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Evaluation of the Training Programme of Supervisors

Evaluation of Module 1

The participants of Module 1 were invited to give feedback two times by means of
an internet questionnaire; the first (33 respondents) after two weekends of train-
ing and before the implementation of the internship (hereafter: *Survey 1*), and the
second (23 respondents) after the implementation of the last part of Module 1, i.e.
after the implementation of the internship (hereafter: *Survey 2*). Survey 1 encom-
passed 22 supervisors, two supervisors of supervisors, and nine students, while Sur-
vey 2 included 25 supervisors and supervisors of supervisors. Where means and
standard deviations are presented, the respondents provided their answers on a
five-point Likert scale (1 – very bad/very unsatisfied/unimportant, 5 – very good/
very satisfied/very important).

At the beginning of the training the supervisors wanted to obtain an accurate outline
of the course of supervision and their responsibilities (in their roles) as supervisors.
Some of the supervisors stated that they wanted more precise instructions for the
implementation of the internship, or a sample of the report they would have to
make after the internship. They expressed a need for a summary or guidelines for
the implementation of the internship and supervised practice. They expressed their
wish for as much group and practical work as possible, new practical knowledge of
mentoring methods, and familiarization with real-life cases; they stated they were
looking forward to applying theoretical knowledge in a real situation. Several times

they mentioned their wish for and expectation of participating in the supervisory group, or having professional support during the mentoring process.

In general, the participants were satisfied or very satisfied with the implementation of the module, and only a few of them were undecided on this issue (Survey 1: $M = 4.2$, $SD = 0.7$; Survey 2: $M = 4.0$, $SD = 0.6$). The entire Module 1, where they learned about the competence-based approach to supervision, the development of the mentoring relationship, and implemented and reflected on the internship, was evaluated as good or very good ($M = 4.6$, $SD = 0.5$). Similarly, most respondents evaluated their training and preparation for the implementation of the internship/supervised practice as good or very good, and only a small percentage felt that they were prepared to lead the internship/supervised practice moderately well ($M = 4.4$, $SD = 0.7$). The parts of the training where the work was performed interactively in groups or pairs with the supervisees were considered to be of higher quality than the others.

The programme of Module 1 was praised by the participants, who stated that they had acquired a lot of new knowledge. They further expressed that the programme was systematic, qualitatively outlined, and well implemented. Many respondents mentioned the pleasant climate during the sessions, chances to exchange experiences, conversations on possible dilemmas and difficulties during the supervised practice, and time for discussion, which they would have made longer for some of the topics. They expressed their satisfaction with the materials used, which they found to be useful, systematic, and illustrative. In particular, they liked the workshops and possibility of active participation with their supervisees in one of the sessions. They would also have liked their supervisees (students) to be present at some other parts of the training. Some of the supervisors, who did not yet have their supervisees in an internship, mentioned that joint attendance would have made it easier for them to make sense of the practicum in the training. The supervisors saw the group work and possibility to transfer theory into practice as very interesting and useful, and wished to have more opportunities for that. Moreover, as a group they were satisfied with the diverse list of techniques and methods of work that were applied, and emphasized group work as an advantage of the training programme.

The supervisors also felt that in Module 1 they had received the structure and theoretical guidelines for systematic implementation of the internship and the supervised practice. They were provided with knowledge about the competences and skills required for establishing and maintaining successful mentoring relationships. They thus became more sovereign and self-confident in performing their role as mentor. They also became more aware of their work from an ethical point of view. Quite a few of the participants recognized the importance of good planning of the internship and specification of goals, which they now more actively applied to their work. Many of them became more familiar with the concept of competences and the competence model, which they considered as very useful, seeing it as a good

starting point for internship planning, directing career development, and the basis for easier assessment of students and novice psychologists. The materials they were given were also thought to provide good support for their tasks. However, some of the respondents noted that it was only after the conclusion of the internship that they realized how much time would need to be devoted to the quality implementation of the supervised practice. They thus started dedicating more time to evaluation and reflection, and the acquisition and application of feedback. They considered group reflection and evaluation of the mentoring relationship to be very important (M = 4.5, SD = 0.7). For some respondents the final evaluation of the internship was too long, because certain questions regarding reflection and evaluation seemed to be repeated. As such, when training supervisors we must be careful not to overload them with evaluations of their work. The documentation that they are required to prepare for us to evaluate their mentoring qualifications should be limited to the most important aspects.

The majority of participants stated that their expectations about the training programme had been realized. They learned a great deal of new things, acquired new knowledge and skills, obtained more insights into psychologists' competences, and gained practical experience in their roles as mentors. They believed that they implemented their roles very well in this context, and their participation in the project was thus a very pleasant experience. Collaborating in the development of the system of supervised practice enabled them to connect with other individuals from different fields of psychological practice, and openly and critically exchange experiences. They recognized the support provided by the group in resolving dilemmas and difficulties within the implementation of the internship, and expected assistance from their peers. Overall, the supervisors stated that they strengthened their professional identities through the entire process, and became more aware of and upgraded their work and competences.

Evaluation of Module 2

After the implementation of each of the two parts of Module 2, the supervisors-in-training and supervisors of supervisors were invited to provide feedback by means of an internet questionnaire. Twenty-two supervisors and four supervisors of supervisors responded.

Most majority of the participants were entirely satisfied with both parts of Module 2. They experienced Module 2 as educational, beneficial, and practically useful, providing important insights into supervision. Most of them considered the material related to the establishment of the supervisory relationship, fundamental documents, and competences of supervision very important for ensuring effective supervision. They emphasized the importance of becoming familiar with the role of supervisor and the area of supervision, delivering feedback, and preparing for complex cases

in supervision. They highly praised the use of video recordings, demonstrations and work in small groups (using the methods of role-play and reflecting team), that is, the experiential nature of the contents learnt. They liked the work in groups comprised of members from different fields of psychological practice, as the experiences and views shared were more diverse than they would have been with homogeneous groups. They highly valued conversations on difficult topics, and their greater awareness of particular behaviour patterns which could have negative impact on the implementation of supervision. The possibility of such discussions was increased due to the feeling of safety established by the lecturers. Several participants commended the exchange of practice between Slovenia and foreign states. What was perhaps most interesting and encouraging was the feeling of new energy and enthusiasm for future work which was felt by some participants.

The majority of the participants thought that the training had prepared them well or very well for the supervision of a novice psychologist. They emphasized the importance of the contents of Module 1 which, in their opinion, presented a reasonable pre-level of Module 2. The Module 2 contents were beneficial, well structured, and valuable for reviewing and upgraded their knowledge. They found it particularly important that they acquired some competences and tools for establishing the supervisory relationship, monitoring, and giving feedback. Several of the respondents emphasized that they felt more competent in applying different supervision techniques. Their experimenting with the role of supervisor in different tasks and dilemmas was seen as useful, and they experienced a feeling of where difficulties could occur and practiced on concrete cases how these could be solved. However, they believed that they would need much more practical experiences to successfully implement supervision, as their participation in supervision also presented a learning process for them. Some individuals pointed to the need for further training of individual competences, in particular giving feedback. Overall, they evaluated their inclusion into supervisory groups as very useful.

Some participants found the training to be extremely intense, and would like to have devoted more time to particular activities. They also called for a more structured theory with additional information and a broader explanation of the individual parts of supervision, more literature, and an even more practically oriented implementation of the training (more real-life cases, workshops, work in smaller groups, work with video recordings, etc.); more information regarding the supervision models and their application, experiential techniques, inclusion of participants in discussions, more time for work in groups (triads), more thorough analysis of video recordings, and a deepening of the knowledge about application of individual techniques in supervision. It can be concluded that it would be sensible to strengthen the contents of Module 2 and give more time to the participants to deepen their knowledge of supervision, and practically train their supervisory competences. This holds true in the current situation in Slovenia, where supervision has not been widely applied and

only a smaller number of psychologists participate in it. Moreover, their knowledge and competences of supervision are insufficient, because most have not had personal experience of collaborating in this way. It would thus be sensible to take the situation and needs of psychologists in a particular state into consideration when upgrading the programme, and then to adjust the parts of the training as needed.

Evaluation of Module 3

Satisfaction with Workshops

Table 11 shows the evaluation of the individual parts of Module 3. The column Sample presents the number of people among the workshop participants who completed the survey. The respondents evaluated their satisfaction with the workshop (content, tasks, and materials) on a 5-point scale (1 – very unsatisfied, 5 – very satisfied). Table 11 shows what aspects of the workshop the respondents praised, and what they would like more of. The supervisors-in-training and their supervisors assessed the importance of the workshop for supervision.

It can be seen in Table 11 that the assessment rates are high, which points to the fact that both supervisors-in-training and their supervisors recognized the importance of the contents learned in the workshops for supervisors. The topics covered in all the workshops received an average estimation of very important for supervision.

Table 11. *Outline of the evaluation of Module 3 workshops*

Workshop	Sample	Satisfaction M (SD)	What did the participants praise?	What would they like more of?	Importance of the topic knowledge for supervision	Will the workshop help in supervision?
1. Burnout	23/31	3.8 (0.8)	Good theoretical outline, application of psychodiagnostic instruments in burnout, proactivity-orientation; among the home assignments they praised the use of diaries and the application of a questionnaire on burnout	Even more practical interventions in the field, more information regarding the biological aspects of burnout and interactive methods of work	Very (73%), Extremely (27%)	Very (27%), Slightly (67%), Not at all (7%)
2. Self-reflection and help seeking	20/30	4.4 (0.6)	Methods of work applied	Even more theoretical information and alternative methods and technique of self-reflection	Very (33%), Extremely (67%)	Very (73%), Slightly (27%)

Workshop	Sam-ple	Satis-faction M (SD)	What did the participants praise?	What would they like more of?	Importance of the topic knowledge for supervision	Will the workshop help in supervision?
3. Addiction	30/32	3.9 (0.8)	Focus on various stakeholders (e.g. in schools, among vulnerable groups)	To devote even more time to the topic and more concrete interventions	Little (19%), Average (48%), Very (19%), Extremely (14%)	Very (10%), Slightly (52%), Not at all (38%)
4a. Ethics	29/35	4.2 (0.8)	Materials and tasks, the content adapted to concrete cases and dilemmas, and the combination of home assignments which opened important issues	To devote more time to the topics because they are complex and demanding, need quality reflection and constant upgrading	Very (10%), Extremely (90%)	Very (85%), Slightly (15%)
4b. Data protection in the psychologist's work		4.7 (0.6)				
5. Suicidality	29/34	4.1 (0.7)	Particularly important were theoretical findings and group discussions	Even more practical exercises and specific examples of interventions, and ways of providing emotional relief for those who provide help	Average (20%), Very (33%), Extremely (47%)	Very (20%), Slightly (80%)
6. Motivational interviewing	20/30	3.6 (0.9)		To devote more time to the topic; to devote sessions mainly to practical part of tasks	Average (14%), Very (43%), Extremely (43%)	Very (29%), Slightly (64%), Not at all (7%)
7. Psychological first aid	30/44	4.7 (0.5)	Practicality of workshops and combination of theory and practice	To devote more time to the topic	Average (17%), Very (44%), Extremely (39%)	Very (78%), Slightly (22%)
8. Counselling at traumatic events						
9. Strategies of coping	37/43	4.7 (0.8)	Practical and experiential aspects of the workshops, which would help them in self-care and practical work	To deepen knowledge of character strengths, and more experience with mindfulness concepts	Average (16%), Very (47%), Extremely (37%)	Very (63%), Slightly (37%)
10. Mindfulness						

Evaluation of the Change in Perceived Self-Efficacy

We wanted to evaluate the efficiency of the training of supervisors, and especially the workshops within Module 3. The programme of the training of supervisors started in March 2015, and concluded in January 2016. Modules 1, 2 and 3 were

interwoven during the period. The course of the training implementation within individual modules is shown in Table 12.

Table 12. *The training of supervisors and implementation of the pilot internship and supervised practice within the SUPER PSIHOLOG project*

Time of the training	Module 1	Module 2	Module 3[a]	Internship	Supervised practice	Administration RAMSES
March 2015	2 * 15 h					
April 2015		20 h		X	X	
May 2015				X	X	
June 2015	10 h		2 * 8 h		X	+
July 2015					X	
August 2015					X	
September 2015		20 h	2 * 8 h		X	
October 2015			2 * 8 h		X	
November 2015			2 * 8 h		X	
December 2015					X	
January 2016			2 * 8 h		X	+
February 2016					X	
March 2016					X	

Note. X stands for the period when the internship or the supervised practice was implemented. A few supervisors implemented the internship later due to unavailability of students. Some supervisors started the one-year supervised practice after April 2015 and thus finished it after March 2016. Instead of the supervised practice, a prolonged internship (two to three months) was implemented by some supervisors.

[a]Every Module 3 workshop comprised eight hours of work including interactive lectures and home assignments. Usually there were five hours of collaboration with workshop leaders and three hours of work assignments.

Method

Instruments

In order to evaluate the efficiency of the training we used the Risk Assessment and Management Self-Efficacy Scale – RAMSES (Delgadillo et al., 2014). RAMSES is used by mental health professionals to rate confidence in their competence of working with people who could endanger themselves or others due to mental health problems. It consists of 18 items (assessed on an 11-point scale, from 0 – not sure to 10 – absolutely sure) referring to key aspects of mental health professionals' competency:
1. Risk assessment (recognizing and assessing risk).
2. Case management (referring persons to other professionals, motivating, ethics of strategies and approaches applied).
3. Interventions (competency for efficient application of specific interventions for reducing risk in clients and/or other people).

Items could be understood in a broad sense and can refer to acute direct risk or endangerment of an individual, or to more remote and/or indirect risk factors. The scale encompasses self-efficacy assessments on a vast area of psychological services.

On the basis of the first completion of the RAMSES scale (the scale was completed by 19 supervisors and five supervisors of supervisors, and at different time points by 28 other psychologists who participated in Module 3 workshops), the Cronbach α coefficients of reliability were estimated for individual sub-scales. With α coefficients of 0.90 (Assessment), 0.92 (Case management) and 0.94 (Interventions) the sub-scales showed a high level of internal consistency.

Procedure and participants

The participants completed the scale before and after the implementation of Module 3 (in June 2015, and in January 2016). Before the training the scale was completed by 54 participants, and after the training it was completed by 51 participants. We were interested in whether any changes occurred in the self-assessment of competences after the training. Therefore, only the data provided by the respondents who completed the scale twice, that is, before and after the training, were included for further analysis. There were 40 such respondents, comprising 13 supervisors, four supervisors of supervisors, and 23 other participants of Module 3, aged between 25 and 70 years old (M = 37.2, SD = 10.3). In terms of gender, there were 37 female respondents and three male respondents.

At the time of the first survey those who participated in the project as supervisors or supervisors of supervisors had already collaborated in two parts of Module 1, mostly concluded the internship, and participated in the first part of Module 2 (see Table 12).

Within the scope of Module 3 the respondents participated in different numbers of workshops; 15 respondents had attended eight to 10 workshops (mostly supervisors and supervisors of supervisors), 20 respondents had been to one or two workshops, while five visited three to seven workshops.

Results

In order to estimate the distinctions between the first and second measurements we used the nonparametric repeated-measures test, i.e. Wilcoxon signed-rank test, and calculated the effect size. The results are shown in Table 13. After the implementation of Module 3, self-assessments of competences increased in all three areas. The respondents assessed themselves as more competent for risk assessment, case management, and the application of interventions. The results of the Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed statistically significant differences, and the effect size was medium to large.

Table 13. *Descriptive statistics of the self-assessed scores of competences before and after Module 3, results of the Wilcoxon signed-rank test and Cohen's d as effect size*

Sub-scale RAMSES	Prior to Module 3		After Module 3		Results of Wilcoxon test		
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*Z*	*p*	*d*
Assessment	5.55	1.87	6.98	1.59	−4.47	< .001	0.92
Case management	6.61	1.71	7.44	1.68	−3.14	.002	0.51
Interventions	5.75	1.98	7.00	1.88	−4.37	< .001	0.85

Next, the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient ρ was calculated and the relation between the self-assessed competences and the age of respondents was explored. Our first aim was to examine whether respondents of different ages evaluated their competency differently before the implementation of Module 3. It was observed that the age and self-assessment of the respondents did not correlate significantly at the time of the first measurement (for risk assessment ρ = .02, p = .877; for case management ρ = .02, p = .892; for interventions ρ = .15, p = .366). Our next aim was to examine whether after Module 3 the changes in self-efficacy assessments were of different sizes among the respondents of different ages. The results showed that age was not related to the size of change in competency self-assessment during the training (for changes in risk assessment ρ = −.03, p = .857; for changes in case management ρ = −.01, p = .936; for changes in interventions ρ = −.04, p = .797).

The connection between the number of Module 3 workshops attended and changes in assessments of self-efficacy was also examined. The number of workshops attended was not statistically significantly correlated with the changes in the self-assessments (for assessment ρ = −.12, p = .455; for case management ρ = .09, p = .564; for interventions ρ = .09, p = .577).

Discussion

Although there was no control group, we assume that the differences in self-assessed rates of competences can be assigned to participation in the project. We believe that various project activities (workshops and other activities, such as group supervision, where different cases of risk behaviour were dealt with) were beneficial and valuable for the participants. However, we cannot omit the possibility that the participants' feeling of professional growth could also be influenced by other factors, e.g. their collaboration in activities outside the framework of the project. Nevertheless, our impression is that the wide range of in-depth contents within the various project activities provided numerous opportunities for professional development, and contributed significantly to participants' increased self-efficacy.

With regard to the absence of correlation between the self-assessment and age of the respondents, we can conclude that the educational activities were welcomed for

the participants regardless of their level of career development or amount of professional experiences. We conclude that the activities were innovative, well-planned and well-implemented, as they enhanced the professional growth of younger psychologists at the beginning of their career paths, as well as the more experienced participants. This confirms our belief in the importance of continuing professional development for practicing psychology, and of organized professional training for psychologists.

The results showed that the changes in self-assessments of competences after the conclusion of the training were not connected to the number of attended workshops within Module 3, although it could be expected that a higher number of attended workshops would lead to greater changes in self-assessments of competences. It can be assumed that more confidence in one's competences could arise by collaborating in educational activities, regardless of the number of topics studied at the attended lectures. It is important to emphasize here that those psychologists who attended a lower number of workshops joined those that they wanted to attend, and thus we assume that they selected those touching on topics important for their field of work, and/or those they wanted to upgrade their knowledge and competences in relation to. Since they could develop personally relevant areas, they soon recognized the strengthening of their competences. The psychologists who participated in a wider scope of project activities were offered numerous and diverse opportunities to be professionally trained. While some topics might have been personally more important to them than others, we assume that the majority of participants gained relevant experiences which contributed to the strengthening of their self-efficacy.

The evidence-based increased confidence of the participating psychologists with regard to their competences seems to be an encouraging result. In our opinion, improved self-efficacy in working with people who could endanger themselves or others due to mental health problems can be of great help in coping with difficult situations at work. Regardless of the field of work, self-efficacy in psychologists' coping with such situations is an important part of professional self-confidence and identity. For some psychologists, their self-efficacy is expressed in recognizing risk and referring individuals in distress to other professionals, while for others their self-efficacy is expressed in applying interventions for direct reduction of risk. In each case, the professionalism of a psychologist engaged with endangered individuals and the quality of their interactions can be vital, as it can impact the person's motivation for strengthening his/her mental health. In this regard, we consider activities contributing to a greater feeling of competency among psychologists in this domain to be very important for the profession.

Conclusion of Evaluation of Module 3

The evaluation of Module 3 points to the tendency by psychologists to recognize self-care as an important value in professional work and private life. The participants

emphasized the necessity of continual self-care and for the development of competences in the domain of health care, as this increased their motivation for work, strengthened their professional identity, and also positively affected their supervisees.

Direct experiential self-work, which was the basis of several workshops in Module 3, proved to be both welcome and critical for the transfer of the competences acquired and for self-efficacy at work with clients.

Evaluation of the Entire Training

Evaluation of the entire training refers to the participants' opinions as to which knowledge in a particular module they considered to be of key importance, and how all three modules of SUPER PSIHOLOG link to one another. The participants provided recommendations on which contents should be added, and in what way, so that future participants could feel completely ready to perform the role of supervisor in the supervised practice.

Although some participants missed a clearer outline of the course of the entire training, they found the instruments they had at their disposal to be useful. They emphasized the benefits of the contents of Module 1 for higher quality implementation of the internship, in particular in terms of structuring the supervision process. The contents of Module 2 provided in-depth knowledge of supervision methods, new supervision-related experiences, and awareness of the importance of performing different roles as a supervisor. The contents of Modules 1 and 2 enabled more insight into the entire implementation of the internship. With regard to Module 3, most participants agreed that the contents of the mental health domain should be known by all psychologists, regardless of their field of practice, as they contribute to enrichment of their professional work and provide a basis for personal and professional growth. However, the contents of Module 3 seemed less interesting for older and more experienced psychologists. For this reason it would be more sensible to offer the contents of Module 3 regularly (cyclically) to all psychologists within the frame of continuing professional development, not necessarily within the scope of the training of supervisors.

In general, the opinions regarding the extent of the training programme differed – some of the participants perceived the entire education as rather time consuming, while others wanted the training to be even more extensive.

The interconnectedness between the modules was praised by some respondents, and they emphasized the contribution of each to the training. In their opinion, the modules covered different contents and enabled the connection of theoretical bases, practical work, and care for the personal development of supervisors. Module 2 was seen as the advancement of Module 1 (in the participants' opinion, Module 1 presented the vision, while Module 2 brought the knowledge needed for more thorough work and the guidance of supervisees). Additionally, they expressed their

wish for systematic teaching in Module 1, with the emphasis on practical cases, and for more extensive training in understanding and applying the competence model. The respondents wanted the extension of Module 2 and more sessions with the Norwegian professionals. They wanted to learn more techniques for processing dilemmas in the supervisory relationship, and more different models of supervision, more contents from the area of supervisory competences (for instance, professional ethics, communication, the mentoring process, methods of work, guiding the group, implementing the supervisory conversation, recognizing the supervisees' needs, establishing relationships with users, relationships between the employees of other profiles, the basis of supervision, actual problems of supervision in the real world, how to encourage the supervisee to add value to the session, giving quality feedback, and professional contents in the area of work), and more presentations of good practices. They missed an explicit explanation of the connection that Modules 1 and 2 had with Module 3, which seemed to be too extensive, or they could not sensibly relate the contents to the needs of the participants in supervision. Moreover, a few stated that it would be good to learn about the topics in Module 3 earlier in the course of the training. A different sequence of modules was suggested (first Module 2, then Module 3, and finally, Module 1), as well as the possibility of choosing among a larger range of contents (similar to the ECTS credits system) within Module 3, which should be offered to both the beginners and supervisors.

As it can be detected in the recommendation on including beginners into Module 3, there were several participants who suggested the entire training be adjusted for beginners as they would then be better prepared for the supervised practice. They found the professional contents and emphasis on self-care in Module 3 important for the beginners. The beginners should, according to the participants, get familiar with the competence model before the internship, as well as the concept of supervised practice, ethical dilemmas, and the bases of all fields of psychological work. The education should be continual, equally distributed over the course of the supervised practice, and the lectures should be in the afternoons and on Saturdays.

It is important to note the positive opinions of the respondents regarding the possibility of preparing at home for particular lectures (e.g. study theoretical foundations, do assignments, complete the lessons by means of internet e-classroom, participate in a chat room, analyse video recordings, participate in interactive on-line workshops, etc.), and then at the seminars apply theoretical knowledge to practical cases by means of experiential learning and workshops.

In conclusion, the participants highly praised the lectures, workshops, and project team. They liked the organization, clear and timely information, promptness and responsiveness. Numerous participants wrote that they were happy to have participated in the project because they enjoyed it. They considered the project to be essential for the development of the profession, and were glad to have helped co-create a better future for psychologists and psychology in Slovenia.