



MCAST



BEYOND BOUNDARIES THROUGH APPLIED QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

"Trial and Error Learning is our Reality": PhD Students Mentors' Experiences in Croatian Higher Education

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Outline

1. ECR-WELL project framework
2. Terminology discussion
3. Paper framework
4. Preliminary results
5. Instead of the conclusion: further steps

ECR-WELL project

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graph TD; A[ECR-WELL project] --> B[Qualitative Research (1st year)]; A --> C[Quantitative Research (2nd - 4th year)];
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The diagram is a flowchart with a white background and a blue border. At the top is a box labeled 'ECR-WELL project'. Two arrows point downwards from this box to two separate boxes: 'Qualitative Research (1st year)' on the left and 'Quantitative Research (2nd - 4th year)' on the right. A third box at the bottom contains a descriptive sentence about the research's focus on well-being and mental health, with a line connecting it to the 'Qualitative Research' box.

**Qualitative Research
(1st year)**

**Quantitative Research
(2nd - 4th year)**

The research explores findings related to early-career researchers' well-being and mental health as a preliminary stage for further longitudinal studies.

Project goal

different types of job demands and job resources, and other job characteristics

... is to explore the dynamic within-person associations between work conditions and individual factors and ECRs' well-being and mental health.

gender, motivation, proactivity, personality, perfectionism

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graph TD; A[ECR-WELL project] --> B[Qualitative Research (1st year)]; B --> C[focus groups with ECRs and interviews with mentors]; C --> D[24 mentors disciplinary, mentorship and institutional heterogeneity];
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ECR-WELL project

**Qualitative Research
(1st year)**

focus groups with ECRs
and interviews with
mentors

24 mentors
disciplinary, mentorship and
institutional heterogeneity

Terminology: mentors vs. supervisors

MENTOR

a guide or advisor who provides support, encouragement, and professional development

SUPERVISOR

an authority figure primarily responsible for overseeing work tasks and performance

NURTURING RELATIONSHIP

foster trust, openness, and a sense of belonging (Kram, 1985; Ragins&Scandura, 1999)
students with mentors report higher levels of academic and professional satisfaction
(Weidman, Stain, 2003; Bair&Haworth, 2004; Smith, 2011)

Terminology: mentors vs. supervisors

LONG-TERM CAREER IMPACT

associated with positive long-term career outcomes (e.g. increased job satisfaction, professional networking opportunities, and higher chances of career advancement)

mentored individuals are more likely to receive promotions and engage in collaborative projects

(Allen et al, 2003; Davis, 2006; Ebay et al, 2013)

INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING

broader perspectives beyond mere task management

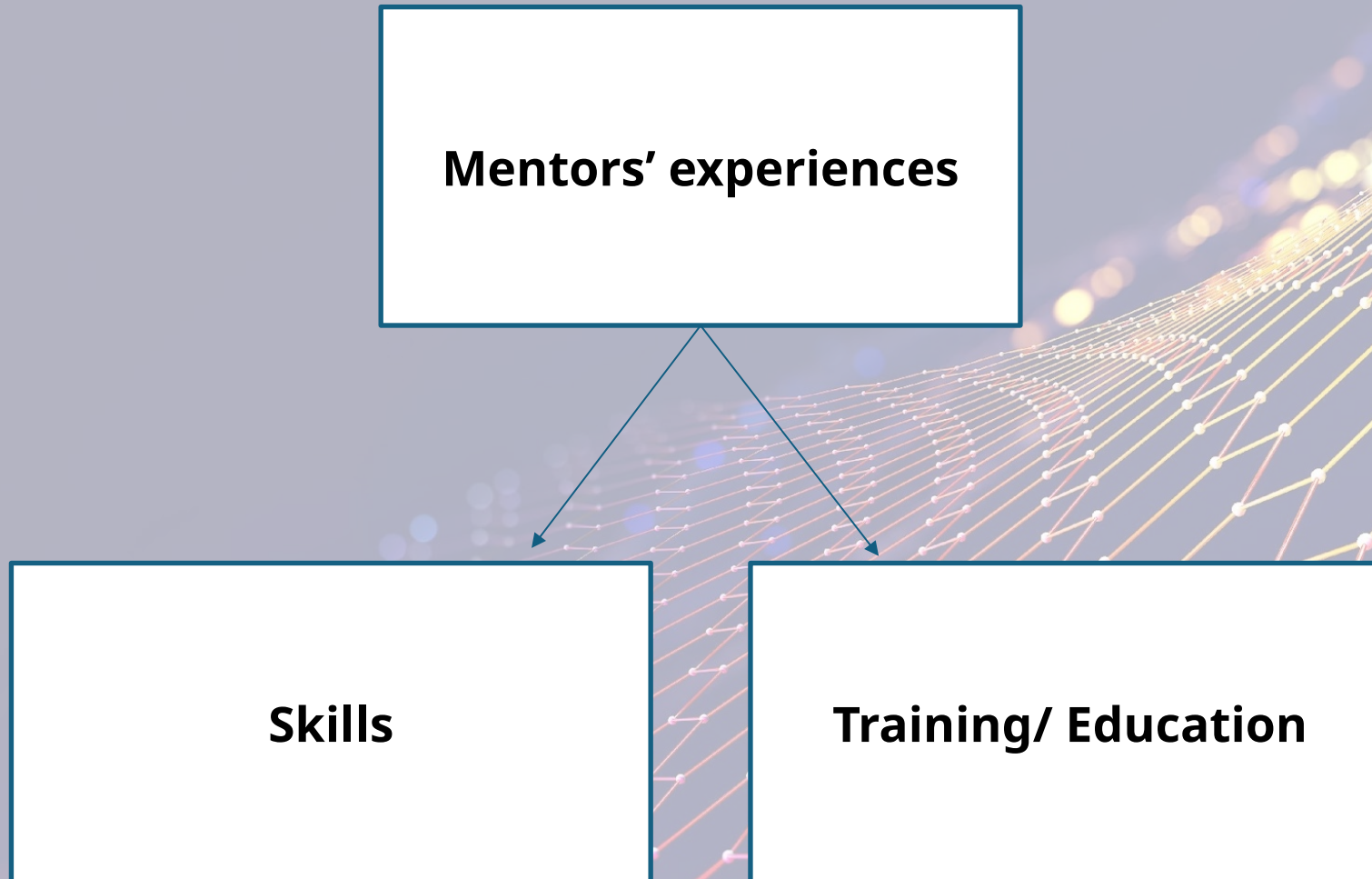
Paper goal

... to delve into the **experiences of PhD students mentors'**, specifically focusing on the **skills and educational background** necessary for **effective mentorship**

Why?

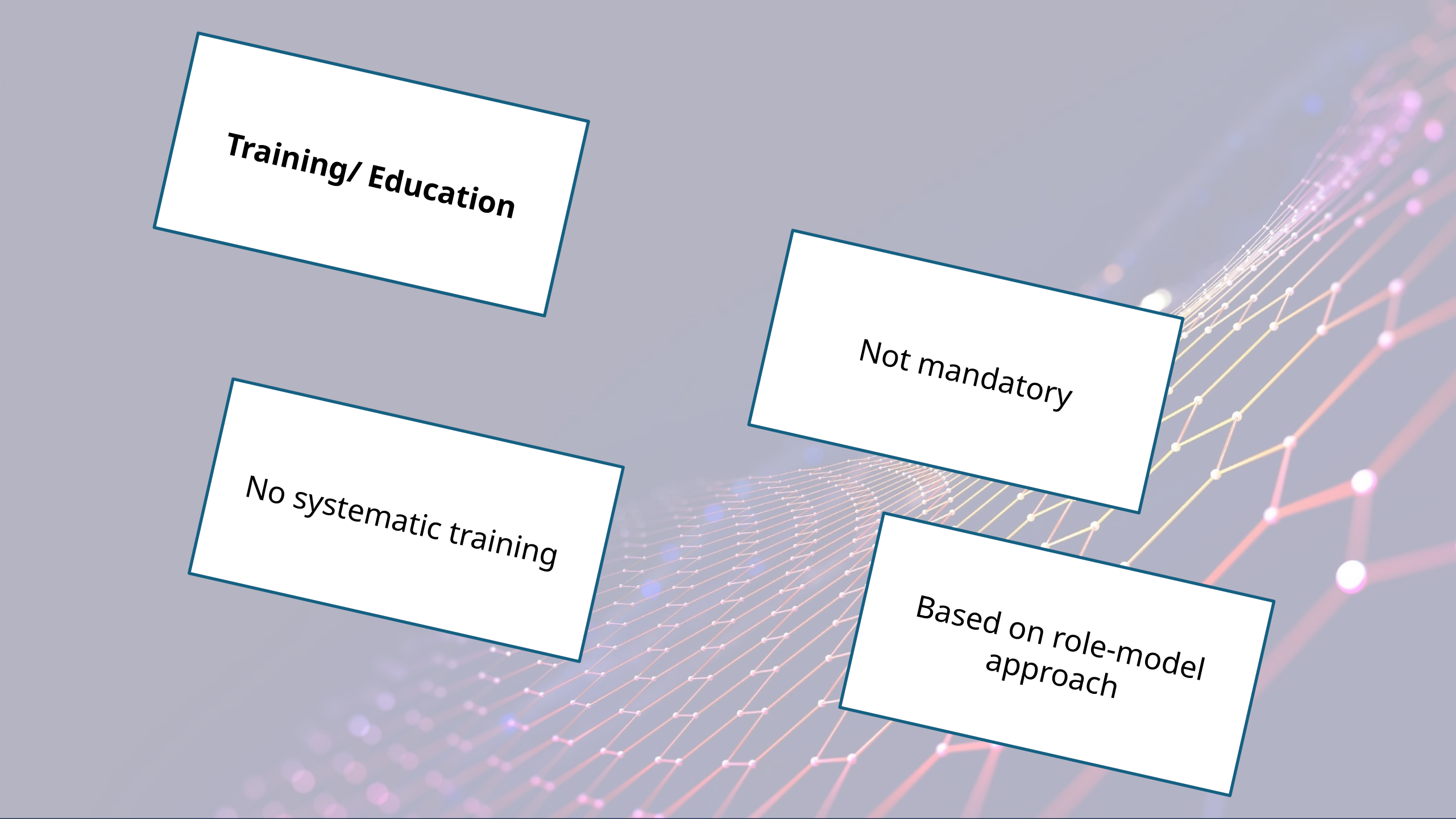
- the life of ECRs might be described as a **“doctoral mania or doctoral depression”** (Ledić & Turk, 2017; Brajdić-Vuković & Vignjević, 2017) **due to ... non-effective academic mentors**
- **relationships with mentors have a vital role** and can have substantial positive and negative influences on ECRs’ progress, well-being, and mental health (Cardilini et al., 2021; Cornwall et al., 2019; Grant et al., 2014)

Preliminary results



Skills





Training/ Education

Not mandatory

No systematic training

Based on role-model
approach

Instead of the conclusion: further steps

- systematic consensual coding and analysis should be done
- deeper analysis and interpretation
- questions in questionnaire for longitudinal study



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THANK YOU!