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TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS ON THE CONTRIBUTION OF SUPERVISION TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract:

This paper presents some of the characteristics of supervision as a specific developmental educational and supportive method of professional development and reflection that we studied in a group of students and a group of teachers. The aim of our research was to find out what participants in supervision sessions perceive the contribution of supervision sessions to their personal and professional development. We conducted a qualitative research in which two different methods were applied to two groups: a) in the group of students from the Faculty of Education at the University of Ljubljana, we conducted a qualitative analysis of the texts of their written reflections, b) we conducted a focus group with four teachers who had participated in intensive supervision sessions in the past. Despite its limitations (the conclusions of the study cannot be generalized as it was conducted on selected samples), the study provides some insights into students' and teachers' beliefs about the benefits of supervision. It can be concluded that supervision is primarily important for students as an entry into the profession (by raising awareness of what supervision is and the importance of continuous professional development), while for those already in the profession, supervision offers a range of other benefits (reflection on work, support, professional and personal growth...).

Keywords: developmental educational model of supervision, teachers, students, personal and professional development

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Introduction

The meaning of supervision

The crisis we find ourselves in and the learning society we are transitioning into is a challenge to all who recognize that learning is a central task for personal development and a successful career; a task which continues throughout life (Falender, et. al., 2004; Kolb, 1984; Kolb, et. al., 2001). The process of supervision represents one of the possible processes of lifelong learning and development of adults. In this paper, we present some characteristics of supervision as a specific educational, developmental and support method for professional development and reflection. A particular focus is on explaining the link between personal and professional development through supervision and its integration into a so-called »professional self«, that we examined in a group of students and a group of teachers.

We can see that this definition is more in line with what mentoring means in Slovenia (Zabukovec, 2016). However, in the UK and Europe, a model of supervision has been established that emphasizes the different functions of supervision (e.g. developmental, educational, supportive, normative, etc.) (Ajduković and Cajvert, 2004; Milne and Watkins, 2014; Puhalić, 2019; Žvelc, 2016). Individual practitioners of supervision have emerged in Slovenia since the 1960s, both in the field of psychotherapy and in the fields of social work and social pedagogical work. Initially, it was carried out by more experienced practitioners (often psychologists and psychiatrists) (Vec, Kobolt, 2010). Only later, with the introduction of specialist (1997) and later master's degree programs (2009), did supervision become an independent professional orientation with its own training. The training was based on the so-called developmental-educational pedagogical model, which was transferred to us from the Netherlands. Its basic premises can be recognized in the definition by Žorga (1995): "Supervision in the field of pedagogical activity is a specific learning, development and support method that enables teachers, educators and others working in educational practice to gain new personal and professional insights through the integration of practical experience and theoretical knowledge, thus building their professional identity." As we can see, the developmental-educational model of supervision encompasses both supervision (which could also be related to so-called models from psychotherapeutic practice, e.g. O'Shaughnessy, et al., 2010), development and process (in which it is similar to so-

called process models, e.g. Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Holloway, 2014) and learning (Ponticell and Zepeda, 2004; Wilkes 1994 in Goldman, 2011). For this reason, the model is classified as an integrative model of supervision (Smith, 2009; Stoltenberg et al., 1998; Žvelc, 2016).

According to Kadushin (1985), the primary goal of supervision is the development of better self-awareness among professionals and the creation of greater autonomy in professional work. Both lead to better informed action, more freedom of decision and the assumption of more responsibility. Such action is necessary in the professional field because the problems that professionals in the helping professions are confronted with often also affect their private lives and are therefore difficult to delimit. The fact that supervision is a process in which integrated professional and personal development takes place is also supported by other authors (e.g. Scaife, 2010; Stoltenberg et al., 1998). In the course of supervision, the professional undergoes not only a change in practices (behaviour, attitudes) changes, but also a gradual change in their beliefs (thoughts, cognitive constructs), emotions, relationships with colleagues and students (or students if teachers were in the supervision process), and sometimes (at least partially) values (see also Scaife et al., 1998). Changes in the professional domain (at least when it is not just a matter of changing or adapting behaviour in a single, specific situation) inevitably entail changes on a personal level as well. Awareness of the need for constant change and learning is therefore one of the keys to professional self-awareness and good self-actualization.

Scaife (2010) describes personal and professional development in supervision as a process in which the individual's personal characteristics, values, lifestyle and relationship formation are changed so which the achievement of personal growth coincides with professional development. From this it can be concluded that a fundamental condition for the development of the integrated characteristics of the professional is already the understanding of the need to change, to reshape the inner world and to seek ever new opportunities in the professional field. In short, a prerequisite for the development of integrated qualities is the improvement of awareness of the need for continuous professional development and change. This is the only way to avoid stagnation in the profession. Appropriate supervision enables the professional to integrate their actions, feelings and thoughts, to integrate practical experience with

theoretical knowledge, to put theory into practice and to learn to carry out their work independently. In this way, the professional develops not only professionally but, as already mentioned, also as a whole person. Van Kessel and Haan (1993) also see the fundamental goal of supervision as a 'two-dimensional integration' that leads to the so-called professional self. When this happens, the professional is able to harmonize the functioning of their self as a person with specific personality traits (first dimension) with the characteristics of their professional functioning and requirements (second dimension).

However, supervision is not (psycho-)therapy and is not primarily aimed at personal change. Supervision is focused on professional situations and primarily aims to improve the professional functioning and well-being of the supervisee in professional situations (Vec et al., 2014). Similarly, Kilminster et al. (2007) emphasize the importance of supervision as it is based on concrete professional situations and experiences and provides guidance and feedback for professional, educational and personal development. In the context of supervision, the supervisee is thus encouraged to examine and learn from their personal strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and challenges that may have a positive or negative impact on their professional performance and development. In supervision, professionals explore and learn new patterns of professional behaviour, primarily by reflecting on their own work experiences in a safe environment with the supervisor and other supervisees (in the case of group supervision) (Hawkins and Shohet, 2006). Better, safer and more appropriate care for the client indirectly leads to greater well-being for the client themselves (Gilbert and Evans, 2000; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006).

Supervision for students

Student life can be extremely stressful as students face many challenges both personally and when entering the professional field (Moore et al., 2011). Both the study of specific content and intensive teaching practice are important to the quality of student teachers' education. However, current practice is moving away (at least in part) from the classic mentoring approach, where the emphasis is on the mentor providing instruction, guidance, supervision, correction, etc. It is increasingly approaching the principles of supervision, as some authors associate it with reflection (Cvetek, 2000) or reflection-in-action (Schoen, 1992), pointing out that it can take place simultaneously with mentoring (where the mentor is responsible for

the quality of the work) and supervision (which allows the student to link and integrate what is learned in theory with what is learned in practice; Žorga, 2002).

Reflective practice that is appropriately integrated into the course of study corresponds to Kolb's "experiential learning model" (Kolb, 1981; Kolb and Kolb, 2008). According to Kolb, learning is a circular process in which the individual acquires knowledge through the transformation of experiences. Accordingly, experience alone is not sufficient for learning; it also requires appropriate processing of these experiences, which begins with the perception of the experience and its reflection, which can lead to the formation of abstract concepts and generalizations. This is followed by the testing of these concepts in new situations, which leads to new experiences.

Teaching, like any intensive work with people, is very demanding and requires a lot of energy to remain compassionate, understanding, calm and patient when surrounded by anxiety, pain and anger (Maslach, 2003; Maslach and Leiter, 2002). For this reason, it is important to sensitize students and prepare them to take care of themselves (Moore et al., 2003). Psychosocial balancing skills and strategies help students (especially in teaching and support professions) to manage their expectations and work-life balance, delineate responsibilities, which reduces stress and prevents professional burnout (Bloomquist et al., 2015; Lewis and King, 2019). In addition, students' purposeful reflection on professional experiences and self-awareness is one of the most important factors for professional growth and development as future professionals (Chang et al., 2009).

The parallels between supervision and education

Ponticell in Zepeda (2004, p. 45) note a number of parallels between adult education (which may include studies) and the intended effects of the supervision process for teachers: both promote self-regulation and reflection, develop the multiple skills and strengths of both individuals and the communities in which they are involved, both increase awareness and responsibility for one's actions, and both contribute to greater openness, interactivity, democratic and developmental orientation at both individual and social levels.

In the course of education, it is not enough to acquire certain competencies (Jarvis-Selinger et al., 2012), as it is necessary to

gradually shape both professional identity and integrate personal and professional development (Salvador, 2016). Similarly, supervision (at least the developmental-educational model) is focused on the acquisition of knowledge and skills and the integration of theory and practice as well as personal and professional development. It can be argued that both study and supervision lead to a higher quality of work, as theory should support action in practice and, conversely, the practical experience of practitioners should contribute to the exploration and development of new theories (Caspi and Reid, 2002; Thompson and Thompson, 2008). Similarly, supervision and study integrate personal and professional development as they are mutually dependent and inextricably linked (Bradley and Ladany, 2001; Moore et al., 2011).

With its approach and methods, supervision enables more effective learning because, as Kadushin (1985, pp. 145-167) already emphasized, we learn better when: a) we are motivated to learn (higher motivation is particularly related to the fact that the content and the way of learning are related to our needs, e.g. when we are involved in the planning of learning or when we are voluntarily involved in the learning process, b) when we can devote ourselves primarily to learning in a learning situation (we are not burdened with unpleasant feelings such as fears, shame, guilt, worries, we have good relationships, realistic expectations, etc.), c) learning is satisfying (when we see that it is effective and brings results), d) we are actively involved in the learning process (we are not only "recipients" of knowledge, but we actively co-create it), e) the content is conveyed in a meaningful way (with reference to our real experiences, work situations, etc.), f) the supervisor gives each individual a sense of uniqueness and specialness (recognizes their specific needs and their way of acting, thinking, feeling). In this sense, we see the quality of supervision, like the quality of study, as part of continuous formative monitoring (Smyth, 1982).

However, we should also emphasize another point of contact between quality supervision and effective learning: a good relationship between the practitioners (supervisor or teacher and supervisee or student/learner). In the field of supervision, many authors (e.g. Crook Lyon and Potkar, 2010; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Holloway, 2014; Örgen and Boëthius, 2014; Pugh and Hatala, 2016; Scaife, 2010) point out that the attitude of the teacher towards the student in general or the individual factors of attitude (empathy,

respect, sincerity, giving support, dealing with conflict situations, directness, understanding, positive attitude, congruence, warmth, honesty, flexibility, caring, attentiveness, curiosity, etc.) are all important factors in supervision.) are all important factors in the teacher-student relationship.) contributes significantly to better performance, greater effort and perseverance in tasks, a sense of inclusion, greater intrinsic motivation, peer acceptance and support, etc. (Cristine et al., 2022; Kozina et al., 2018; Martin and Collie, 2019; Rutar Ilc, 2019).

Research problem

We wanted to find out what contribution the 8 supervision sessions have made to the students of the Faculty of Education as part of their studies and how the teachers who have participated in supervision in the past (2-6 supervision processes) see the contribution of supervision to their professional and personal growth. We also wanted to compare whether there are similarities and differences between the two groups in how they viewed the contribution of supervision sessions.

The aim of the study was to find out how the participants in supervision (students and teachers) see the contribution of these sessions to themselves and their professional development.

Method: The qualitative research was conducted in two groups using two methods:

(a) with a group of students (aged 23-25) from the Faculty of Education (127 first-year Master's students from the 2019/20 (46 students - 1 male), 2020/21 (42 female) and 2021/22 (39 students - 1 male) generations), I conducted a qualitative analysis of the texts of their written reflections written after each of the 8 supervision sessions,

b) with a group of four female teachers (aged 45-65) from elementary school who had participated in supervision sessions in the past (2 to 6 processes with 15 sessions each), I conducted a focus group with 4 female teachers (2 participated in 6 supervision processes, 1 in 4 and 1 in 2).

Starting questions in the focus group:

How do you view your experience of supervision today (what is most important to you now, looking at it from a distance, what was important to you then, what did it contribute to, what did it change for you, etc.)?

Have you benefited from supervision and what has supervision done for you professionally (how has it influenced your work with children, colleagues, professional development, career, attitudes, approaches, relationships, etc.)?

Has it and what has it done for you personally? (how has it affected you personally, your relationships with others, yourself, your views, attitudes etc.)

What is still important to you today in relation to supervision?

Is there anything that could be described as negative, unpleasant, inappropriate that has or had to do with supervision?

Research questions:

RQ 1: What is the contribution of teachers in the supervision process?

RQ 2: What contribution does the involvement in the supervision process make to the students?

RQ 3: How do teachers and students perceive the benefits of involvement in the supervision process differently?

RQ 4: Has participation in supervision brought about changes in the personal lives of teachers and students, and in what ways?

Procedures data processing

In my qualitative research, I analyzed the data through a qualitative analysis of both the students' written reflections (written after each of the eight meetings) and the transcripts of the teachers' focus group interviews. I used coding and an inductive approach to process the data. This is characterized by the fact that the codes are determined during the analysis of the text and are not prepared in advance, but that abstract concepts are formed from the empirical data (Mesec, 1998; Vogrinc, 2008).

In data processing, I relied on the coding process described by Kordeš and Smrdu (2015), i.e. the organization of the material, the definition of coding units, open coding, the selection of relevant concepts in higher-order categories, axial coding, the selection and definition of relevant categories, and relational coding and the formulation of grounded theory.

Editing the focus group material involved transcribing the recorded material into a Word document. In transcribing, I omitted parts where we discussed things unrelated to the purpose of the group (greetings, discussion of procedure, etc.). For the students' written reflections, I

included all written material in the qualitative analysis. I defined the coding units by marking the parts of the written material that I found relevant, meaningful and interesting in relation to the research topic. In open coding, for each selected coding unit I wrote down a key word or phrase that captured the content of the highlighted content. Some of the coding units were given more than one code, as they covered several areas. In this way, I obtained Tier I codes. This was followed by combining the Tier I codes into Tier II codes, i.e. finding more broad terms that still covered the content of the text. In the axial coding, I linked statements with similar meaning. This was followed by the selection of relevant codes and the creation of categories based on the selected parts of the text under each code. I placed the categories in relationships according to the research questions. Finally, I attempted to formulate a grounded theory by integrating the data collected and the theory reviewed.

An example of coding student reflection

Personal Code	Coding unit	1st order codes	Categories
ŠZ72021	I was also able to learn a lot from my classmates. It was interesting to observe their experiences, their actions, their coping with situations and to learn from their experiences.	Learning from other students	Higher quality of professional work

An example of coding a transcript of a conversation from a focus group of teachers

Personal Code	Coding unit	1st order codes	Categories
U1	Looking back today, the most important thing for me is that I learnt how to solve problems in supervision. That doesn't mean I don't have them anymore, but I know they can be solved. Maybe today I prefer the word challenge to problem, although I still use it a lot.	Learned problem solving	Higher quality of professional work

Results and discussion:

Despite its limitations (the conclusions of the survey cannot be generalized as it was conducted on selected samples), the survey provides some insight into students' and teachers' perceptions of supervision. In their written reflections on the supervision sessions, students expressed that it was important for them to gain insight into what supervision is, how it is conducted, what methods are used, etc. (level of information and knowledge), some of them emphasized that they are aware of the importance of supervision for their professional development, and a small part of them also came to some changes in their beliefs (e.g. regarding the division of responsibilities at work, clearer ideas about their professional role, etc.). In the focus group, a group of female teachers emphasized to a greater extent the importance of supervision for their professional development (changing teaching and communication patterns, building relationships with students and their parents) and the recognition of supervision as one of the necessary ways for continuous professional development, the recognition of supervision as a form of peer support in solving concrete problems in both behavioural and emotional areas, and the importance of supervision for personal development (changes in partner relationships, setting boundaries, responsibilities, etc.). It can be concluded that supervision is primarily important for students as an entry into the profession (by raising awareness of the importance of supervision and continuous professional development), while for those already in the profession, supervision brings a number of other benefits (reflection on work, supervision, personal growth, etc.). Below we will break down the above points by category, which we have identified separately for both groups (students and teachers).

Categories for the Students group:

Knowledge, information (what is supervision, what is it for, what are its functions, working methods, how does it work, what are the different forms of supervision...) (e.g.: "I always thought that supervision is a kind of control that monitors whether you are doing a good job or not").

The importance of supervision; the theory and experiences of supervision contribute to an awareness of the need for supervision in future work (e.g.: "I believe that supervision can really contribute to better work, not to fall asleep, but to develop your competence, and it's even easier for yourself if you can share your problems.").

Higher quality of professional work; learning about a certain method (incident method, two-chair method, method as...), how to act more professionally in a certain situation or how to act better in future, similar situations, from the presentation of the actions of others, getting a view of possible other ways of acting (e.g. "I realized that my behavior with child D. is not the only possible one, but that I could also act like U." /classmate/).

Awareness of responsibility; why we are responsible in our work and what the responsibility of others is (e.g.: "I used to be fully burdened with the fact that as a voluntary learning helper I have to do everything the parents expect of me: that K. has better grades and that he enjoys learning and does not get into trouble at school anymore, but now I know that these things do not just depend on me").

Clarification of one's own professional role (and differentiation from the roles of other professionals); (e.g: When I first learned about some methods, I thought that I was now the one who had to help the child with everything, but now I see that part of it is my professional work and part of it is the work of others who work with the child (e.g. psychologist, social worker)).

Impact on personal life; how to set boundaries, how to define what is a problem and what is not, the use of some counseling and communication techniques (e.g.: "I used active listening with my boyfriend, and then he told me how well I helped him, even though he came up with the solution himself because I just listened to him").

The experience of different approach; compared to most other methods, the supervision sessions (exercises) were exclusively experience-oriented, working in smaller groups... (e.g.: "It was strange that we had to sit in a circle at the beginning, but that was also very important to the professor, what we expect from these meetings.").

Categories for a group of working teachers:

Knowledge, information (what supervision is, how to behave in certain situations with children, parents, colleagues) (e.g.: "I definitely communicated more easily with parents, colleagues and students. I think that because of everything I have learned, I have been able to work better with parents and contribute more easily to solving the problems that arise." "I think I learned some basics of understanding myself and others in the supervision sessions. I realized that this is important in all the roles I have. Some theoretical knowledge has often helped me to solve problems...").

The importance of the supervision process; the theory and experience of supervision contribute to an awareness of the need for supervision in professional work (e.g.: "At the time, it was important for me to be heard." "I can calm down, I have time to think about what is happening to me, I can really focus on something.").

Higher quality of professional work; professional development, learning about the contribution of supervision in general or with certain methods, how one could act more professionally in a certain situation or how one could act better in future, similar situations, gaining insight into possible other ways of acting from the account of others' actions (e.g. "There were also uncomfortable moments, for example when we were confronted with silence because no one had an example. But even the most unpleasant things turned out to be suitable circumstances for learning, because when I feel good or even great, I enjoy the moment and do not look for new possibilities, improvements, solutions.").

Awareness of responsibility; why we are responsible in our work and what the responsibility of others is (e.g.: "What I remember most is learning to survive, and not just survive, but to work with students with behavior problems. It also helped me a lot to recognize what my problem is in certain situations and what someone else's problem is." "I have learned to deal with problems better - to figure out which problems are actually mine (so I do not falsely own other people's problems), which ones are unsolvable due to circumstances, and which ones it makes sense to invest energy in.").

Clarification of one's own professional role (and differentiation from the roles of other professional groups); (e.g.: "I thought that my position defined my profession, but during supervision I realized that my position was much more than that, I saw that I was very much influenced by the supervision group, and not only that, but also by the trainings and seminars I attended. Yes, exactly, and all the books we exchanged and talked about in the chamber. And not forgetting how we were shaped by all the children we worked with and the parents who got on our nerves. Exactly, yes, and when I learned to set boundaries with my husband, I found it easier to do the same in the chamber...").

Impact on personal life; how to set boundaries, how to define what is a problem and what is not, the use of some counseling and communication techniques (e.g.: "Of course, very positive. It was then that I realized that we all make mistakes, or that there's nothing wrong with that. I learned to talk openly about what I think, to discuss different truths...").

Supportive meaning of the group; experiencing the group as a (potential or actual) source of help (e.g.: "If I remember correctly, one of us once said or wrote that she knew she would get our support if something difficult happened to one of us and she needed our support. I feel the same way myself. If there is no one in my life to turn to for help, advice or comfort at that moment, I can turn to the members of the group. Surely someone would write me something encouraging.").

Negative aspects of participating in supervision; the changes that participants initiate in their professional and personal lives also have a negative aspect (e.g.: "I have definitely changed a lot as a result of participating in supervision, which has sometimes led to problems in my partner relationship, although basically I have also learned to solve personal problems there and have also solved some of my private problems. I think that my husband (still a boy at the time) "resents" me in a way for having changed or for hanging out with the group.").

Comparison of categories between students and teachers:

For the teachers, the acquisition of knowledge and information has become part of their professional development, and a few times they expressed that they did not even know exactly where they had acquired a certain knowledge ("I do not know, but we talked about it in supervision, but it could have come from one of the communication trainings"), or how they had upgraded it ("I had heard about it before (about responsibility), I knew it, but I only really understood it when I had an example of it in supervision."). The teachers did not talk about what supervision is, whereas this was clearly expressed in the students' reflections ("I thought supervision was the same as therapy, but now I understand what it really is"). Students tried to put the knowledge into practice more directly ("then I tried to draw a support system map with the children and it worked well"), teachers made more abstract conceptualizations (Kolb, 1984) ("I saw that a support system map can be a great starting point to talk about supportive factors and we do not even have to draw it, so I used it at home with my family"). They also acquired more applied knowledge, similar to what Kilminster et al. (2007), Ponticell and Zepeda (2004), Smyth (1982), and Zabukovec (2016) have previously found. The students expressed a lot of knowledge about supervision, rarely (only for some) also knowledge about themselves, the teachers mainly expressed what they had learned about themselves, their own way of thinking, feeling and acting. They began to use this reflective attitude

in their professional and personal lives and even passed it on to the people they were in contact with ("I used to say to the students on Fridays towards the end of the lesson, well, let us see how the week was, what happened, what was important, what was good, what was not good... " or "I introduced family meetings once a week, and we talked about how the last week was for each of us, and then we thought a bit about what the next week would be like. ").

The importance of supervision was an important factor for both groups, as expected from previous research (e.g. Alila et al., 2016; Goldman, 2011; Kilminster, 2007; Moore, 2011). At the same time, students emphasized the difference between the experience of supervision (which took place in formal tutorials) and that of tutorials and lectures in other courses ('it was so different, so much more personal, not hierarchical at all than elsewhere'), teachers identified supervision as one of the most important methods of ongoing involvement in developing better quality professional work ('having seen what I could get in supervision, I was in it (or talking about it) until I retired, ...'). I can not imagine how anyone can work as intensively with other people as they do in school and not go to supervision. "). The teachers also mentioned several important elements of supervision (e.g.: taking time, being listened to, learning not to give quick prescriptions, realizing how important it is to define a problem well, receiving support, realizing they are not alone, not the only one with a problem, learning and internalizing how to solve problems, applying what they learn to their own life, knowing how to set boundaries, saying NO, being more assertive, realizing how important it is to working on themselves and their own progress, making friends, etc.) than the students (who only mentioned individual elements).

Improving the quality of professional work is a fundamental goal of supervision, as emphasized by most authors in the field (e.g. Bernard and Goodyear, 2014; Bradley and Ladany, 2001; Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Puhalić, 2019; Vec et al., 2014). This is also an area where the differences between students and teachers were significant, as the quality of professional work is clearly influenced not only by involvement in a supervision group (and the number of supervision sessions), but by the full range of experiences. The teachers involved in the focus group had already had a range of experiences before participating in the supervision process (only one teacher was a novice). However, by the time they took part in the

focus group, they all had several years of teaching experience and had already participated in other forms of training. In our view, this made it easier for them to recognize where and to what extent they could integrate the new insights gained in the supervision sessions into their professional work. It should be emphasized that they also actively tested these insights in practice and reflected on them in the follow-up discussions. The teachers also actively tested the methods that they themselves had experienced in the supervision process ("I find it very rewarding to spend 10 minutes at the beginning of the lesson with an activity that activates the pupils, wakes them up or simply makes them think about their mood.").

However, only some of the students worked in the field for which they were studying for (in some form of student or voluntary work) alongside their studies and compulsory internship. Their testing of new findings and methods in supervision was therefore rather limited, sporadic or remained at the conceptual level ("I will apply this", "I think this makes sense" etc.).

Awareness of why they are responsible in their work and what is the responsibility of others was a category in which we did not find qualitative differences in the responses of the students and the workers themselves. In both groups, they came to important conclusions about who is the problem solver in a given situation, how they can distinguish what is the professional's responsibility and what is not, and they recognized what their work can trigger (in terms of cause-effect relationships) and what they can only influence (in addition to other influencing factors). From this, they also drew similar conclusions about who should solve certain problem situations and what.

As pointed out by authors (Kroflič, 2001; Jerald, 2006; Alsubaie, 2015; Batistič Zorec & Jug Došler, 2016), the so-called hidden curriculum in education works in such a way that only after some time in an institution does a professional begin to adopt its culture (a set of unspoken and implicit values, behaviours, procedures and norms that exist in a given setting). Based on what has been written, one might assume that students who have participated in the supervision course recognize the importance of separating responsibilities in professional work, but this is not so important to them in the first years of their employment because they do not live this in practice due to the hidden curriculum they are involved in. It is

only later, when they are involved in processes of self-reflection and questioning of professionalism (e.g. supervision), that they become aware of this issue again and begin to put it into practice realistically (as experienced teachers who have been involved in the supervision process).

The clarification of their own professional role (and its differentiation from the roles of other professionals) is perceived by the students as rather "technical", in the sense of a demarcation of professional fields and areas of work. Only some of them problematized this separation of roles and placed it in the context of specific situations and circumstances (e.g. "I know what my work with a student will be and what my work as a psychologist or social worker will be, but this student is a human being and I wonder if it is really possible to separate these areas in this way because I also have to be a bit of a psychologist and a bit of a social worker and a bit of a mother and probably something else"). Teachers linked their updated professional roles to their competencies. Similar to what Sharrock et al. (2013) found for nurses, our study suggests that it is crucial to look for the link between competencies and professional roles in changing professional roles. While competencies are influenced by the formal education system, they are also influenced by other forms of education (trainings, seminars, reading literature, etc.), various (self-)reflections, reflections, interviews, professional and personal experiences and, besides all this, supervision, which the teachers were good at identifying. It is these other forms of training that contribute significantly to the gradual transformation of the professional role.

We could see a greater impact of supervision on the teachers' personal lives than on the students', which is quite understandable since the teachers participated in at least two supervision processes of 15 sessions each, while the students had only 8 sessions, which were an attempt to simulate supervision sessions. Thus, the teachers changed some of their beliefs and attitudes in a realistic way and implemented these changes in their lives (both professionally and personally) (e.g. "I started to change, I became more assertive, more assertive, I slowly started to set boundaries, first with the children at school, then with my colleagues, then with my parents, then at home and finally even with the head teacher."). Students repeatedly wrote that they applied some of the lessons and methods in their personal lives as well (e.g., "I used active listening with my boyfriend..."), but

we assume that these changes were not permanent and remained more of a one-time experiment (as expressed in one student's written thoughts: "It occurred to me that I should take care of myself differently, but since there was no visible effect last time, I have to wait a bit. But I know it's something I need to work on"). We can therefore conclude (as previous research has also shown, e.g. Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Pugh, 2016; Puhalić, 2019) that supervision had at least a partial (for students) or even significant impact on relationships in the personal and professional sphere.

The truly supportive nature of the group was only emphasized by teachers, although research suggests that all participants would be expected to express it (Alila et al., 2016; Eisenberger et al., 2002). The students, on the other hand, repeatedly mentioned greater group cohesion, better relationships within the group and a greater sense of wellbeing within the group. However, in terms of the supportive meaning that the group can provide, they seem to have remained limited to their previously established friendships with certain individuals in the cohort. The teachers built deeper relationships in the supervision processes, which we see as part of the fact that they were together for a long time (at least in 2 processes they all participated), in these processes they also had to talk about their "weaknesses", "problems", "bad and misguided approaches" (as they called it themselves). In a way, they exposed themselves, presented themselves in their vulnerability (which is not very common in Slovenian culture) and also bonded more intensively as a result, as they received considerable support in the process.

They experienced the group as reliable, safe and trustworthy (e.g. "After a few initial meetings, I started to really trust the group that what I say stays there, that they do not take it outside, because that would be really terrible if it happened."). The experience of the group being a (potential or actual) source of help was not only related to the supervision sessions themselves (e.g.: "If I remember correctly, one of us once said or wrote that she knew she would get our support if something difficult happened to one of us and she needed our support. I feel the same way myself. If there is no one in my life I could turn to for help, advice or comfort at that moment, I can turn to the members of the group"). In this we recognize that some in the group have also made friends.

Only the students emphasized the experience of a different approach (in teaching), which is understandable since their so-called

supervisory experience was tied to the formal delivery of the course (both lectures and exercises). We attribute the fact that they pointed this out in their reflections to the fact that, compared to most other subjects, the work within the supervision sessions (exercises) was exclusively experiential in smaller groups... (e.g.: "It was strange that we had to sit in a circle at the beginning..." or "Everything we heard in theory in the lectures, we then tried out on our own skin in the exercises..."). Collaborative group work by students in itself requires higher work engagement, prevents passivity, improves communication skills and trust in each other (Gruden, 2022), but when this type of cooperation is also associated with giving feedback to each other, it can significantly improve performance both in the academic sense and in other areas of life (Simonsmeier et al., 2020).

The teachers did not see this as a different approach in the sense of different education, but something that became natural after the first meetings and an integral part of every supervision session. Nevertheless, we can emphasize here the importance of experiential learning, which many authors (e.g. Bartle, 2015; Jarvis, 2003; Kolb & Kolb, 2008; Prouty, 2014) see as more effective - as we could conclude from our research: both in the study process itself and later when people are already working.

In the group of employed teachers, negative aspects of participation in supervision were also emphasised. Otherwise, both teachers and students mentioned individual inconveniences in their reflections, such as the occasional exposure in front of a group or the discomfort of having to talk about one's strengths in a small group or "exposing oneself to the possibility of negative feedback" (as already mentioned by Su et al., 2022; Xiao et al., 2021). However, the students did not perceive this as a negative consequence of supervision, but rather as "stepping out of their comfort zone" and as an "opportunity to learn and progress", as they wrote several times. The teachers also saw negative consequences in the changes they made to their professional and personal lives. For example, one participant pointed to the time she was able to devote to her family ("I sometimes wondered if I was being selfish when I could have picked my child up from school, but I went to supervision first"), another pointed out how supervision affected her partner relationship (e.g.: "I definitely changed a lot through supervision, which sometimes caused me problems in my partner relationship, although basically I also learned to solve personal problems there and also solved some of my private

problems. I think that my husband (still a boy at the time) "resents" me in some ways for having changed or for hanging out with the group."). I would like to mention the experience from a supervision group in which a participant decided not to participate in the next process because her husband "threatened" to divorce her if she continued to participate in the group (because she became much more assertive and decisive in the partner relationship, she started to set limits for him...). One of the teachers also highlighted the (temporary) deterioration of her relationship with the head teacher as a negative consequence of attending the supervision meetings ("When I started to take more care of myself, I stopped having everything imposed on me, and because she was used to the fact that when she could not impose something on someone else, she demanded more demanding things from me, we had quite a strained relationship for a while").

Conclusions:

The study has a number of limitations; a) it was conducted on selected samples, b) both groups (students and teachers) were undoubtedly influenced by the fact that I was also a participant (as a subject professor and as a supervisor as well as a moderator of the focus group), c) the two groups are already difficult to compare in principle, as they differ in number, age, professional experience and in the actual supervision process, d) although I used qualitative analysis for both groups, I worked with written reflections in the group of students and on the basis of transcripts of the focus group interview in the group of teachers.

Despite these limitations, I believe that the research provides some insight into students' and teachers' perceptions of supervision. The research findings show that some elements that supervision entails for the participants are similar in both groups (students and teachers), despite the fact that the two groups differ greatly in many parameters (age, educational level, length of participation in the supervision process, professional experience, etc.). Thus, we see that both in the written reflections of the students and in the discussions in the focus group of the teachers, some factors emerge that are at least seemingly the same (acquired knowledge and information, awareness of the importance of supervision, the contribution of supervision to better professional work and professional development, sense of responsibility, clarification and

definition of one's professional role and the impact of supervision on one's personal life).

Even the basic analysis showed that there was a significant qualitative difference between the two groups with regard to these factors. While with the students we observe the manifestation of the factors on a more superficial level, often in the form of a unique experience that is not integrated into their professional activity or private life, with the teachers the same factors are more consolidated, they have become part of everyday activities in both professional and private life situations.

However, we can conclude that supervision (even in an adapted form) is a way of raising students' awareness of the need for supervision for the later period when they will be working in practice. In terms of the immediate benefits of the supervision process, it would be difficult to distinguish it from the benefits of students working together in groups, e.g. greater engagement and activity, better relationships, higher performance (which has been noted before us, Gruden, 2022; Simonsmeier et al., 2020). The importance of such a way of working is also reflected in the analysis of the participating teachers' responses, where the role of supervision's contribution to lifelong learning and professional development, changing dysfunctional beliefs, forming a more competent professional identity and professional role, building better relationships and communication with professional and other life situations, overcoming the need for constant reflection, offering emotional support, etc. is emphasized.

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