanc (2022.).

4 For more information on the development of the university specialist study Supervision in Psychosocial Work see Ajduković and Sladović Franz (2022.).

between supervisory practice and supervision research, the role and complexity of research on supervision, the development of supervision and coaching in Europe and the topics related to accelerated changes in the labor market. The results of this conference were collected in a publication which was presented in 2017 during a summer school of supervision in Rotterdam.

Considering the role of ANSE in promoting research on supervision, it is important to point out an ECVision⁵ project. Key outcomes of this project were the establishment of the European competence framework and a Glossary of supervision and coaching in Europe that received its Croatian edition (Judy and Knopf, 2015.; Ajduković, 2018.).

Apart from that, ANSE encourages young professionals and researchers to exchange their research experience within the European supervisory professional community, so in June 2012 it organized an online event called Young researchers' days.

Such international research conferences are certainly motivating for the development of evidence-based practice since most European research literature is written in the languages of individual countries, which makes research papers and contributions from many countries such as Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia, Latvia, Estonia etc. less available. For the same reasons, a large part of the professional supervisory community in Europe is unaware of the research that is conducted in German-speaking countries (Austria, Switzerland and Germany).

The professional supervisory community is also interested in research that is conducted in English-speaking countries (the USA, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand etc.), and whose concepts of supervision differ from the so-called 'continental' ones, but because of the language barriers not enough effort is being made to explore those differences. Considering the existing risk of conceptual and terminological implications and the complexity of the research process in the area of supervision and coaching, outcomes of projects such as ECVision are all the more important due to the systematization of the diversities of tradition, methods, concepts and definitions of supervision.

Generally, it has been shown that in the countries in which the tradition of supervision is well established and where the national supervisory association leans on some educational/research institution or institute, there is a relevant selection of research topics and projects, as well as an increasing corpus of professional and scientific literature on supervision. Therefore a good connection between HDSOR (Croatian Association for Supervision and Organisational Development), the Postgraduate University Study Program "Supervision in psychosocial work" and the Doctoral Study Program "Social work and social policy" is an important resource

5 ECVision project within the LEONARDO project platform approved by the European Commission in 2012. aimed to compare, determine and validate supervisory competencies and outline the development of supervision and coaching in Austria, Croatia, the Netherlands, Germany, Hungary and Sweden.

for the development of supervisory evidence-based practice. An outcome of this co-operation were *1st research days on supervision*. The conference will be presented in more detail hereinafter.

THE PURPOSE OF THE FIRST RESEARCH DAYS ON SUPERVISION

The purpose of the conference was to promote relevant research on supervision in Croatia that has theoretical significance for a better conceptualization of supervision and applied significance for a better education of supervisors and a better quality of supervisory work. The aims of the conference were:

- a better understanding, terminological and conceptual harmonization of qualitative models and methods of research in research of supervision;
- a clearer delineation between the levels of methodological demands of doctoral dissertations that need to have a clear scientific contribution and professional specialist final papers that should contribute to the development of supervisory practice;
- a review of experience in conducting research in supervision in the context of different systems (social welfare, educational, health care and judicial system);
- reflection on who and why needs research on supervision.

The expected outcomes were strengthening mentoring capacities for the research on supervision, strengthening the competencies of doctoral students for keeping scientific discourse of qualitative research in research on supervision, and a clearer connection between scientific outcomes on the doctoral and specialist final papers on supervision.

To achieve a synergy between essential characteristics of supervision and the qualitative research on supervision, all participants participated in reflection and dialogue: doctoral students and postgraduate students of supervision, mentors, decision-makers, and supervision users in the social welfare system, educational system, judicial system and the civil sector.

The participation of colleagues from Slovenia, Tatjana Rožič and Nuša Kovačević Tojnko from the University Sigmund Freud Vienna (Ljubljana branch), gave the conference an international dimension. They outlined two research studies, the first one related to a research of common factors of metasupervisory programs in Slovenia, and the second to the dynamic connection of the processes of metasupervision, supervision and psychotherapy assessed by synergy-navigation system.

RESEARCH ON SUPERVISION AT THE DOCTORAL LEVEL

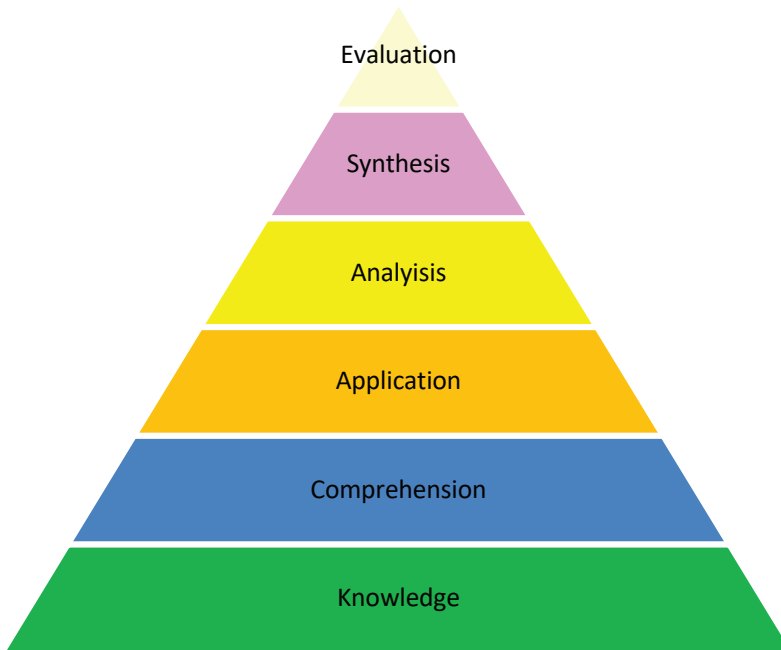
An analysis of research on supervision at the doctoral level was conducted within a panel discussion moderated by Daria Rovani, starting from the perspective of four supervisors, two of whom defended their doctoral theses in the area of supervision (Maca Cicak and Dunja Pačirski who defended her thesis in the USA), and two of whom are in the process of their finalisation (Tatjana Vlašić and Margareta Mešić), as well as from the perspective of their mentors (Marina Ajduković and Kristina Urbanc)

Doctoral students first briefly outlined the aims and methodology of their doctoral research. Their reflections on the following topics were focused on: (1) similarities and differences between the research process and supervision process, (2) multiple perspectives in planning the methodology of a doctoral thesis on supervision, (3) reflection as a research process and supervision process, (4) integration of theory and practice in doctoral research and in the process of supervision and finally (5) personal perspective on the path of expanding the identity from a supervisor practitioner to the identity of a doctoral candidate and researcher, multiple roles with mentors who are simultaneously their colleagues and mentors.

What these doctoral theses on supervision have in common is the use of the qualitative approach. All panel participants expressed that they went through and are still going through a significant role transition from supervisors to researchers and that they are gradually integrating those two roles into a new, expanded professional identity. They also expressed a feeling of loneliness, uncertainty and insecurity in this process. This feeling of loneliness and a need for additional support during the preparation of a doctoral thesis was also previously discussed by Žižak, (2014.:381).

Conceptualisation of doctoral qualitative research on supervision

Since our research on supervision on doctoral level used a qualitative approach, the issue of their conceptualisation in line with Bloom's taxonomy (Picture 1) and expected learning outcomes at the Doctoral Study Program "Social work and social policy" was crucial (Frame 1).



Picture 1. Bloom's taxonomy of educational aims⁶

FRAMEWORK 1

Learning outcomes of the Postgraduate Doctoral Study Social work and Social Policy of special significance for research on supervision

- *critically analyse and synthesise current research studies and assess their methodological quality (outcomes 1 and 2)*
- *critically connect theoretical foundations of research (outcome 4)*
- *critically analyse theoretical concepts and professional values of own research practice and plan further scientific development (outcome 5)*
- *critically analyse and evaluate possibilities and scope of research in relation to research draft, data collection method, sampling and data analysis (outcome 12)*
- *assess potential scopes of conclusions of scientific research in changing professional practice and social policy (outcome 13)*
- *anticipate ethical and social responsibilities and social usefulness for research processes and results (outcome 15)*
- *use newly acquired empirical knowledge in planning, conducting and evaluating interventions (outcome 19)*

⁶ The work by Bloom et al. from 1956. inspired numerous elaborations of the model of educational outcomes which is today widely used in the European context and which is known as Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives.

The qualitative approach is particularly attractive in the area of supervision and in social work research in Croatia in general, since it enables a better understanding of multiple perspectives and relational aspects that is especially significant for supervision. However, the qualitative approach is 'at risk' to become a popular 'fast' solution, particularly if researchers lack a high level of methodological knowledge. Apart from that, it is challenging to harmonize learning outcomes based on Bloom's taxonomy of educational aims of a doctoral thesis which is closer to the quantitative methodology in social sciences in Croatia than to the relational and reflective nature of supervision. Because of this "fragile position of qualitative methodology" and the status of qualitative research which is insufficiently present and recognized in our academic communities, additional attention should be given to the quality of such research studies and the relationship between mentors and doctoral students (Žižak, 2014.:383).

Therefore, in planning doctoral research on supervision that uses the qualitative approach it is necessary to start with several key questions:

- Which necessary characteristics should research on supervision (or any other topic) have based on the qualitative approach in order to have the characteristics of a scientific discourse?
- Which competencies should have a researcher and a mentor of the qualitative approach? How to acquire them and develop them?

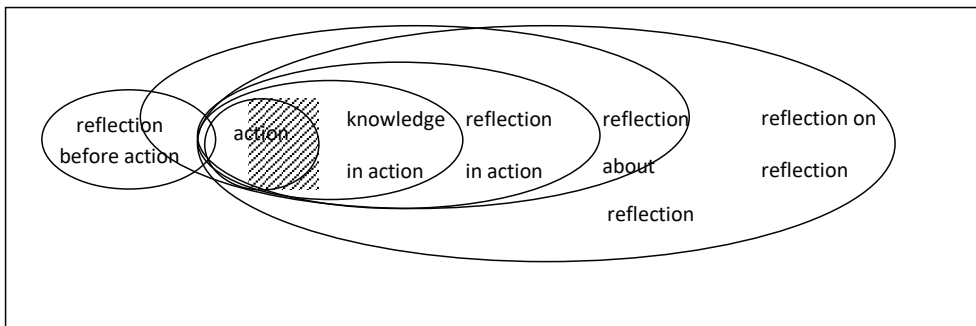
In qualitative research, the emphasis is on the holistic and detailed description of a certain situation or activity. The quality of relationships, activities, situations or experiences in supervision can be analyzed from the perspectives of supervisors and supervisees. Individual cases can be examined (for example, a description of the dynamics of certain supervisory group), events (for example, some crisis situations in supervision) or topics (for example, how to approach the topic of professional stress in supervision). However, starting from Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives that is applied as "the golden standard in defining the objectives of any educational program", it is clear that understanding and usefulness are necessary, but not sufficient for the doctoral research level. That is one of the borderlines between the expected outcomes of doctoral theses and specialist papers. Thus, depending on the aim of the research, conclusions are reached after analyses by (1) description and/or (2) creating theories that are needed for the doctoral level of research. For example, the process of the expansion of supervisory identity can be determined by using online supervision, or the effects of the supervisor's outlook on the process of supervision and effects of supervision can be determined. Theoretical sensitivity and openness to different interpretations are necessary, as well as observing relationships between different phenomena. Bias in reaching conclusions and in interpretations is visible in papers, which include, for example: "finding" patterns and relationships that are not empirically supported, personal preferences

of interpretations, insufficient level of awareness of the operation of own characteristics (knowledge, motivation, relationship with the collocutor...) on interpretation, "forcing" the data to fit an imagined model and neglecting alternative conclusions and interpretations (Ajduković, 2020.).

Necessary characteristics of qualitative research on supervision at the doctoral level

Starting from Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives, we are referring to some specific necessary characteristics of the qualitative research on supervision at the doctoral level⁷. The purpose of this text is not to give a lesson on the qualitative approach but to emphasize some specific features that are significant in mentorship.

Qualitative research studies are very complex and in them 'the researcher's voice' is intertwined with 'research participant's voice'. In supervision, 'the participant's voice' can also be 'the supervisor's voice', 'the supervisee's voice' and 'the voice of the supervision user'. A prerequisite of a well-founded and conducted qualitative research is a clear description of research motivations, selection of methods, samples and research questions ('the researcher's voice'), as accurate as possible outline of research findings ('the participant's voice'), a clear transition from the description of findings ('the participant's voice') towards their interpretation ('the researcher's voice') (Ajduković, 2014.). This complexity is well described by the model of reflective learning that can be used as a model of reflective research (Picture 2).



Picture 2: Reflective multiple loops learning model (Cowan, 1993; according to Vizek Vidović and Vlahović Štetić, 2007.:302)

⁷ On how to plan, conduct and present findings of qualitative research, see more in Ajduković (2014.).

There is another specific problem in doctoral research of supervision that should be transformed into a challenge. Namely, it is how to present the model of reflective learning with multiple loops in the defining of research questions and the expected outcome of the doctoral research to the level of integration, synthesis and creation of new knowledge. In that process it is crucial to step aside from the mere formulaic usage of terms that appear in Bloom's model. The following research questions illustrate this:

- How do supervisors integrate 'online' supervision into their professional identity of supervisors?
- How do supervisors describe the development and application of professional competencies needed to ensure the quality of 'online' supervision?

Instead of simple descriptive research questions:

- How do supervisors describe/recognize factors that contribute to the efficiency of 'online' supervision?
- How do supervisors describe specific features of the content, process and conditions of conducting 'online' supervision?

In the preparation of the doctoral research theses, it is necessary to state that there is no research in a particular area because it is a new phenomenon or because the phenomenon is being observed differently and the existing corpus of knowledge is not sufficient for its full comprehension, and then explain:

- Why is it necessary to conduct this research by using the qualitative approach?
- How can such research contribute to the existing research (however scarce it was)?
- How is the phenomenon in focus connected to the existing theories of human behaviour and social relationships?
- Which theories can help in understanding this phenomenon and on which theories is the selection of an approach based?
- Does the research confirm or examine some questions and patterns that are significant for the evaluation of practice?

Experience shows that potential weaknesses of research in this area are that (1) insufficient theoretical conceptualization of the context and/or research topic necessarily leads to unclear operationalization and description of the procedures of operationalization of research questions, (2) defining very general aims of the research with research questions that are not clearly formulated and operationalized. Additionally, the so-called phenomenological research questions are not used enough, as for example "What is it like (to be)...?"

- What is it like to be a supervisor in an online environment?
- How do supervisees describe the manner in which they present their outlook in supervision?

The inner processes of a researcher during research are frequently not transparent enough. It is therefore particularly important to systematically monitor and note reflection during data collection and/or analysis.

In the qualitative approach, it is also necessary to determine the theoretical position of a researcher and/or personal experiences with the research topic so that the users of research can know through which 'filter' a researcher analyzes and interprets findings.

As a rule, potential risks that can jeopardize the authenticity and independence of a doctoral thesis are not mentioned in the thesis, and they can be highly demonstrated when using the qualitative approach:

- What is the role and the relationship between the mentor and the doctoral candidate in private and professional life?
- Who is more interested in the topic and expected findings – the mentor or the doctoral candidate?
- In which areas are the mentor and the doctoral candidate in unequal positions of power?
- What are the research competencies and competencies regarding supervision and regarding qualitative methodology of the mentor and how did he/she acquire them?
- In cases of socially sensitive topics or direct research involving traumatised participants, how were the researchers supported by their mentors? How was secondary traumatising or research fatigue prevented?

Considering the aims of these research days on supervision, it is not possible to give elaborated answers to all questions that were raised, but it is important to recognize them, name them and motivate researchers and mentors to consider them when planning their future research.

A relational perspective and a wider context of a shift of research paradigms should be also mentioned. Postmodern social work and postmodern psychology generally question neutrality which is one of the foundations of quantitative methodology. Nowadays even natural sciences are slowly giving up on the idea that the observer and the observed are separated; i.e. now we know that the observer influences the measurement results by their perspective, at least in the area of quantum physics. Key equations of quantum physics do not describe precisely what is happening to a certain physical system but only how one physical system perceives another. What does that mean? Reality is nothing but interaction.

Everything in the world constantly interacts and at that the condition of one bears traces of everything else it has interactions with; in that sense they constantly exchange information about each other (Rovelli, 2017.).

This principle of quantum physics is not mentioned to confuse readers, but to remind them of the reality of interactions and of the fact that interactions are characteristics of the research process. This contributed to strengthening the qualitative approach in researching the processes of supervision that are based on interaction. In this process it is important to take into consideration in planning, implementation and reaching conclusions in qualitative research where scientific criteria are complied with, which was already mentioned in this paper and which is described in detail in key textbooks and scientific contributions in methodology (Milas, 2005.).

Finally, in the qualitative doctoral theses in the area of supervision, it is not easy to integrate the qualitative approach that is science and art. The scientific part relates to the analytics, rigor, discipline and criticality of perspectives. The artistic part relates to playfulness, adventurousness, metaphoricality, creativity and perspicacity. The challenge is to strike a balance and preserve credibility by using 'science' so that adventurousness does not turn into irresponsibility, playfulness into frivolity, and by using 'art' so that systematicity does not turn into rigidity, and rigor into limitations. Research in the area of supervision as a creative space deserves that.

CONTRIBUTION OF RESEARCH FOR THE SPECIALIST STUDY "SUPERVISION IN PSYCHOSOCIAL WORK" TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF HELPING PROFESSIONS

Postgraduate specialist study Supervision in Psychosocial Work is a study program in which the students are trained to independently lead group, individual, team and organizational supervision. Competencies gained in the study enable the candidates to apply the acquired knowledge in a wide range of activities in the area of supervision in psychosocial work – the area of education, the criminal justice system, civil sector and social welfare system. An emphasis is placed on thorough mastering of specific skills needed in the supervisory process and the theoretical foundation of their application. Acquired knowledge can be used in leading developmental-integrative, team and organizational supervision or method supervision.

Out of 20 learning outcomes of the Postgraduate specialist study Supervision in psychosocial work, seven represent a potential framework for research in the area of supervision, i.e. for the preparation of a final professional thesis (Framework 2).

FRAMEWORK 2

Learning outcomes of the Postgraduate specialist study Supervision in Psychosocial Work relevant for research in supervision:

- *interpret essential characteristics of supervision as a specific process of counselling and supporting professionals (outcome 1)*
- *integrate modern theoretical orientations such as systemic approach, humanistic approach, psychodynamic, cognitive and postmodern approach into supervisory work (outcome 2)*
- *analyze the theoretical foundation of specific skills in the supervisory process and their applications (outcome 4)*
- *describe the role of supervision in the professional development of professionals (outcome 7)*
- *interpret and analyze value-ethical components in the conduct of supervisory work (outcome 17)*
- *develop professional identity of supervisors and advocate standards of quality supervisory practice in accordance with European professional standards (outcome 19)*
- *integrate into professional standards the significance (or role) of lifelong learning and development of supervisory style (outcome 20)*

The program of the Postgraduate specialist study Supervision in Psychosocial Work was created in line with modern European standards for education in supervision by ANSE (www.supervision-eu.org/anse), and was revised and adjusted to the outcomes of the Leonardo da Vinci Multilateral Project "A European system of Comparability and Validation of supervisory competencies" that was conducted from 2015 to 2017 and in which Croatia participated as one of seven countries that managed the project, as it was already mentioned (Ajduković, 2018.).

So far, five generations of candidates have successfully completed this study and by September 2023, more than 50 final papers were defended, which included review papers, research papers and papers focused on monitoring and specific characteristics of individual professional development of candidates. Many final papers represent significant material for further study and teaching, as well as for reflection on future research. The most prevalent papers are qualitative research on smaller, appropriate samples (approximately 50%). We would like to especially point out the thematic issues of the Annual of Social Work (2007., 14(2)2007/2 and 2011., 18(1)) focused on supervision and based on defended final papers of the candidates of the study. This synergy between the selection of research topics that derive from practice, the educational needs of the candidates and the modern supervisory paradigm is one of the ways how supervision influences the professional community and vice versa, which will be further elaborated in the continuation.

Applied significance of research on supervision: Interactive and synergic interaction between supervision and the professional community

The third panel within the conference dedicated to research on supervision had in its focus the development of supervision in the public and civil sectors. Within the panel, discussions were held about (1) interaction between supervision and the professional community in the sense of the development of supervisory practice, (2) education of supervisors, (3) research on supervision at the level of the specialist study and (4) effects of research on the advancement of supervisory practice within the social welfare system, education system, the judicial system and civil sector. The participants of this panel were supervisors from different 'sectors': Nikica Hamer (Victim and Witness Support Service), Ivana Šešo (Family Center Zagreb), Daria Rovani (Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb), Gordana Daniel (SOS Children's Village) and Ljerka Tuđa Družinec (Croatian Institute for Social Work). The moderator of this panel was Kristina Urbanc.

Reflecting on the significance of the development of supervision in the public and civil sectors, the participants pointed out the importance of 'spreading' supervision, from its beginnings within the social welfare system until today when it is conducted within the education system, the judicial system and the civil sector. Although supervision was not introduced methodically and systematically, we can state with certainty that it is present today and that it 'leaves its mark', even in some segments of the health care system, specifically those that deal with prevention of mental health difficulties. During the last two decades, the understanding of the professional public about supervision as some kind of control has transformed into the idea of supervision as a resource for support and new knowledge, as well as a tool to avoid professional stagnation.

In parallel with the change in perception about the role of supervision, the issue of its representation in legislation and its sustainability in daily practice has arisen (Urbanc, 2023.). Thus supervision is today a standard of quality maintenance in, for example, SOS Children's Villages where it is obligatory for all employees who work with children, and the awareness of its importance is increasingly present in planning various programs and projects on the level of the civil sector, but also on the institutional levels of the public sector.

Supervision entered into the education system somewhat later, in 2008 and the first supervision in the judicial system was conducted in 2013. Although supervision was introduced to the judicial system last, a shift from project funding to a systematic and more sustainable approach to the organization of supervision can be noted.

All panelists state that they had positive experiences with supervision and they recognize the need for its continuity in different systems. However, the continuity and predictability of organizing supervisory cycles proved to be challenging for implementation. The first obstacle is related to the lack of accessibility of supervision in some parts of Croatia on the level of all aforementioned systems. This is accentuated by an uneven distribution of licensed supervisors in the Republic of Croatia, which could be overcome by organizing online supervision. One of the important prerequisites for conducting supervision is to conduct it during the working hours of the participants since it belongs to the 'professional' part of life. Although the most difficult thing at first was to make the managers, who had to approve that, aware of the fact that most employees have no replacement while they are on supervision (f.e. educators in children's homes, professionals in nursing homes or employees of local offices of the Croatian Institute for Social Work if supervision is held on the days planned for fieldwork) which is the greatest challenge today. Also, the question arises of how to organize supervision in case of emergencies in which employees are obliged to take part.

The current legal wording of the right to supervision is vague. In the social welfare system, the employees have a legal right to supervision once a year. It is unclear if 'once a year' means one supervisory meeting or continuous work throughout the year. As an answer to this problem, the panelists see the possibility of defining what 'once a year' means through by-laws and ordinances of individual institutions.

With regard to the education system, the greatest difficulty is the lack of systematic supervision, and along with that a small number of supervisors within the system. Since supervision is held during working hours, the employees should not be working during that time. However, this is particularly difficult to achieve because, as already mentioned, there is nobody to replace them while they are in supervision. Also, one of the difficulties is certain specific characteristics in conceptualizing supervision in the area of education, which has some characteristics of developmental-integrative, and some characteristics of team supervision. However, this is not applied to teams but frequently encompasses only the employees of the same educational institution, which calls into question the guidelines for assembling supervisory groups, the trust in groups and the topics that the participants bring into supervision.

In the judicial system, a challenge lies in unclear aspects of organizing supervisory groups. The results of conducted evaluations are contradictory and it is not clear whether they should be heterogeneous or homogenous regarding the profession of experts, and should the groups be led by supervisors from within the system or from the outside.

In civil society organizations, the largest difficulty is ensuring funding for the supervision of employees. Civil society organizations are mainly funded through

projects in which tenders define acceptable costs. They sometimes include small funds for supporting employees, which means the inability to conduct supervisory cycles that would actually provide support and monitor a project process or implementation of a new service. Since the employees who will participate in activities have to be named, the question of voluntary participation in supervision in CSOs also arises.

Popularization of supervision brings some additional difficulties, conceptual and organizational, such as too large supervisory groups, inadequate number of hours, lack of respect for proceduralism and generally unacceptable conditions in which supervision is conducted, and which distort its ethical standards.

According to the panelists, important research topics that should be explored to make the supervisory practice empirically founded include the need to research various organizational and essential aspects of supervision, such as the issue of forming groups (the contribution of homogeneity/heterogeneity considering different criteria), challenges of the application of ethical principles in the implementation and planning of supervision (multiple relationships, confidentiality, voluntariness), as well as continuous evaluation research related to monitoring the outcomes and processes of different forms of supervision.

IN CONCLUSION

Although the applied value of research on supervision is evident, further promotion and synergic interaction between research on supervision, the supervisory community and the wider professional community is needed. Continuous development of a partnership with decision-makers regarding the topics of research is important to ensure sustainability and further growth of supervision in different fields. Therefore, more elaborate research projects should be created jointly by the groups of supervision students (3 to 4) together with their mentor(s). This would enable the creation and synthesis of cumulated and more relevant knowledge.

The analysis of final specialist papers has shown that a frequent topic is the needs and satisfaction with supervision in different fields. These are usually qualitative research focused on process, but not impact of supervision. Evaluation research of supervision outcomes is neglected and scarce in Croatia, but also in the wider European context, primarily because of its complexity. Thus, for example, Carpenter (2016.) analyzed 48 studies (2000.-2012.) dealing with the efficiency of supervision and found that there are very few longitudinal studies and that the focus is on correlation research that cannot answer the question about the outcomes of supervision on the supervisees, but even more significantly, on the clients of supervisees. Due to its methodological complexity, this topic could be the focus of future doctoral research or more complex research projects which would include groups of students of supervision.

Another problem is the insufficient dissemination of research papers within the supervisory and wider professional community. These research papers should be more available on the different websites including the one of the Croatian Association for Supervision and Organizational Development.

The mere fact that 50% out of 50 defended specialist papers used the qualitative approach represents a risk that the same methodological level is to be expected at the doctoral level. The expectations of the scientific outcome of a doctoral thesis are simply higher and different and therefore university specialists who are about to take that road and their mentors should be empowered to be prepared for that from the point of planning the draft research.

Regarding qualitative doctoral research on supervision it is necessary, while keeping high criteria of qualitative research, to continuously monitor the process of research and the dynamics of the relationship between the doctoral student and the mentor since they are both changing in this process. Both of them should be aware that the process of doing a doctoral thesis is frequently a lonely process accompanied by numerous uncertainties for doctoral students, and it is therefore necessary to have focused meetings with the mentor and other doctoral students which will provide creative space and time for students to reflect on the development of their professional scientific-research identity (Žižak, 2014.; Tkalčić, 2019.).

The workshops for enhancement of mentors' competencies would also be significant.

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DOPRINOS I OBILJEŽJA SUVREMENIH ISTRAŽIVANJA O SUPERVIZIJI U HRVATSKOJ

SAŽETAK

Povod za ovaj tekst su ishodi 1. istraživačka konferencija o superviziji koja se održala u organizaciji Poslijediplomskog doktorskog studij Socijalni rad i socijalna politika i Poslijediplomskog sveučilišnog specijalističkog studija Supervizija u psihosocijalnom radu u travnju 2023.

Uvodno predavanje o konceptualizacija kvalitativnih istraživanja o superviziji na doktorskoj razini te dva panel u kojem su sudjelovali doktorandi i mentori, pokazalo su da je proces izrade doktorskih radova o superviziji intenzivan proces u kojem se odvija i tranziciju uloga iz supervizorica/supervizora u istraživačice/istraživače supervizije i postupno integriranje te dvije uloge u jedan novi, prošireni profesionalni identitet. Uz to, izrada kvalitativnog doktorata je često osamljenički proces popraćen s brojnim nesigurnostima, te je nužno razvijati nove oblike podrške doktorskim studentima koji će omogućiti kreativni prostor i vrijeme za doktorande da reflektiraju o razvoju svog profesionalnog i znanstveno-istraživačkog identiteta.

Analiza metodoloških aspekata i ishoda specijalističkih radova, te panel supervizora, donositelji odluka i korisnika supervizije u različitim sustavima ukazali su na potrebu i mogućnost daljnjih a unapređenja kao npr. izrada strategije primijenjenih istraživanja u partnerstvu s donositeljima odluka, osmišljavanje složenijih istraživačke projekte u kojima bi sudjelovao tim poslijediplomanata s mentorima. Za kontinuirano održavanje kvalitete specijalističkih i doktorskih radova potrebne su ciljane metodoloških radionica za studente i mentore.

Ključne riječi: *istraživanja o superviziji; razvoj znanstveno-istraživačkog identiteta supervizora; primijenjeni značaja istraživanja o superviziji; radionice za vođenje kvalitativna istraživanja*



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