Work Supervision for Master's Degree Students in Management in the Social and Health Care Field

This study targets university students of development and management in the social and health care field, and its goals were to discover 1) how does group supervision suit supporting college students, 2) what benefits can students receive from supervision and 3) how can group supervision be developed? The Tampere University of Applied Sciences' supervisor training program piloted a supervision program for master's degree students (N=30) in management in Fall 2021. The purpose of the study was to chart the possibilities of supervision in advancing students' team formation and commitment to their studies. Six supervisor students at the university supervised six teams of four to six members of management master's degree students for five meetings. The supervisor trainees could practice their skills while the master's students could process feelings related to their studies and receive peer support in their challenges. The results show that team formation was successful and deepened during the process. The supervision received by individual teams affected the entire group's class spirit and commitment. Developing the contents of supervision should focus on good planning, structure and initiation. The supervisor's role was emphasized in development, particularly their approach, activity and reinforcing dialogue between participants. Based on the positive experiences, collaboration between the supervisor training and master's students will be continued and developed further.

Keywords: *work supervision, Master´s student, team commitment, team spirit, Finland*

Introduction

Work supervision (henceforth supervision) started in the 1920s in the American social care field. It arrived in Finland in the 1950s, and became established in social care, the health care field and within the Lutheran church. Currently supervision is used in many fields in developing and supporting work, workplace communities and management work. Its forms include individual, group, workplace and peer supervision.

Many scholars have tried to define supervision, but finding an exact unambiguous definition is challenging, as it can be understood as both a tool and a method, as well as a service and a profession. Supervision has emerged from practice and been influenced by many sciences, such as health care, social psychology and various theories of personality, interaction and organization. Supervision is thus considered a reflective learning process based on interaction between the supervisor and supervisee. The supervisee's work and its assessment are key to the process. Supervision is not about the supervisor training or teaching the supervisee. Rather, the supervisee learns new and meaningful things about their work and work experiences in collaboration with other members of the workplace community and the supervisor (Niemelä 2019,

57, 64). As a process, supervision thus requires both time and processing matters together.

Supervision is always confidential communication between the supervisor and supervisee, in which the supervisor respects the supervisee's expertise in their own work. The supervisor's role is to help the supervisee discover new perspectives on matters important to them. The supervisor is not meant to give ready-made answers and solutions but will help the supervisee process matters through their expertise (Kivinen 2018, 54). Ethics are a central part of supervision. The supervisee's situation may be very sensitive and delicate, which requires ethical skills and professional communication skills.

There has been fairly little student-directed group supervision and research into it in Finland. In a study on supervision of classroom teacher students (Savolainen 2015), the students felt that supervision should be confidential, regular, pre-emptive and voluntary. Students saw supervision as something needed only after other tools had been exhausted. They wished that supervision would be available quickly and easily to all who desire it. Regarding contents, the respondents discussed matters related to their work, supporting wellbeing and difficult situations, which could be processed in supervision. In addition, they wished for new perspectives on their work.

Kattainen (2016, 161-175) has studied master's students' supervision from the perspective of self-management, learning and development. The study examined two groups, which met for six 90-minute sessions. The groups' goals were to help with managing studies and support for graduating. They wished for empowering discussions and processes. Central results were recognizing one's own learning style, strengthened team spirit, learning from experiences and support in combining studies, work and family.

The goal of Tikkanen's study (2017) was to develop students' group supervision to better support their learning needs. The study also wished to increase students' interest in mental health and substance abuse work in a criminal psychiatric unit. The study produced a model of group supervision, which includes the purpose and goals of student supervision and four themes related to criminal psychiatric care. However, the model could not be tested with new students due to a lack of time. The results show that the students had not received sufficient information about supervision, which was unfamiliar to them even as a concept. Its purpose and goal had remained unclear to them.

This study charts the potential of supervision in advancing students' team formation and commitment to their studies. The pilot group consists of master's students in development and management in the social and health care field. The degree program is started by 30-40 students each year, who work in teams throughout their studies. Quick commitment to their team and its work will also help the students commit to their studies. However, one to four students quit their studies withing the first six months each year, which is unfortunate from the perspective of cost-effectiveness. Some students' graduation may also be delayed, which can lead to them quitting their studies. Sometimes the teams have internal problems which have required intervention from teachers.

1　　Student teams are extremely important in this program, as work in the
2　social and health care field is largely organized as teamwork, which they can
3　thus practice as part of their studies. Various courses also include team
4　assignments, which require cooperation and sharing of responsibility. The
5　teams assess their own functioning in writing every six months, whose results
6　the project manager sends to the teacher-in-charge. In case a team has
7　problems functioning and sharing responsibility, the project manager contacts
8　the teachers-in-charge, who discuss the matter with the team as necessary.

9　　The purpose of this study was to chart the experiences of master's students
10　in social and health care development and management on group supervision
11　organized for them. The study questions were 1) how is group supervision
12　suited to supporting college students, 2) what benefits can students receive
13　from supervision and 3) how can group supervision be developed. The goal of
14　the study was to produce new information on group supervision aimed at
15　students, which can be utilized in both supervisor training and in developing
16　supervision aimed at students. The benefits of this pilot study may be obvious
17　to student teams from the perspective of quicker team building, more
18　committed students, fewer students quitting and more graduations on time.
19　These are, however, long-term effects, which may be difficult to prove as
20　results of supervision.

21
22
23　　**Literature Review**
24

25　　Supervision is defined and understood, both as a concept and a practice, in
26　highly variable ways. Its background consists of several theoretical
27　perspectives and tendencies, upon which it is built (Kärkkäinen 2012). Some
28　frames of reference include e.g., psychoanalytical, solution-centric, dialogic
29　and resource-centric tendencies. Other influences include psychodynamic,
30　psychotherapeutic, learning theoretical and positive psychology. In the Finnish
31　context supervision refers to guidance and support organized by a trained
32　supervisor, in which the supervisee's work-related questions and phenomena
33　are processed reflectively to attain work goals. The goal is to develop the
34　supervisee's work, increase their readiness, preserve their resources and
35　improve workplace wellbeinğ (Ollila 2006; 2008; 2014).

36　　Supervision does not merely seek to solve problems arising from work or
37　ensure the completion of tasks, but to increase the supervisee's understanding
38　of various individual and communal processes and challenges at work and
39　offer support (Alila, Määttä & Uusiautti 2015). The principal goals are to
40　defuse work pressures, process ethical challenges (Blomberg & Bisholt 2016)
41　and to act as support to each individual's professional identity (Berggren,
42　Barbosa da Silva & Severinsson 2005; Ollila 2014). The strengths of the
43　individual and the workplace community should not be forgotten, as processing
44　and emphasizing them reinforces a positive attitude towards overcoming
45　challenges. Supervision thus also acts as a forum that pre-emptively lessens
46　work-related stress.

1   Supervision proceeds from the supervisee's needs, experiences and
2   questions in different situations. The supervisor does not act as a teacher,
3   mentor, facilitator or a consultant. Their role is to help the supervisee discover
4   new perspectives, meanings and insights into their work through reflection.
5   Open and confidential discussion, reflecting together and maintaining
6   reciprocity are central principles of supervision (Knight 2011). Supervision
7   also offers the possibility of peer support.

8   Coaching and supervision are very close to each other. Supervision was
9   originally used as a problem-based way of processing difficult client
10   experiences, while coaching has been associated with sports (Kupias 2022).
11   The methods have their own approaches and goals, but both depend on the
12   guide's frame of reference. Both seek to aid the employee in managing work as
13   variedly as possible. Supervision has an important role as a method that
14   advances learning and develops the organization's functioning (Immaisi 2012).
15   Supervision is a process of professional support, reflection and learning, which
16   affects individual development at work (Evans & Marcroft 2015).

17   The principal forms of supervision are individual, group, workplace, peer
18   and management supervision (Kivinen & Ollila 2023). The first two are, as the
19   names imply, conducted individually or in groups with the supervisor. Group
20   supervision can however be conducted both as supervision between professions
21   or as peer support between people in the same profession or performing the
22   same tasks (Vanne 2021). Workplace supervision involves the entire workplace
23   community and their manager. Peer supervision consists of a group that
24   performs supervision without a specific supervisor (Kärkkäinen 2012). One
25   may also speak of peer group supervision, in which an outside supervisor
26   familiar with the profession supervises employees or managers (Valtasaari
27   2023).

28   Supervision has traditionally been highly process-like and lasting from
29   one to three years. Due to the hectic pace of modern workplaces, such long-
30   term supervision has become rare and processes generally last only for a few
31   meetings (Paunonen-Ilmonen & Heinonen 2020). Relatively brief processes
32   can also yield good results, particularly in group and management supervision
33   (Bullington & Cronqvist 2018). Methods have also, sometimes forcibly,
34   become increasingly digitalized, which can be seen as an opportunity to
35   increase supervision's accessibility to various professions (Kivinen & Ollila
36   2023).

37   The effects of supervision are varied, but fundamentally positive.
38   According to several studies, people who have received supervision have
39   experienced better job satisfaction and flexibility and improved workplace
40   communication and interpersonal skills. It is generally experienced as an
41   important forum that enables the safe processing of difficult matters and is
42   important both personally and professionally (Austin 2016; Barham, de Beer &
43   Clark 2019). Group supervision in particular was seen as useful when
44   participants were willing and motivated to participate comprehensively, the
45   sessions reflective and goal-oriented, the participants respectful of each other,
46   sessions regular and confidential and processes suitable to the participants'

1   workplace conditions, i.e., available to them (Allbutt, Colthart, El-Farargy,
2   Sturgeon, Vallis & Lough 2017). Committing to the supervision process
3   strengthens the advantage of individual and group-based peer support.
4
5
6   **Methods**
7
8   **Research Setting and Sampling**
9
10   Management studies in the social and healthcare field are conducted as
11 multiform learning the students perform alongside their work. They have
12 approximately three to six in-person or remote learning days per month. The
13 class that started in Fall 2021 consisted of 30 students. The students all had a
14 bachelor's degree or equivalent related to the social and health care field. All
15 students were also required to have at least two years of work experience in the
16 field.
17   This qualitative study utilized elements of action research in the form of a
18 "marketplace stroll" (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018). The class's studies started in
19 August 2021 through two orientation days. Permanent student teams were
20 formed on the morning of the second day, which was followed by group
21 supervision in the afternoon. The teams were formed by first allowing the
22 students to meet each other through an "Italian marketplace stroll", which is a
23 modified version of a "cocktail party" meeting game (Vanninen & Nieminen
24 2016). The stroll was conducted inside a large lobby. The students (N=30)
25 were instructed to talk with any other student they met for two minutes about
26 whichever subject to get to know them better. Each meeting would last for two
27 minutes, after which the teacher-in-charge would give a sound signal
28 announcing a switch of conversation partners. During the stroll each student
29 had time to talk with ten other students.
30   After the stroll, the students were sorted into groups based on their
31 previous degree (nurse, public health nurse, midwife, physical therapist,
32 laboratory assistant, social worker, etc.). The guiding teacher then observed the
33 groups and chose one with six members of the same profession. They were
34 then asked to form teams that were as heterogenic as possible. All students
35 were allowed to be active and express their wish to join particular teams to
36 their leaders. The guiding teacher did not participate in the team formation
37 further and waited until the students were done.
38   Afterwards the six supervisor students presented themselves to the teams.
39 The teams moved to a separate location with their own supervisor, where they
40 became acquainted better and agreed on initial dates for supervision dates in
41 the Fall. The organization had defined the following goals for the supervision:
42 1) team members becoming acquainted and building trust, 2) establishing
43 ground rules for the team, 3) commitment to ground rules and studying and 4)
44 successful team formation. At the beginning of supervision each team
45 discussed these goals and potentially set their own goals for supervision. Each
46 team gathered for five 90-minute sessions of supervision during Fall 2021.

1   Some meetings were organized through the Teams platform. The supervisors
2   had had their own group supervision, during which they discussed contents of
3   management students' supervision and potential challenges.
4   The six supervisor students who participated in the study had the
5   following earlier degrees: Master of health science, nurse, psychiatric nurse,
6   master of pedagogy, medical doctor and licenciate degree in political science.
7   All had several years of experience in their field and two had training as
8   therapists. A supervisor agreement was made with each of the six students. The
9   students conducted their supervision without pay. The supervision was part of a
10 course that was obligatory in their training program.
11
12 **Data Collection and Analysis**
13
14   The students who participated in supervision provided information on the
15 group supervision's implementation, benefits and development needs through
16 writing and themed interviews. The written questions were formed based on
17 the goals of the supervision:
18
19   • How did group supervision reach the goals set by the team?
20   • How was group supervision implemented as a whole?
21   • What benefits have you gained from group supervision?
22   • How could student group supervision be further developed?
23
24   The written questions were sent to the student teams as e-mail attachments
25 approximately a month before the planned themed interviews. They were asked
26 to submit their answers at least a week before the themed interview. A study
27 conductor read the responses before the interviews and formed the following
28 supplementary questions for the themed interviews:
29
30   •   Which themes did you discuss in supervision?
31   •   Which theme was most useful and why?
32   •   Which methods did the supervisor use in addition to discussion?
33
34   The interviews were conducted in February 2022 via Teams by interviewing
35 each team for 30 minutes. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The
36 themed interview started by discussing the team's responses to the written
37 questions. All potential additions and clarifications were recorded. Afterwards
38 the interviewer asked the above supplementary questions. The written answers
39 consisted of eight pages written on size 12 Arial font and a line spacing of 1.5.
40 The transcribed interviews consisted of 14 pages, using the same settings.
41 Authentic expressions are quoted in the results to increase reliability.
42   The data were collated by adding both the written and transcribed oral
43 responses under each question. The data were then read several times. The
44 sentence was chosen as the unit of analysis, after which the data were
45 compressed, grouped and abstracted into subcategories, categories and main
46 categories (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018).

1
2 **Respondents' Background**
3
4 The management students (N=30) had an average of 14 years of
5 experience in their field and 43% worked as managers. Approximately 57%
6 had a nursing degree, along with various specializations. Of the rest, 13% had a
7 social work degree. The rest were radiographers, laboratory assistants, physical
8 therapists or midwives (Table 1.) The data were collected during the
9 interviews.
10
11 **Table 1.** *Respondents' Background*

Background degree	Number %
nurse (n=17)	57
radiographer (n=3)	10
midwife (n=3)	10
bioanalyst (n=1)	3
social worker(n=4)	13
physical therapist (n=2)	7
works as manager (n=13)	43
Work experience	**Average years**
Experience in the social and health care field	14

12
13 **Ethical Approval**
14
15 Ethical approval was obtained in June 2021 from the head of the health
16 care unit. As the class started their studies, they were told about supervision
17 and its goals, purpose and implementation. They were told at the earliest point
18 that they would be asked to provide feedback and to participate in a themed
19 interview. The students were given a privacy notice and a research notice,
20 which provided information on the interviews and data handling, storage and
21 protection. Consent to participating in the study was asked through the
22 electronic eLomake editor. All stages of the study have followed scientific
23 principles such as honesty, diligence and accuracy (TENK 2012).
24 The supervision was part of an obligatory course. The students were given
25 the chance of not participating in the themed interview and a small portion did
26 not participate in the Teams interview, but all participated in forming the

1   written responses. Individual students could be absent from supervision
2   meetings, but generally all participated. The teams' answers were not
3   individual opinions but collective ones. It is thus not possible to identify
4   individual students from the answers. The data have been presented in a way
5   that also obscures the identity of the supervisor. No answers can be connected
6   to individual supervisor students. They participated in a feedback discussion as
7   part of their training.
8
9

10   **Results**

11

12   The results of the study are presented below in the order of the study
13   questions, starting from the supervision goals set by the teams, followed by
14   assessing the supervision as a whole and its benefits, ending in ideas on further
15   developing it.

16

17   **Reaching Goals**

18

19   The supervision groups were asked how well the teams were able to reach
20   the goals they set for themselves. Thoughts on setting goals for supervision
21   were split among the teams, as four had set goals for themselves while two
22   claimed they had not set goals at the start of supervision. Some set goals
23   included team formation, becoming acquainted, successful cooperation, self-
24   management and graduating on time. Content analysis was used to abstract
25   these into the main category of s*uccessful team formation*, which contained the
26   categories of *becoming acquainted and support* and *organization*. Their
27   subcategories were *group formation, team member support, ground rules* and
28   *goals*. (Figure 1.)

29

30   **Figure 1.** *Successful Team Formation*

31
32

33   The responses show that the teams built their own ground rules: *"everyone
34   committed and kept to the ground rules"*. The team members' multiform
35   support was seen in the replies as flexibility, as *"cooperation has been flexible
36   and proper"*. Support was also experienced as guidance, listening, openness,
37   encouragement and consideration. The teams became acquainted on a deeper
38   level and built trust with each other. Discussing challenges in their studies
39   made them feel calm and *"we could support our self-management well"*. Team

1   building under supervision was successful, as *"the team became a tightly knit
2   unit that listened to each other"*. However, some of the respondents were not
3   sure about the effect of supervision on team formation, as the teams generally
4   spent a great deal of time together outside supervision.
5
6   **Implementation of Supervision**
7
8   The teams' responses on how supervision was implemented as a whole were
9   analyzed through inductive content analysis, forming three categories:
10 *organization of supervision, contents of supervision* and *supervisor's professional
11 approach*. Supervision was seen as a pleasant part of one's studies and an
12 important gesture of the university's support to students. Organization of
13 supervision also contained the following subcategories: *implementation of in-
14 person and remote meetings, technical implementation, supervision scheduling
15 and *team functioning in supervision*. (Figure 2.)
16   Supervision was conducted remotely or in-person, depending on the teams'
17 wishes and needs. Remote meetings had a policy of keeping cameras on so that
18 everyone's face would be visible. The technical implementation had occasional
19 difficulties, such as dropped connections, problems with headphones, weak noise
20 signal and dark video. Sufficient lighting was considered important so that all
21 faces could be seen properly.
22
23 **Figure 2.** *Implementation of Supervision*
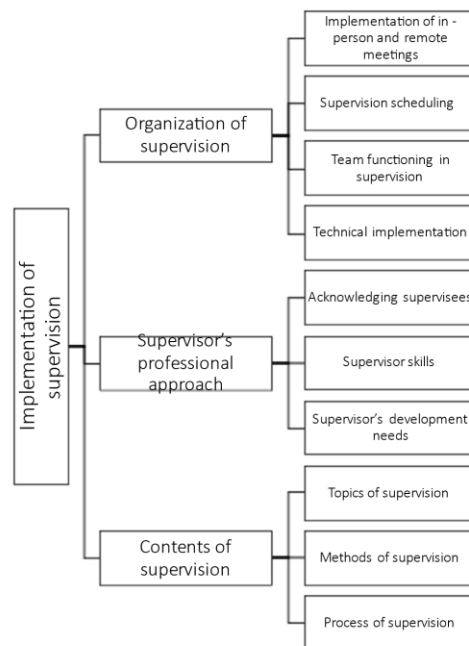
24
25   Agreeing on scheduling for supervision could be difficult, as *"it was
26 challenging to find time among all other school work"*. Other teams had an
27 easier time of finding time and scheduling meetings beforehand, while others
28 had more challenges. Some found the 90-minute length of the session suitable,
29 while others found it too long, particularly for the later sessions. The

functioning of the teams in supervision was seen as positive and *"the implementation was overall very effortless"*. The students praised their own teams for functioning well.

The second category, *supervisor's professional approach*, contained the following subcategories: *acknowledging supervisees, supervisor skills* and *supervisor's development needs.* The students felt that they had equal opportunities to speak and that "*even the quiet ones were heard"*. The supervisor gave the students space and was interested in them and their assignments.

The *supervisor skills* subcategory contained the supervisor's ability to ask further questions, form wholes out of the topics of discussion and raise matters to a more abstract level. The supervisor's presence gave the meetings structure, and their calmness was seen as an advantage.

The responses also mentioned some challenges related to the supervisor's work, which are here categorized as *challenges of professional development.* Supervisors could forget scheduled things or to provide final feedback. Some supervisors multitasked during the meetings, which could be seen as unprofessional. The supervisor's "*negative emotional states" or "personality analysis"* were seen as uncomfortable. Personality analysis in particular, in which the supervisor categorized students based on their temperament, was not seen as proper, particularly given how little time they spent together.

The contents of supervision category contained the following subcategories: *topics of supervision, methods of supervision* and *process of supervision.* The respondents felt that the topics or supervision were suitable and good. They especially mentioned situations where the respondents felt that the supervision was well-structured and the supervisor capable of altering the theme to suit the participants' needs. The supervision groups discussed many topics, as shown in table 2. The students felt that the supervisor asked them for topics of interest and that they could affect the themes of supervision. In case the students did not suggest any themselves, the supervisor had prepared topics.

**Table 2.** *Topics discussed in Supervision*

Case studies	My strengths and weaknesses as a manager
Challenges	Relaxation
Combining work and leisure	Self-knowledge
Conflict case	Self-management
Discussing group work	Sharing experiences
Future plans	Stress, anxiety
Goals	Successes
Ground rules	Use of time
Group dynamics, functioning in a group	Values
Handling others' strengths	What is a good manager
I as a manager in five years	What is supervision
Managing studies	Workplace wellbeing
My feelings	
My resources and wellbeing	

1   There were some responses contrary to the above. Some felt that not all
2   sessions had a clear theme, which they found frustrating. Some wished for
3   more varied perspectives and a clearer structure. Some sessions did not reach a
4   relaxed atmosphere, which bothered the participants. The sessions were
5   partially seen as additional work that gave *"only a little added value"*.
6   The most common method of supervision was discussion and listening,
7   which sought to form a genuine dialogue. Some sessions started with a
8   relaxation exercise followed by examining one's feelings. Some supervisors
9   also assigned a topic that was then discussed together during the next session.
10   Some supervisors kept records of previous topics and would start the following
11   session by asking if the participants still wished to discuss something related to
12   the previous topic. During the final session, the supervisor reviewed the team's
13   journey together.
14
15   **Benefits of Supervision**
16
17   **Figure 3.** *Benefits of Supervision*
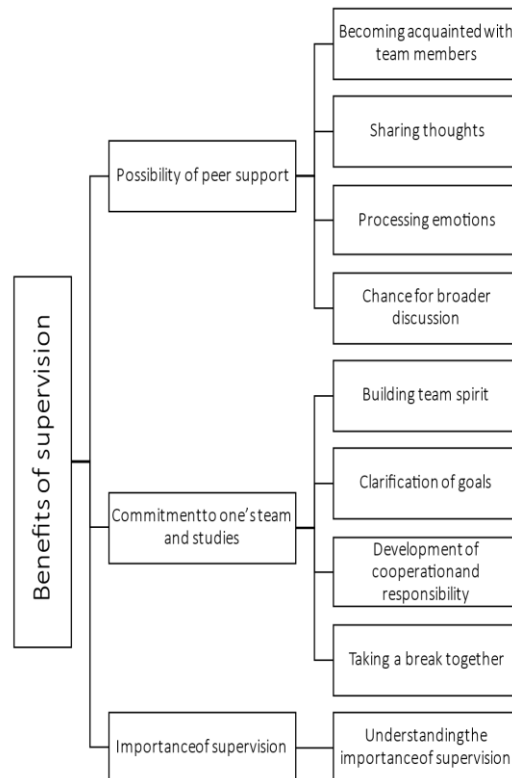
18
19
20
21   The benefits of supervision included the possibility of peer support,
22   commitment to the team and studying and understanding the importance of
23   supervision (Figure 3.) Peer support *"deepened us getting to know each other"*,
24   gave an opportunity and courage to *"share thoughts"* and to hear *"others have*

the same thoughts". It deepened discussions about feelings and reflection on topics such as *"uniting personal life and studies"*. Part of sharing thoughts included the courage to present one's own thoughts and to receive advice from team members.

Processing emotions as part of supervision was discussed in diverse ways. The participants felt a need to share their emotions, unburden themselves and "*to be able to tell how it feels"*. They talked about their stress and anxiety as part of supervision, which made them feel better. Supervision thus offered a chance for broader discussion.

Commitment to one's team and studies could be seen in building team spirit, clarification of goals, development of cooperation and responsibility and taking a break together. Supervision united the team members and increased their group spirit, not only within their own team but with the entire class, so that "*we learned to trust each other"*.

The students' personal goals became clearer during the process and were shared with their team. Supervision made reaching their goals easier. Developing cooperation and responsibility were seen as clear benefits of supervision, as "*all took responsibility for the team's results and actions"*. During the process, the students discovered "*ways of self-management"* and learned to recognize their own strengths. All teams receiving supervision may have had a positive effect on the entire class's commitment and teamwork skills.

The teams' answers emphasized using supervision as a way to take a break, despite busy study schedules. It "*made us make time"*, which enabled the teams to discuss matters in greater depth and to share their thoughts. The students felt that this would not have happened without supervision and the teams would have merely rushed through their assignments otherwise. The responses emphasized the importance of supervision as support for studying. Supervision was empowering and gave resources for starting their studies. The experience also gave them understanding of the role of supervision and that it did not always require a major issue; supervision could also focus on matters such as the team's functioning.

Development of Supervision

The *development of supervision* main category contained three categories: *organizing supervision, contents of supervision* and *role of the supervisor.* (Figure 4.) *Organizing supervision* included preparation, length of session, acute supervision and longer supervision. Supervision started on the students' second day of studying, which the students considered insufficient preparation. They wished for more explanation of supervision on a theoretical and practical level from the perspective of goals and purpose. Some students had no previous experience of supervision, which also caused confusion.

The students pondered the length of the session and suggested shorter durations than the program's 90 minutes, usually 60-minute sessions. They also considered the length of the program. They wished for *"supervision until*

1   *graduation"* and *"more sessions early on, followed by fewer sessions through*
2   *the year".* It would be good to have a final summary of the process and
3   everything the team learned towards the end of their studies. In case it is not
4   possible to have supervision throughout their studies, they wished for the
5   opportunity to receive crisis supervision if necessary.
6   The *contents of supervision* category contained the subcategories *emphasis*
7   *of supervision, structure, methods* and *themes.* The emphasis of supervision
8   should be on the students and not the supervisor's opinions. The supervisor
9   should be neutral and not introduce their personal views into the discussion.
10   The structure should focus on clarity, good planning and initial orientation and
11   tuning. Along with discussion, the students wished for *"more tools for*
12   *studying", "more versatile use of tools"* and *"some assignments"*, as they
13   would be useful in their studies. The students suggested that suggestions for
14   themes they wished to discuss could be collected from the entire class through
15   e.g., an online form or as direct suggestions to the supervisor.
16
17   **Figure 4.** *Development of Supervision*
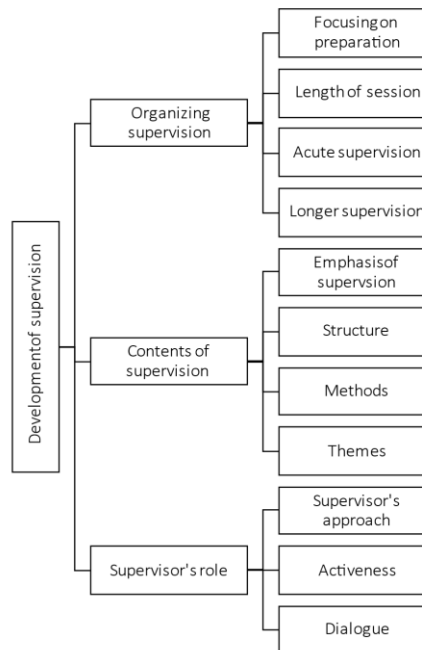
18
19
20   The *supervisor's role* category contained the subcategories *supervisor's*
21   *approach, activeness* and *dialogue.* The students wished that the supervisor's
22   approach would be firm in directing the discussion to the desired direction.
23   They hoped that the supervisor would have prepared topics, new perspectives
24   and approaches and the ability to stimulate conversation. They also hoped for
25   more *"attempts to challenge and reach a realization"* and attempts to *"dig out*
26   *the leadership from the participants",* as they were students in management.
27   Dialogue is important in supervision and there should be a focus on including
28   even quieter students. They wished for more *"dialogue between team*

1 *members"* and *"both the supervisor and supervisees throwing themselves"* into
2 the discussion.
3
4
5 **Conclusion and Discussion**
6
7   This study charted the experiences of master's degree students in social
8 and health care management on group supervision organized for them. It also
9 sought answers to the study questions of how group supervision is suited to
10 supporting university students, what benefits do students receive from
11 supervision and how group supervision could be further developed. The results
12 were collected into a SWOT analysis, which is presented in table 3. The
13 analysis contains a distillation of factors supporting and hindering management
14 students' group supervision.
15   Based on the results presented in the SWOT analysis, group supervision is
16 suited for supporting university students in their studies. Supervision improved
17 team formation and commitment to goals and commonly accepted ground
18 rules. Successful team formation also allowed the students to receive support
19 from other team members. The supervision was organized as remote and in-
20 person meetings and scheduled according to the wishes of each group. The
21 teams' functioning in supervision was seen as fluent and positive. However,
22 some remote sessions faced challenges such as dropped connections. Remote
23 supervision requires sufficiently good technical connections (Kivinen & Ollila
24 2023).
25
26

1   *Table 3.* Study Results on Management Students' Supervision

	SUPPORTIVE FACTORS	HINDERING FACTORS
INTERNAL	*Strengths* -including supervision as part of course work - support for team building - permanent team work for students - common goals and ground rules - flexible practices regarding in-person and remote meetings - possibility of processing the team's needs - sufficient supervisor skills - supervisor students' background training in the social and health care field and long-term work experience	*Weaknesses* - insufficient initial information on supervision - Lack of clear goals in teams' supervision - supervisor students' failure to grasp structure of supervision process - unprofessional behavior from supervisor students - supervisor students' unclarified professional growth - multitasking during remote meetings, by both supervisor and supervisees
EXTERNAL	*Opportunities* - versatile implementation of in-person and remote meetings - remote meetings through Teams, no travel required - supervision supports studying management and team formation - experience of supervision during studies makes it easier to seek supervision at work - opportunity to practice for supervisor students - both study programs benefit	*Threats* - lack of supevisee motivation - supervisor students' unfinished training and undeveloped professional skills - dropped remote connections and low quality of equipment - scheduling challenges - in-person meeting locations, reserving spaces - management students may gain a false picture of supervision if supervision students' professional approach is lacking

2
3   The supervisor's professional approach meant versatile acknowledgement
4 of supervisees, listening, giving space and showing interest in supervisees'
5 opinions. Even quiet participants were included in discussions. Other shows of
6 professional approach included the ability to ask additional questions and to
7 raise matters to a more abstract level. The supervisors could, however, also
8 have challenges in their professional development, such as occasional lapses in
9 attention and showing negative emotions.
10   Under supervision contents, the topics, methods and process were
11 separated. Supervision's topics arose from the team's needs, but in case they
12 failed to suggest one, the supervisor had prepared topics for discussion. The

1 participants were satisfied with structured supervision, in which the supervisor
2 could alter the theme based on the team's needs. Supervision that lacked a clear
3 theme was seen as frustrating. Tikkanen's study (2017) contained four
4 prepared themes for the supervision process related to the students' field. This
5 model could also be piloted for supervising university students.

6 The methods of supervision were discussion and listening, which sought
7 to create a genuine dialogue. Some supervisors gave assignments, which were
8 then discussed during the following session. Summarizing the previous session
9 at the start of each new one was seen as a good procedure. One session started
10 with an activity, such as a greeting round or a relaxation exercise. Afterwards
11 they summarized the key observations from the previous session's topic and
12 potentially continued discussing it. They would then discuss the assignment, if
13 applicable, followed by the session's theme. At the end of the session, the
14 supervisor summarized the day's discussion.

15 The benefits of supervision were shown to be peer support, commitment to
16 team and studying and understanding the importance of supervision (Vanne
17 2021). Supervision allowed the teams to have broader discussions, process
18 emotions, share their thoughts and become acquainted on a deeper level. The
19 supervisor's role is to help the supervisees to discover new perspectives on
20 topics that are important to them (Kivinen 2018), which was realized in the
21 students' dialogic reflection.

22 The students shared their feelings and expressed themselves on topics such
23 as the challenges of combining work and family. The teams felt their trust and
24 relationships with their teammates had deepened during the supervision
25 process. They felt that supervision had increased group spirit within the entire
26 class, as was also found in the study by Kattainen (2016). Supervision helped
27 clarify goals and improve cooperation and responsibility. Supervision making
28 the team take a break and analyze matters was seen as significant. An
29 understanding of the importance of supervision in today's hectic work culture
30 also grew. It is, however, worth considering whether team formation could
31 have happened equally effectively in the teams' normal meetings without
32 supervision.

33 The supervision provided for management students offered its participants
34 support and a chance to manage stress, as theoretical literature has discussed
35 (Alila et al. 2015; Blomberg & Bisholt 2016; Vanne 2021). Supervision offered
36 a space for confidential discussions in which matters were reflected on
37 dialogically according to the principles of supervision (Knight 2011).
38 Supervision is a learning process (Alhanen et al. 2016; Immaisi 2012), which
39 was realized for each team in this study through a strong communicative
40 relationship with team members and the supervisor. The learning process could
41 be seen concretely in the teams' deep considerations of case studies of various
42 themes and in their analyses of supervision.

43 Supervision aimed at students should be developed in the facets of
44 organizing, contents and the supervisor's role. Preparing the group beforehand
45 is an important aspect of the supervision's success. This includes explaining
46 the purpose and goals of supervision to students, both theoretically and in

1 practice. A similar development need was identified in the study by Tikkanen
2 (2017). Some students felt that 90-minute sessions were too long, and some
3 wished the sessions were spread over a longer period of time, even the whole
4 duration of their studies. They also wished for acute supervision, to which the
5 team could have access on short notice. A similar wish was expressed in the
6 study by Savolainen (2015).
7   It is important for the contents of supervision that the focus of discussions
8 is on the students, the supervision's structure is clear, and each session has a
9 meaningful theme. Supervision's methodical activities should be broadened
10 through e.g., operational methods. Some wished that the supervisor's approach
11 should be stronger and even more dialogic, which requires professional skills
12 from the supervisor in helping the supervisees process matters (Kivinen 2018).
13 The results form a partial picture of the supervisor student as a teacherly and
14 guiding role, which some of the students expected. They particularly wished
15 for the supervisor to use more methodical activities, to challenge the
16 supervisees more and to join in bravely themself.
17   Supervision is generally recommended as a one-to-two-year process. In
18 this manner, its benefits are surely greater than those of a brief supervision
19 process. However, according to Bullington and Cronqvist (2018), even a
20 relatively brief supervision process can have good results, particularly as group
21 supervision. The social and health care management degree program could be
22 piloted as a longer-term project, such as ten 90-minute sessions spread over the
23 entire student period. Longer-term student supervision would give new
24 information on the potential of supervision in defusing conflicts within teams
25 and managing stress.
26   The pilot program described in this study gave the management students
27 personal experience of supervision, which may inspire them to seek supervision
28 for themselves or their employees in the future. The supervisor students have
29 their own challenges in finding sufficient opportunities to reach their training
30 quotas, so the university offering them ready-made groups is also helpful to
31 their studies.
32   Student supervision could have also been studied via individual
33 interviews, which might have given deeper results. Charting the experiences of
34 supervisor students would also give further information on further developing
35 supervision for students. The results of this study can be used in developing
36 both supervision aimed at students and supervisor training.

References

40 Alila, Sanna, Määttä, Kaarina & Uusiautti, Satu (2015). How Does Supervision Support
41   Inclusive Teacherhood? *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education,*
42   *2016, 8(3), 351-362.*
43 Allbutt, Helen, Colthart, Iain, El-Farargy, Nancy, Sturgeon, Caroline, Vallis, Jo & Lough,
44   Murray (2017). Understanding supervision in health and social care through the
45   experiences of practitioners in Scotland. *Journal of Integrated Care Vol. 25 No. 2,*
46   *pp. 120-130. https://doi.org/10.1108/jica-11-2016-0046*

1 Austin, Helen (2016). Supervision for superheroes: the case for reflective professional
2   supervision for senior doctors. *New Zealand Medical Journal (NZMJ) 6, Vol 129, No*
3   *1434, pp. 69-72.*
4 Barham, Debbie, de Beer, Wayne & Clark Helen (2019). The role of professional
5   supervision for palliative care doctors in New Zealand: a quantitative survey of
6   attitudes and experiences. *New Zealand Medical Journal (NZMJ) 30, Vol 132, No*
7   *1501, pp. 10-20.*
8 Berggren, Ingela, Barbosa da Silva, Antonio & Severinsson, Elisabeth (2005). Core ethical
9   issues of clinical nursing supervision. *Nursing and Health Sciences, Vol 7, pp. 21-28.*
10   *DOI: 10.1111/j.1442-2018.2005.00224.x*
11 Blomberg, Karin & Bisholt, Birgitta (2016). Clinical group supervision for integrating
12   ethical reasoning: Views from students and supervisors. *Nursing Ethics, Vol. 23(7)*
13   *761–769. DOI: 10.1177/0969733015583184*
14 Bullington, Jennifer & Cronqvist, Agneta (2018). Group supervision for healthcare
15   professionals within primary care for patients with psychosomatic health problems: a
16   pilot intervention study. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences, 32, pp. 108–116.*
17   *doi: 10.1111/scs.12436*
18 Evans, Carol & Marcroft, Emma (2015). Clinical supervision in a community setting.
19   *Nursing Times, 111: 22, pp. 16-18.*
20 Immaisi, Anna-Maija (2012). Työnohjauksen muutosmatka - katsaus historiaan ja visio
21   tulevaan [Change journey of work supervision – a look into history and a vision of
22   the future]. In: Työnohjaus -ryhmien ja organisaatioiden kehittämisen välineenä
23   [Work supervision as a tool of developing groups and organization], 18-23. Eds.
24   Ranne, Kaarina, Markkanen, Heikki & Malo, Tuula. Tampere: Tammerprint Oy.
25 Kattainen, Eija (2017). Työnohjaus opiskelijan itsensä johtamisen prosessissa
26   ammattikorkeakoulussa [Work supervision in the process of self-management in
27   universities of applied sciences. In Työnohjaus – välttämätön hyvä
28   ammattikorkeakoulussa [Work supervision – a necessary good in universities of
29   applied sciences], Arja Koski & Eila Jantunen (edit.), 160-176. Diakonia-
30   ammattikorkeakoulu.
31 Kivinen, Pirkko (2018). Työnohjaus työyhteisöjen tukena [Work supervision supporting
32   workplace communities]. In: *Työn ilolla! -dialogia ja yhteistoiminnallista*
33   *kehittämistä,[With joyous work! - dialogue and collaborativedevelopment] 53-60.*
34   Edit. Laaksonen, H. Tampere: Kirjapaino Hermes Oy.
35 Kivinen, Pirkko & Ollila, Seija (2023). Johtajien työnohjauksen uudet muodot
36   digiaikakaudella [New forms of leaders' work supervision in the digital age].
37 Knight, Jim (2011). What good. When Coaches and Teachers Interact Equally as Partners,
38   Good Things Happen. *Journal of Educational Leadership, pp. 18-22.*
39 Kupias, Päivi (2022). Työnohjaus ja coaching. Tukea työssä onnistumiseen [Work
40   supervision and coaching. Support in succeeding at work]. Helsinki: Gaudeamus.
41 Kärkkäinen, Maj-Lis (2012). Työnohjauksen monimuotoisuus [Versatility of work
42   supervision]. In: Työyhteisön työnohjaus [Work supervision in workplace
43   communities]. Eds. Kallasvuo, Anita, Koski, Arja, Kyrönseppä, Ulla & Kärkkäinen,
44   Maj-Lis,14-30. Helsinki: Sanoma Pro Oy.
45 Ollila, Seija (2006). Osaamisen strategisen johtamisen hallinta sosiaali- ja terveysalan
46   julkisissa ja yksityisissä palveluorganisaatioissa. Johtamisosaamisen ulottuvuudet
47   työnohjauksellisena näkökulmana. [The Mastery of Strategic Competence-based
48   Management in Public and Private Social and Health Service Organizations: The
49   Dimensions of Managerial Competence from the Viewpoint of Management
50   Supervision]. Acta Wasaensia No 156. University of Vaasa.

1   Ollila, Seija (2008). Strategic support for managers by management supervision.
2   *Leadership in Health Services, Vol. 21, No 1, pp. 16-27.* [https://doi.org/10.1108/175](https://doi.org/10.1108/17511870810845879)
3   [11870810845879](https://doi.org/10.1108/17511870810845879)
4   Ollila, Seija (2012). Hallinnollinen työnohjaus perusopetuksen ja lukion johtamisessa.
5   Tukea johtamisosaamiselle [Administrative work supervision in managing primary,
6   secondary and tertiary education]. Tutkimuksia 298, Sosiaali- ja terveyshallintotiede
7   7. Vaasan yliopisto.
8   Ollila, Seija (2014). Johtajakin tarvitsee työnohjausta [Leaders need work supervision
9   too]. In book: Parempaa työelämää tekemässä. Tutkiva ote työnohjaukseen [Creating
10   a better work culture. A scholarly approach to work supervision], 181-201. Eds.
11   Heroja, Teija, Koski, Arja, seppälä, Pekka, Säntti, Risto & Wallin, Aila. EU: United
12   Press Global.
13 Paunonen-Ilmonen, Marita & Heinonen, Ulla (2020). Hyvän johtamisen ainekset - Johdon
14   ja esimiesten työnohjauksesta [Ingredients for good leadership – On supervising
15   leaders and managers]. Sued Management Oy. Tallinn: AS Pakett.
16 Savolainen, S. (2015). Työnohjaus luokanopettajan työssä jaksamisen tukena. Pro gradu -
17   tutkielma. [Work supervision as an aid for classroom teacher wellbeing, master's
18   thesis] Kasvatustieteiden tiedekunta, Luokanopettajakoulutus, Lapin yliopisto.
19 Tikkanen, Sini (2017). Opiskelijoiden ryhmätyönohjausmallin kehittäminen
20   oikeuspsykiatriseen yksikköön – Case Niuvaniemi [Developing a student group
21   supervision model for a criminal psychiatrist unit, bachelor's thesis. Terveysalan
22   kehittämisen ja johtamisen koulutusohjelma. Opinnäytetyö. Savonia-
23   ammattikorkeakoulu.
24 Tuomi, J. & Sarajärvi, A. (2018). Laadullinen tutkimus ja sisällönanalyysi [Qualitative
25   research and content analysis]. Helsinki: Tammi.
26 Valtasaari, P. (2023). Orkesterimuusikoiden työnohjaus. Luova potentiaali
27   yhteisöllisyyden rakentamisen ja yksilöllisyyden kunnioittamisen risteyskohdassa
28   [Work supervision for concert musicians. Creative potential in the crossroad of
29   community building and respecting individuality]. Studia Musica 95, DocMus-
30   tohtorikoulu, Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia.
31 Vanninen, K. & Nieminen, J. 2016. Vertaistutorin käsikirja [Handbook of the peer tutor]
32   2016. Metropolian ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelijakunta.
33 Vanne, Tarja (2021). Ratkaisukeskeinen ryhmätyönohjaus esimiesten ja asiantuntijoiden
34   kokemuksellisen oppimisen ja työhyvinvoinnin kehittämisen menetelmänä
35   [Solution-centric work supervision as a method of experiential learning and
36   developing workplace wellbeing for superiors and experts]. Doctoral dissertations
37   483. Tampere University.
38