

CONCLUSION

The present publication offers a comprehensive perspective on the phenomenon of online supervision in the context of the digitalization of helping professions. The research findings demonstrate that online supervision is no longer merely a temporary response to the crisis situation caused by the pandemic but has become an established and legitimate component of supervisory practice. The digitalization of supervision represents not only a technological innovation, but a deeper transformation of the ways in which supervision is conducted, including its relational framework, ethical requirements, and organizational conditions.

The research confirmed that the transition to online forms of supervision unfolded in several phases – from initial improvisation and forced adaptation to the gradual professionalization and stabilization of this format. This process was accompanied by the acquisition of digital competencies, the development of new methodological approaches, and the redefinition of boundaries between professional and private space. Online supervision has thus become a standard component of professional support, particularly in contexts where accessibility, flexibility, and continuity are of key importance.

One of the most sensitive areas remains the establishment of the supervisory relationship in the online environment. The research findings indicate that the absence of physical presence and the limitation of nonverbal communication place increased demands on the conscious and intentional work with the relationship, trust, and a sense of safety. At the same time, the findings confirm that it is possible to create a functional, safe, and supportive supervisory relationship in the digital space, provided that the process is purposefully structured and ethically grounded. For some supervisees, the online environment may even represent a factor that lowers barriers to openness and supports greater authenticity.

A significant contribution of the research also lies in the analysis of visualizations of online supervision, which reveal the symbolic dimension of the digital space. Technology emerges in these visual representations as a mediator of contact, a bridge between two subjects, but also as a potential source of barriers. The visualizations indicate that participants construct their own mental space for supervision, within which professional and personal dimensions intersect, as do proximity and distance, certainty and uncertainty.

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Across all research questions, the ethical dimension of online supervision consistently appears as a key issue. Digitalization shifts ethical reflection into new areas, including data protection, the security of communication platforms, the preservation of confidentiality, the maintenance of boundaries, and the responsible use of digital tools, including artificial intelligence. The findings clearly indicate the need for the systematic adaptation of existing ethical codes to the conditions of the online environment and for their integration into the education and training of future supervisors.

Among the principal benefits of online supervision are its accessibility, temporal flexibility, the possibility of continuity of support, reduced organizational and financial demands, and the development of digital competencies. Online supervision extends the reach of supervisory support to regions and sectors where face-to-face formats have been limited, and it also plays a significant role in crisis situations by enabling a rapid professional response. These benefits, however, are balanced by identified limitations, including technical problems, screen fatigue, a reduction in the spontaneity of interaction, the risk of increased formalization of supervision, and a tendency to avoid more complicated or sensitive topics.

A comparison of online and face-to-face supervision suggests that these formats should not be understood as opposing, but rather as complementary forms of supervisory practice. Face-to-face supervision remains irreplaceable, particularly when working with deep emotional and relational themes, whereas the online format appears to be effective for ongoing reflection on practice, planning, education, and crisis support. The findings therefore clearly support the development of *hybrid models of supervision* that deliberately combine the advantages of both formats according to the aims, themes, and contextual conditions of the supervisory process.

Conceptions of the future of online supervision expressed by both supervisors and supervisees are relatively consistent. They are associated with demands for the establishment of clear methodological and ethical standards, the systematic integration of online competencies into the education and training of supervisors, the development of technological infrastructure, and the continuation of research into the quality and effectiveness of different forms of supervision. The findings also support the core category of the research, according to which *online supervision constitutes a flexible form of professional support that is shaped by contextual conditions and requires standardization*.

From an applied perspective, the research points to several key implications for practice, including the need for minimum technical and spatial

standards, systematic work with organizational management, the prevention of excessive formalization of supervision, the sensitive assessment of the suitability of the online format for specific topics and clients, and the responsible use of asynchronous formats and artificial intelligence tools. From an educational perspective, the findings highlight the need to integrate online-specific aspects into the curricula of supervisor training and continuing professional education.

From a theoretical perspective, the research expands understanding of how supervision is transformed under the conditions of a digital society. It demonstrates that digitalization does not alter the essence of supervision as a relationally grounded form of professional support, but rather reshapes its forms, tools, and conditions of implementation. The online environment thus becomes another legitimate setting for supervisory work; however, it requires its own methodological, ethical, and organizational grounding.

The international dimension of the publication is further strengthened by the analysis of supervisory practice in Georgia, which demonstrates that issues of professionalization, standardization, supervisor education, and ethical frameworks are relevant across diverse social, cultural, and institutional contexts. Findings from the Georgian context also confirm that the systemic embedding of supervision, along with its legislative and organizational support, constitutes a key prerequisite for its quality – corresponding closely with findings from the Slovak context. This underscores that digitalization and online supervision are not local phenomena, but rather broader transnational developments reflecting global changes in the helping professions.

In conclusion, online supervision can be understood as a lasting component of the evolution of the supervisory profession. Its further development will depend on the extent to which technological possibilities can be aligned with ethical principles, professional standards, and sensitivity to the relational nature of supervision. The research presented herein provides a foundation for this process and simultaneously opens space for further systematic investigation into the quality, effectiveness, and impacts of online supervision across different contexts of the helping professions. By integrating theoretical reflection with original empirical findings, this monographic work contributes to the systematic development of knowledge on supervision in social work under the conditions of digitalization.

Editors

