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Intergenerational Programmes Evaluation

Mariano Sánchez (Director)

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Documents Collection
Technical Documents Series

N.º 21003

COLLECTION DESIGNED BY:
Onoff Imagen y Comunicación

First Edition, 2007
First English Edition, 2009

EDITED BY:

Ministry of Health and Social Policy
General Secretary for Social Policy and Consumption
Spanish National Institute for Older Persons and Social Services
Avda. De la Ilustración, s/n. c/v. Ginzo de Limia, 58 – 28029 Madrid
Phone: +34 91 363 89 35 - Fax: +34 91 363 88 80
E-mail: publicaciones.imserso@imserso.es
http://www.seg-social.es/imserso/documentacion/pub.html

NIPO: 216-07-021-9
ISBN: 978-84-8446-093-0
D.L.: M-15.904-2007

CONTENTS

Note: The original Spanish edition of this book included nine chapters. Chapter nine consisted of the Spanish translation of Bernard, M. & Ellis, S. (2004). 'How Do You Know That Intergenerational Practice Works?' Stoke-on-Trent: The Beth Johnson Foundation. This publication is available in English at http://www.centreforip.co.uk/

FOREWORDS

The book you are looking at has, above all else, two characteristics that make it unique. First, it is a pioneering publication: never before has a monographic work on the evaluation of intergenerational programmes been published in Spain. Second, this book constitutes proof that the efforts made by IMSERSO (Spanish National Institute for Older Persons and Social Services) in the area of specialised training do not end, to put it colloquially, on the last day of class. This book would never have come into being if it had not been for the decision by IMSERSO to organise, in September of 2006, a course with the same title as the one this book now has. At the time, the course instructors prepared training materials especially for the occasion; now, several months later, the materials have been adapted and expanded, new reflections have been added, and they are being published with a view to reaching a larger audience. Interest in intergenerationality is most definitely on the rise.

If we look behind us, in search of the explanations for this growing interest, in the distance we will see, as a fundamental milestone, the Second World Assembly on Ageing that took place in Spain in 2002. The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, which was adopted at the Assembly, included an Issue specifically devoted to intergenerational solidarity.

The first few words of each of the two paragraphs that comprise the issue highlight the importance of the subject:

"Parr. 42. Solidarity between generations at all levels –in families, communities and nations– is fundamental for the achievement of a society for all ages."

"Parr. 43. At the family and community level, intergenerational ties can be valuable for everyone."

The Plan of Action concluded that all sectors of society, including Governments, should aim to strengthen these ties. There is no doubt that these reflections have prompted both public and private actors to ask themselves about what is being done to support intergenerational solidarity, something which came naturally in the past, especially in the family setting, but which can now be seen to be slowly fading away.

The movement to promote intergenerational activities, projects and programmes first began to take shape in the mid 1960s in North America. At that time there was a certain amount of concern about something called *the generation gap*, evidenced by the increase in negative stereotypes about older people and in the growing distance between older people and other members of society; in addition, at the other end of the life cycle, the number of children and young people in need of attention, care, support, education and other resources was growing inexorably. The pioneers of the intergenerational field decided to get to work: organising projects that enabled mutually enriching encounters to take place between the various generations would be a good way, they thought, to help stop the process that seriously threatened social harmony and cohesion.

Over three decades later, and with the significant contribution made by the aforementioned Plan of Action, that initial effort, far from slowing down, has become stronger and broader. In Europe, the creation in 1999 of the International Consortium for Intergenerational Programmes (ICIP) represented a landmark event. This organisation managed to bring together the experiences of both sides of the Atlantic to make them more efficient and accessible world over.

In the case of Spain, IMSERSO has been making valuable contributions to this effort for the past few years. The Specialised Training Programme that spurred the authors to write this book organised in Madrid, in June of 2005, the conference entitled *Intergenerational Programmes in Spain. Analysis of current situation and development potential*, which more than one hundred people attended. This event was the first action, in recent times, of a series of activities that included the creation of the Intergenerational Network (www.imserso.redintergeneracional.es), the training of specialists in intergenerational intervention, the creation of a database on intergenerational programmes, the funding of research on the current situation of these programmes in Spain and the organisation of the evaluation course mentioned above. Specific actions like these, combined with other similar ones, have culminated in IMSERSO adopting the subject of intergenerational relations as a primary line of action in its efforts to promote active ageing in older people.

At this stage we can safely say that the awakening of the intergenerational field (the sum of intergenerational policies, theories, studies and practices) in Spain is unstoppable. What are the consequences of this development? It is still too early to see results. However, books like this one will help do something that is considered vital: evaluate the impact of the many intergenerational projects and programmes that are underway. Only if we have strong evidence of the benefits to children, young people, adults and older people, whether dependent or not, will such practices earn the respect, confidence and recognition they deserve.

A few years ago, the organisation *Generations Together*, one of the most important actors in the intergenerational sector in the U.S., adopted the phase, *"Intergenerational approaches: Not just nice…necessary."* In the words of the British researcher Gillian Granville, the author of the first report on intergenerational practice in the United Kingdom, "Too often, intergenerational activity has been viewed as 'a nice thing to do', with a feelgood factor, while the potential of the exchange to solve difficult issues has been largely ignored, or underdeveloped" (Granville, 2002, 24).([1]) Greater attention to dependence, active ageing and the real needs of older people, and of people of all ages, leads us to think that a book like this one is not only interesting or *nice*, but necessary. We hope that it will contribute to overcoming the deficiencies pointed out by the aforementioned researcher.

IMSERSO
Spanish National Institute for Older Persons and Social Services

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In recent years we have enjoyed an increasingly close working partnership with colleagues in Spain collaborating together to share understanding and learning about intergenerational practice. Building the evidence base on understanding the impact and effectiveness of intergenerational programmes is fundamental to the future of this work. We welcome the generosity of our Spanish partners in giving us permission to translate their book on evaluation of intergenerational programmes to enable it to be made available to a wider audience. We would like to particularly thank Professor Mariano Sanchez for generously giving his time and expertise to editing the translation and the Beth Johnson Foundation for funding the cost of the translation.

Alan Hatton-Yeo.
The Beth Johnson Foundation

[1] Granville, G. (2002). *A Review of Intergenerational Practice in the UK.* Stoke-on-Trent: The Beth Johnson Foundation.

Chapter 1

COMPONENTS OF AN INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMME

Mariano Sánchez and Pilar Díaz
University of Granada

Many definitions have been given for Intergenerational Programmes (IP)([1]) and we are not going to attempt to provide a definitive one here. At the beginning of a book such as this, it seems sufficient to clarify which elements are usually considered indispensable to one of these programmes. From our point of view, the minimum three elements are:

- **Organisation, length, and goals:** Since we are dealing with a programme, we are referring to actions that are organised in time, and that seek to achieve certain specific goals (i.e., involving intended actions). In general, an intergenerational programme includes diverse activities (some intergenerational and others not), but an activity (or even various activities) is not enough in itself for a programme to exist;

- **Participants from several generations:** The adjective, *intergenerational*, suggests that participants in the programme are people from different generations; the term generation is generally used to refer to age (children, young people, adults, the elderly, etc.) or family position (grandchildren, children, parents, grandparents, etc.). There is some debate as to whether the participants in these programmes should be people that belong to contiguous generations (for instance, children-parents or adults-elderly), or whether, as a criterion of efficiency, they should not be allowed to form a part of the same family. However, neither of the two cases arrives at a definitive conclusion. Despite the fact that IPs traditionally focus on programmes whose participants do not have a family relationship or who belong to distant (not contiguous) generations in the life cycle, nothing impedes us from continuing to refer to them as IPs, even when these last two conditions are not met;

- **Ongoing exchange:** All intergenerational programmes pursue certain positive goals that are beneficial to the participants as well as other people in their surroundings (whether personal, family, community, etc.). The basic element for attaining these goals lies in the relationships between participants -one of these programme's typical strategies is to encourage this type of relationship-building around an ongoing exchange of resources between participants. This exchange process helps to create a framework for going beyond dependence in order to achieve interdependence: each participant feels that s/he needs the others and that they, in turn, need her or him. The idea is to bring about relations that are reciprocal, and that surpass the mindset of mere simple service ('I do something for you because you need it, without you doing anything for me'). However, if a mutual service is produced ('I do this for you and you do that for me'), then in that case we can begin to speak of an exchange and, therefore, an intergenerational programme.

The definition of intergenerational programme adopted by the International Consortium for Intergenerational Programmes, a non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting IPs, includes these three elements: *Intergenerational programmes are vehicles for the purposeful and ongoing exchange of resources and learning among older and younger generations for individual and social benefits.*

That said, we can and should refine these reflections a bit more by shifting to a discussion of the components of the best-performing intergenerational programmes. For instance, Professor Sally Newman (1998) addresses eight elements that are typical of the most successful IPs:

1) **Community**: Every intergenerational programme takes place within the context of one or various communities to which participants in the programme belong. Therefore, one must act accordingly by connecting the programme to the reality, resources, members and real needs

[1] Three terms are widely used in this field: Intergenerational Programme (also called Intergenerational Programming in the USA) and the closely related Intergenerational Project to talk about specific actions, and, finally, Intergenerational Practice to refer to the field in more general terms. This text will use the initials 'IP' to refer to Intergenerational Programme/Project and the initials 'IGP' to refer to the field of Intergenerational Practice.

of these communities that, far from being mere programme spectators, are present in the programme through people and organisations. In cases in which an IP performs well, the community is not simply some type of background adornment, a setting for action, but rather a constitutive part of the IP.

2) **Institutionalisation**: The programme must be connected to institutions and organisations beyond the specific individuals that ensure its maintenance, thereby facilitating the establishment and attainment of medium- and long-term objectives and evaluations. If, earlier, we used the notion of surroundings or the constitutive context of the programme to refer to community, then by institutionalisation we mean the importance of ensuring programme sustainability by channelling it and connecting it with the processes that make it a stable resource. For instance, an intergenerational programme seeking to improve social inclusion through an exchange between immigrant children and elderly people who are local natives could have a community component if it were to work with immigrant organisations in the area. It also could become institutionalised if the local network of schools were to adopt the programme within their annual work plans as one of their own activities.

3) **Administration**: All programmes are in need of appropriate management and material as well as human resource coordination, otherwise implementation would be unviable. Earlier when we spoke of **organisation, length and goals**, the need for management was implicit; here, it is made explicit.

4) **Evaluation**: Undoubtedly, certain intergenerational programmes are not evaluated (in fact, precisely one of the reasons for this book is to lower the number of such programmes), but clearly without evaluations, no matter how small or unsystematic, it would be impossible to achieve sustainable programme improvement. Here, we are talking about supplying a strategy and the appropriate instruments for evaluating the programme according to the evaluation objectives pursued from the start.

5) **Participants**: Most important to the programme are children, young people, adults and/or the elderly, whether from inside as programme initiators or outside as people that the programme affects in some way (in the latter case, it is essential to pay attention to the role that the intermediate generations often play as IP facilitators and/or those who make the IP possible. For example, parents authorise the participation of their minor children in the programme). This component is the second of the three that we proposed at the beginning of the chapter (**participants of various generations**).

6) **Networking**: The fact that people of different generations can be counted on as participants probably forces us to connect groups, organisations, activities, spaces and so forth that are not related or that only sporadically enter into contact. This means that we should create networks, or take advantage of those that are already working, and introduce the intergenerational perspective to them in such a way that age does not prevent participation, but rather the opposite. For instance, an IP can serve as a nexus between a school, a day centre and a youth organisation of the same neighbourhood. In other words, the interconnection between these three entities that leads to a flow of resources between them makes discussions about networking possible.

7) **Funding**: Despite the fact that many cases count on voluntary personnel, the cost of all of the activities and necessary resources must always be taken into consideration. Without an appropriate and realistic financial forecast, good intentions can turn into failure. Intergenerational activities can be undertaken without any funding but it is hard to imagine that those activities could become regular and long-lasting programmes.

8) **Staff**: In addition to the participants, the programme can require the involvement of a broad variety of professionals (schoolteachers, therapists of an elderly care facility, psychologists at a residence, etc.). The programme must sometimes pay for and even be in charge of part of these personnel.

As we have seen, Newman envisions these elements without explicit reference to either the particular characteristics of the relationships or the values implicit in them. Bressler, Henkin and Adler (2005) offer a complementary perspective by specifying the following five essential elements of intergenerational programmes "that are most effective at achieving their goals and most fulfilling to participants" (2005: 20):

1) **Roles:** All programme participants should have an assigned role, a position and a task that they understand and that is meaningful to them.

2) **Relationships:** IPs go beyond the organisation of a service; they seek to ensure that their participants develop personal relationships and positive feelings (affection, support, trust, companionship, etc.).

3) **Reciprocity:** All participants should experience *giving to* and *receiving from* people who are not of their age group.

4) **Ongoing recognition of each participant's contributions to the programme**. Experience shows that this type of recognition serves as a wonderful source of motivation for IP participants.

5) **Capacity to respond to community needs:** The programmes that focus on satisfying real and clearly identified needs have a greater probability of being sustainable and, therefore, of producing a greater impact.

In her review of intergenerational practices in Great Britain, Granville (2002: 12-13) offers a third proposal about the key components of the best-performing IPs. After having identified and analysed more than sixty different intergenerational programmes, this researcher specified nine such components:

1) **Sound project planning and management**, in accordance with the community programmes' usual practices more generally, and decisiveness about the reasons for establishing the programme under consideration as well as its goals.

2) **Partnership working:** Since intergenerational programmes are intersectorial by nature (in these programmes, groups of people get together that are traditionally viewed as *collectives* within a certain *sector*, such as children, young people, adults, etc.), this type of collaboration is essential to the achievement of one of the generic goals of any IP, i.e. that all participating generations should benefit from the programme (otherwise, the result is a volunteer programme rather than an IP).

3) **The presence of champions**, meaning people who know how to champion the IPs' merits with enthusiasm and commitment and who, with their work, galvanise and inspire other people to become involved in the programme.

4) **Developing the capacity of communities**: The best IPs succeed in raising levels of competence, trust and status among persons of different generations within the community. This results in more unified communities capable of successfully solving their problems and increasing their development.

5) **Promoting social inclusion:** When promoting encounters and people's knowledge, a well-managed and experienced intergenerationality can be an instrument for mitigating discrimination, prejudice and isolation.

6) **Benefits to participants for everyone and not only for some**. The maximum objective of an IP is not for people and organisations to collaborate (although good collaboration is necessary, as stated in component 2) but rather, as an outcome of that collaboration, for there to be improvements, positive changes for those involved.

7) **Preparing the generations:** The prior, and, when possible, separate, orientation and formation of those who participate in an IP are critical conditions for the programme's success. The first time that children, young people, adults, and so forth meet to start working together, they should know what they are becoming involved in and be prepared to have a positive, pleasurable and motivating experience.

8) **Ensuring that the IP does not end up reinforcing (negative) stereotypes:** Obviously, bringing together different generations is not in itself enough to ensure the emergence of positive outcomes from such an encounter in any way whatsoever. Furthermore, in her study, Granville affirmed that IPs often end up producing a negative impact by reinforcing or even deepening (rather than solving) the conflicts they take on. Intergenerationality is not a game ('Let's get young people and old people together and see what happens!') precisely because of what is at stake: solidarity, collaboration and mutual trust between people, which is an indispensable foundation for attaining more humane and unified communities.

9) **The need for an evidence base:** Intergenerational work usually is based on anecdotal evidence that alludes to some specific aspect of the programme rather than its general impact. Where there is a well-founded and systematic IP evaluation, there are greater achievements.

Lastly, we present a proposal undertaken by some authors in Australia to review the country's IPs (Feldman *et al.*, 2002: 19). Based on the study of thirteen pre-selected intergenerational programmes, they concluded that the seven most common factors in successful IPs, in order of greater to lesser relevance, were the following:

1) **A Sustainable Theme:** If intergenerational work focuses on an area/issue/need whose characteristics require long term performance and that, in addition, is a fundable project that depends on the support of the affected persons who request it, then the possibilities of the IP's success will be much greater.

2) **Stakeholder support for and interest in the IP:** The best-performing programmes are those that are able to connect with the real needs of the communities, attend to the interests of the organisations and administrations devoted to putting into practice services for the different generations and gain the support of the local financial backers and the mass media.

3) **Community involvement** in launching, implementing and maintaining the IP.

4) Planning.

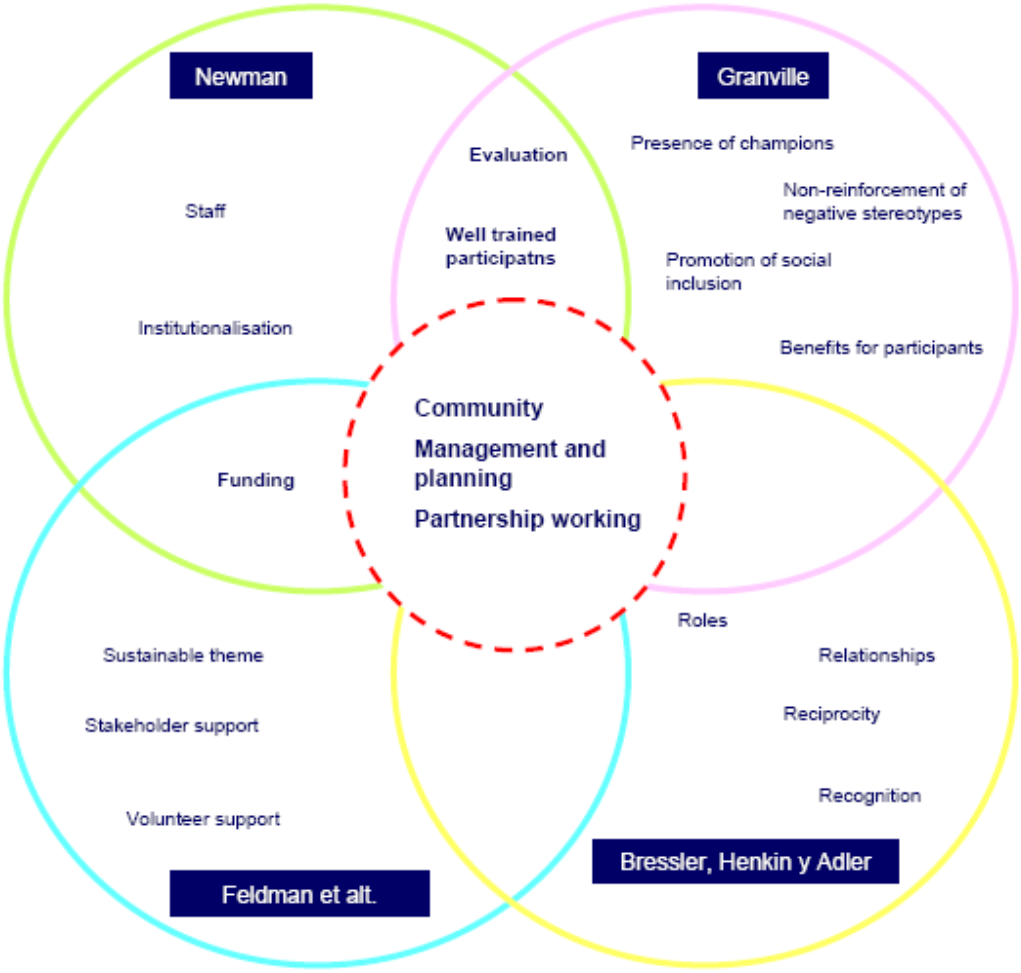
5) **Volunteer support** for the tasks undertaken within the IP.

6) Funding.

7) **Collaboration** between the IP's sponsors and other entities.

Here, the four abovementioned lists are arranged in a chart in order to provide an at-a-glance comparison between the components proposed for evaluating the principles of best IP performance:

FIGURE 1
Components of the best-performing IPs



Source: Authors

A reliance on community (with its participation, involvement, development and attention to real needs), the implementation of good IP planning and management, and the fostering of collaboration between organisations (networking) are the components that coincide most in the four analyses used. Funding, an appropriate evaluation and participant attention and preparation appear in two of the four lists (for this reason, we placed them at the intersections of their respective circumferences in Figure 1).

We did not review these components so that the reader might take them word for word and make up her/his own list. We do not believe that the objective is to produce one list after another. Above all, we want to transmit to the reader the importance of reflecting upon the practice that we are going to

undertake when we think about the design and implementation of an intergenerational programme. There might be elements that we have not mentioned and that are equally relevant; the true worth of our review is that it is based on contributions from people who have spent many years dedicated to intergenerational work. That said, there is no question that IPs cannot be improvised. Whatever the components that we are talking about, we must stop and think carefully about what we are trying to achieve by putting an IP into practice. Often we will have to accept that intergenerational strategy might not be suitable to the needs in question. Lists of components are more or less easy to come up with, whereas the truly difficult task lies in knowing how to assess the suitability of an IP in each case. This can only be achieved through training and experience.

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Chapter 2

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO EVALUATE AN INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMME?

Mariano Sánchez and Pilar Díaz
University of Granada

"There are at least two critical problems associated with the state of research and evaluation in this field. First, there is simply not enough of it in any area of intergenerational programming, and we need more of it, even small-scale evaluations that diligently and systematically record programme development, intervention, and outcome information" (Kuehne, 2005: 10).

This book is specifically dedicated to the evaluation of IPs. We believe that evaluation is a *sine qua non* for discussing a good intergenerational programme. However, in the previous section we saw that evaluation is not always cited as an essential factor in the best-performing IPs. Our point of view is that where one of these programmes exists, some form of evaluation takes place, even if it is not systematic or specific. Therefore, in this book we challenge and invite the readers to take some time to think about evaluation so that it becomes an intended and systematised task, one more of the many processes to undertake within the framework of an IP.

The question of what it means to evaluate a programme is not by any means new. Many people have considered it before and some of these people have even made their answers public. Let us consider some of them as a way of beginning to elaborate our own.

Saéz and Nieto (1995: 142), speaking of projects and programmes in general, conceptualise evaluation in the following manner:

"[It is] a systematic and explicit process, an organised and deliberate effort to gather valid information in order to describe and issue grounded value judgments about a phenomenon".

We already have some elements here that we can begin learning about. IP evaluation means *carrying out a process*, or undertaking a task that lasts a certain period of time and that, as we will see later on, has certain phases. Additionally, IP evaluation means *undertaking a systematic effort*, in other words, one that is ordered, organised and, to some extent, controlled. Thirdly, IP evaluation means *taking on an explicit task*, one that is deliberate and intentional, meaning that the evaluation of an intergenerational programme is not something that appears in front of us but rather is something that we must look for and pursue. Evaluations are not mere opinions expressed *a posteriori* about a programme; that would not warrant a book such as this. We all know how to opine, but not how to evaluate; an opinion does not have to be systematic or argued, but an evaluation does (as we will discuss below). IP evaluation means *gathering valid information*: not all information about a programme is useful for its evaluation. Finally, the essence, or goal, of an evaluation is the *grounded assessment* of a programme. Evaluating and assessing are two closely related verbs: an evaluation that only describes ('the IP was this way, this happened in the IP, etc.') is not an evaluation; we need to effectuate an assessment ('the IP achieved this, the IP worked, the IP was not worthwhile, the IP achieved that, etc.'). Moreover, it should be a *grounded*, defensible assessment, such that its conclusions can be explained and understood, and that those who did not carry out the evaluation can, in turn, sensibly assess the evaluation.

John Owen (2006), a researcher from the Programme Evaluation Centre of the University of Melbourne takes up Fournier's proposal in that he questions the logic or foundation of all evaluation processes, regardless of what is being evaluated, and we, in turn, have adapted it to the case of IPs. Evaluating an (intergenerational) programme means:

…*establishing criteria* about what we consider to be valuable. In other words, what are the dimensions, the aspects of an IP that need to be evaluated in order to assess the programme?

…*creating standards* that allow us to determine the level of success or failure by which an IP can be considered good (or bad).

…*providing indicators* for contrasting the reality of the IP against established standards.

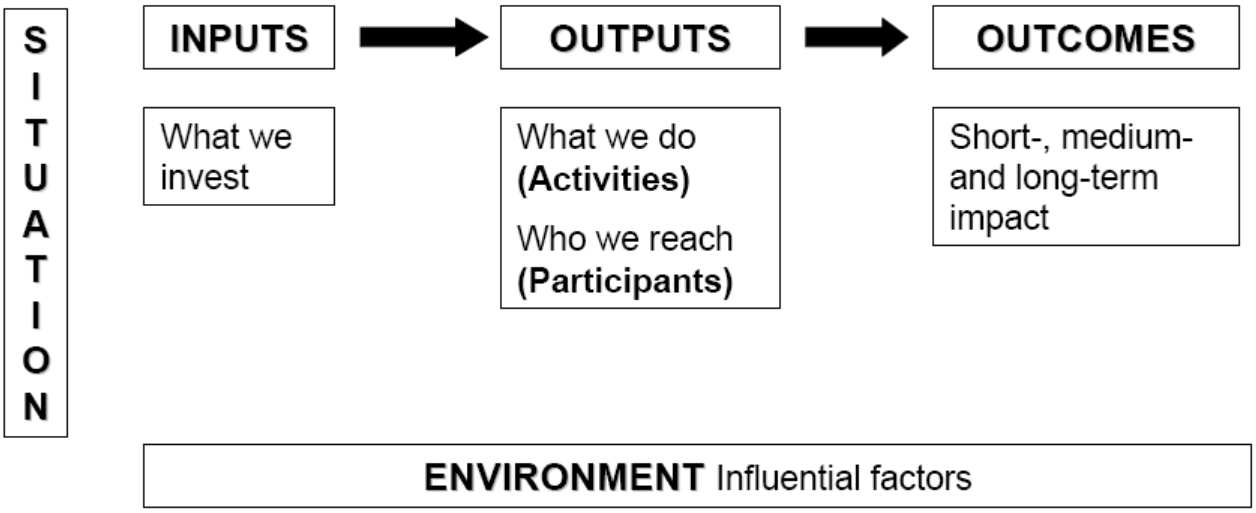
…*synthesising and integrating the evidence* gathered as a means of judging the IP's merit (or failure) and value.

Owen's own thoughts develop with his proposal of five different types of programme evaluation. Each of these types has certain implications with regard to the question of what IP evaluation means. Let us examine them:

1) *Proactive Evaluation* (Is the programme necessary?): This type of evaluation seeks to determine whether the programme is needed and, if so, what type of programme. In our context, whenever we study needs (or when we review the IPs undertaken by others or research in the intergenerational field) as a means of determining whether or not to start up an IP and how to focus it, we are undertaking what Owen calls proactive evaluation. The IP does not yet exist but we have already begun to evaluate whether the present situation advises its future start-up.

2) *Clarificative Evaluation* (What is the implicit logic of the programme?): This type of evaluation is concerned with clarifying or defining the programme's logic: its implicit assumptions, its objectives, its intentions, the reasons for linking certain activities with objectives, etc. Even during the implementation phase, those who run the programme are often not fully conscious of its key aspects, thus the need to pause to evaluate and clarify the programme's logic. One way – but not the only way – of approaching clarificative evaluation is to set about determining the programme's *logical model*, which is "a graphic representation that shows logical relationships between inputs, outputs and outcomes relative to a situation" (Mindel, n.d.). Figure 2 illustrates the logical model concept:

FIGURE 2
Logic Model of a Programme



Source: Adapted from Mindel (n.d.)

McCrea, Weissman and Thorpe-Brown (2004) offer the following supposition as a specific example of clarification in a hypothetical intergenerational programme using the logical model framework that we just saw:

SITUATION: In a small town, a street fight breaks out between a gang of youths and a group of adults, as a result of which an adult is seriously injured. The newspapers echo the event and reactions begin to form. The atmosphere heats up and finally the town hall decides to get involved: they get the youth and adult organisations together in order to see what they can do to avoid a recurrence of the conflict. They propose to implement an IP.

INPUTS: Youths and adults, personnel from the town hall and from interested organisations, resource material (local material, documents, etc.).

OUTPUTS (Participants): Twenty youths, twenty adults, the involvement of ten people from the local organisations.

OUTPUTS (Activities): Gatherings for sharing life histories, discussion groups about the event that took place, encounter groups to agree on a joint activity to carry out in the town.

OUTCOMES:

Short-term: Youths and adults learn ways of avoiding possible conflicts like the one that took place. They decide to start up certain joint volunteer activities.

Medium-term: The contact between local youths and adults is smoother and more direct. The number of spaces in which both generations meet and do things together increases.

Long-term: Mutual negative stereotypes of youths and adults practically disappear. The IP's youth participants show a more respectful attitude toward the adults and an interest in having contact with them.

Owen does not clarify whether the entire programme can be reduced to one (and only one) logic or whether, on the contrary, various logics can coexist. Our experience with implementing intergenerational programmes certainly leads us to choose the second option. Although we usually concentrate on logic –on a specific relationship between a situation, inputs, outputs and outcomes– in reality there is always much more that we would like to concentrate on or that we are capable of seeing. We generally hold onto certain aspects of the starting point (because we think they are relevant, because they are imposed upon us, because they coincide with our financial backers' interests, etc.). We also hold onto some of the resources we invest in (often we are not even one hundred percent sure who else, beyond the participants in the activities, is helping in more invisible ways to keep the programme going: in the case of the IPs, this frequently occurs, for instance, when we forget that without the parents' support the children often would not be able to get involved in the programme). Additionally, we hold onto some of the activities carried out (because they are the most interesting or most attractive, they are going to give us more coverage, etc.). Lastly, we hold onto certain outcomes (let us not fool ourselves: we will never know –because it is impossible– the totality of the outcomes that a programme produces). All this is nothing more than a simplification that, for practical purposes, we make as part of the process of programme implementation. That said, let us be clear: no matter how practical it is, it will never be more than a simplification and, therefore, it will never equal the totality of what occurs in the programme (even though our conclusions frequently tend to be fairly totalitarian). We must be careful: simplification ('we reduce things in order to approximate and understand them to some degree') is only one step away from simplism ('there is nothing beyond what we are capable of managing during programme implementation and evaluation'), a step better not taken.

3) *Interactive or Participatory Evaluation* (Those participating or interested in the programme want to know how it is performing): In this case, the (internal or outside) evaluators focus on the interests of those who are committed to the programme and who try to provide some measure of control (that they rightfully have) over it. The reason for this type of evaluation is to attend to the demands of those who direct and/or support the programme and, therefore, the indispensable interactivity to which the title alludes. For instance, when an external evaluator works closely with those who implement the programme in order to analyse the best ways of improving it, that evaluator is doing interactive evaluation.

4) *Monitoring Evaluation* (How is the programme working?): In any programme, especially if it is long term, it is useful to know continuously how it is evolving, what it is achieving, what adjustments need to be made in the process, and how it is progressing. This is a monitoring evaluation; the evaluators' attention is focused on the different processes that develop along with the programme.

5) *Impact Evaluation* (What are the intended and unintended outcomes of the programme?): When we speak of an impact, we are referring to the programme outcomes. Unfortunately, this is often the only meaning of the term evaluation that is used. The degree to which the programme objectives are fulfilled or the needs requiring attention produce satisfactory outcomes are typical conclusions of this type of evaluation. The programme in question is conceptualised as the cause of a series of outcomes or effects. Here, Owen makes a very pertinent clarification: realistically speaking, we can only affirm that a programme works in a certain way and achieves a certain impact under certain circumstances. In other words, a programme's effectiveness cannot be generalised beyond the conditions and specific contexts in which we are evaluating it. Sometimes we become obsessed with looking for quasi-universal conclusions that allow us to declare a programme's suitability for export to other places and situations without realising that this export (which implies a change in the conditions of implementation) could be the beginning of the programme's failure.

Returning to the main thread of this chapter's second section (What does it mean to evaluate an intergenerational programme?), we might say that, depending on the form of evaluation, the answer to the initial question varies at least partially. Here are some examples:

- A proactive evaluation of an intergenerational programme can compel us, for instance, to perform an analysis of needs that leads us to conclude that an intergenerational strategy is a more appropriate means of satisfying them than others. That is, IPs are not cure-alls for anything; therefore, their start-up should respond to a purposeful choice between different types of programmes that might intervene in a particular issue. In attempting to alleviate loneliness among certain elderly persons, why should it be more advisable to offer them the companionship of a young person in their home than periodic visits from another elderly person? If we cannot respond to a question like this, then our IP will be built on shaky ground.

- A clarificative evaluation can mean challenging those in charge of developing an IP to answer the question, 'To what extent do you know and share the same viewpoint about what you are doing'? Unfortunately, it is not uncommon that, after writing an insufficiently detailed formulation of IP objectives and activities, the conclusion is arrived at, once the IP is already underway, that this or that objective has not been understood by everyone in the same way or, worse, is unrealistic. In other circumstances, different IP rationales get mixed up within the same IP and, since they are contradictory, the possibilities for attaining what is sought after are ruined. For instance, when the stated objective of an IP is to bring children and elderly persons closer together in order to encourage contact between them but, at the same time, a selective process is championed that can exclude many children and elderly persons from participating in the IP, then simultaneously and by virtue of the same programme, we are trying to encourage, on the one hand, inclusion and coming together and, on the other hand, exclusion.

- An interactive evaluation requires close and direct contact with people and institutions that have expectations about the IP, whether they directly participate in it or not. In this case, we believe that a prior analysis of who those people or institutions may be is obligatory.

- In the monitoring evaluation of an IP, we may need to identify a series of programme components that would allow us to undertake this monitoring. Of course, this evaluation involves work that takes at least the same amount of time as that of the programme, since it concerns the evaluation of how the IP is progressing.

- An impact evaluation can mean, for instance, developing an indicator of intergenerational contact between children and elderly persons of a town based on our premise of a situation

of considerable segregation by age of community activities. The impact of the programme is evaluated by virtue of how that indicator varies as the IP is implemented.

In summary, what does it mean to evaluate an intergenerational programme? Figure 3 shows the different answers given to the question up to now:

FIGURE 3

What Does It Mean to Evaluate an Intergenerational Programme?

Source: Authos.

We could continue adding similar thoughts to the previous ones and we imagine the readers could, as well. However, as mentioned above in the discussion of the IPs' components, this is not about amassing information but rather opening avenues of reflection so that the readers of this text might venture to go about creating their own answers to their own questions.

For this reason, and as a way of rounding up the chapter, we come to one final question. Until now, we have presented some basic characteristics of what it means to evaluate any social intervention programme acting to change the status quo (whether to reinforce what is good or to correct what is considered inadequate), as in the case of the IPs. Now one may ask oneself, 'What, if anything, makes an intergenerational programme evaluation particular or different from other social programme evaluations'?

Although this question is not easy to answer, it is pertinent. The answer can be divided into two aspects:

1) What is particular about an intergenerational programme with respect to its specific components and processes?

2) What is particular about an intergenerational programme with respect to the field study situation, research and practice to which it pertains: the intergenerational field?

In terms of the first of the two aspects, we ought to recognise that the majority of an IP's components and processes do not differ from other social programmes. Nonetheless, a minority of them do. Let us focus on them. When looking at Figure 1 (The Best-Performing IP Components), we could ask ourselves what the minimum components are –not for an IP to perform well, but rather for an IP to exist. Our response is that, at a minimum, any IP should count on a) participants of different generations, b) a relationship of resource exchange between participants, c) certain planning and management, and d) the pursuit of participant benefits. Looking back and reviewing the tradition of IPs until now, what is truly specific about them is that they bring people of different generations into contact so that they can relate to each other, mutually contribute (exchange) something and benefit from their participation in the programme. Furthermore, these four components are not optional: either they are all present or we are not talking about an IP.

That said, we can focus this analysis still further: what is truly specific, most genuine, about any IP is its intentional use of the intergenerational encounter as a motor, an axis, for positive individual and social change. According to this notion, programmes that people of different intergenerational groups participate in are only intergenerational when intergenerationality is viewed as the prime objective in the programme methodology. As in other cases, we are dealing with a question of emphasis, of priority.

Consequently, what makes an IP evaluation especially singular is that it issues defensible value judgments about certain intergenerational relationships and processes; it is not enough, as often occurs, to assess what happens to a generational group during the IP and *add to it* an assessment of the relationship on behalf of the other participating generational group (or each of the other groups). The assessment of a relationship is not only about the *sum* of assessments of those who relate to each other (this, without getting into a discussion about what can be meant by a *sum* of assessments); we need to observe the relationship and understand it within the culture that gives it meaning. For this reason, it is advisable not to rely upon purely quantitative foci: "The quantitative approach to research has been useful for describing specific kinds of programme impact. However, this approach may be inadequate for achieving a broader, holistic understanding of the way that groups or systems function –a key feature of intergenerational programs" (Ward, 1999: 10). The fact that people who belong to different generational groups have contact with each other can complicate the assessment of that relationship (although it does not always have to be that way), since it is very possible for those peoples' ideas, beliefs, knowledge, languages, meanings, experiences and practices to come from different cultural referents as a result of having different social ages. The need to negotiate a diverse range of symbolic referents can complicate the task of evaluation; perhaps this is one of the specific challenges most typical of an IP evaluation.

The second way of responding to the singularity of an IP evaluation is based on the following question: what is particular about an IP evaluation with respect to the field study situation, research and practice to which it pertains: the intergenerational field? By this question we mean that the greater or lesser accumulation of expert knowledge and knowledge of traditions in the evaluation of these programmes can explain how and why IP evaluations are (or are not) undertaken.

One of the few people to tackle this last question is the Canadian researcher, Valerie Kuehne. Of her many works, we want to refer to one that was published in 2005 in which the Annie E. Casey Foundation invited her to write about the real effects of IPs on children, young adults, families and communities most in need of support. Kuehne explains in detail the dearth of evidence produced from the research and evaluation capable of proving many of the IPs' outcomes. In short, the lack of a solid foundation of evaluative research is patent in the intergenerational field. This lack of practice and of reference models hinders the growth of an evaluative culture in the intergenerational field; today, this culture is still very limited.

Kuehne (2005) summarises the current outlook of IP evaluation in the following factors:

- The number of participants tends to be very low and, furthermore, the groups are not assigned in randomly, nor are control groups used in the evaluation.

- Not enough evaluations are done, not even on a small scale.

- The evaluation methods are not rigorous enough.

- Participant involvement in programme design and its outcomes hinders the choice of an appropriate evaluation methodology.

- All IP models need more evaluative practices, with the exception of those that are aimed at achieving a change in attitudes.

- In general, only direct IP participants, and not their families (fathers, grandparents, etc.), are relied on for gathering information for the evaluation.

- When an attempt is made to carry out the same IP in another place, cultural and contextual elements that might make programme implantation inadvisable are not given much consideration. This is usually due to the obsessive concern with outcomes and not giving more attention to the processes.

- The evaluations, when undertaken, only cover the time period immediately following that in which the activities are carried out; we know little about sustainability achieved beyond the experimental period.

Given this outlook, this researcher presents a series of recommendations for improving IP evaluations:

- All intergenerational programmes should include a rigorous evaluation.

- The evaluation should be planned alongside the programme: those who evaluate and those who implement the programme should work in unison.

- Attention should be paid to the repercussions of the programme on the health of children and young people (for instance, early pregnancies, nutritional problems, etc.).

- In the case of intergenerational school programmes, long-term studies should be introduced that make it possible to monitor the trajectory of children/young people beyond the momentary impact produced by programme.

- We should include other members of the broader family unit (parents, grandparents, etc.) in order to find out about the programmes' repercussions and sustainability as a whole.

- IP evaluation ought to be linked to that undertaken in the area of community development: it seems that these two fields share certain objectives and methodologies and, therefore, they can mutually benefit from the evaluative practices they undertake.

- We need to promote programmes that are more inclusive, more understanding (not so focused on an isolated group or context) and more multidisciplinary.

- We have to be careful about taking a programme that functions in one place and trying to implement it elsewhere.

- During programme planning, the coordinators, along with any involved community agents/organisations, need to anticipate how programme success can be identified in the medium- and long-term; attention to the immediacy of the short-term is not enough.

Another researcher, in this case British, of renowned prestige in the intergenerational field, Miriam Bernard, who partially relied on Kuehne's (2003a, 2003b) aforementioned reflections, also reviewed the state of the research, including evaluative research (evaluation is, after all, a form of research). She starts from the premise that "research (and indeed evaluation) underlies, and is fundamental to, facilitating and understanding the linkages between intergenerational practice, policy and theory" (Bernard, 2006: 6).

In the first place, Bernard champions more connections between theory and evaluation: the former can point to tools that are useful for the latter. On the other hand, she shares with Kuehne the defence of an IP evaluation that necessarily includes the broader context in which the programmes are run. In the third place, she shows a willingness to try to overcome the mere evaluation of programmes in favour of shifting over the long-term to an evaluation of the generations involved in those programmes. This follows the lines of what seems to be a clear recommendation: when we evaluate an IP, we must look beyond the programme itself. Lastly, Bernard recommends that we involve the IP participants as much as possible in the complete evaluation process (from the design to the conclusions) so that they do not feel superfluous or like research objects in an enterprise that they are alien to. Even though Bernard is not more specific in this respect, at least we can gather that her idea follows the lines of what other authors have called *collaborative research*, wherein the interests and needs of the researcher/evaluator and those of the IP participants intersect in the pursuit of mutual benefit.

In 2002, Gillian Granville published an analysis of more than sixty IPs carried out in the UK. The subject of evaluation appeared in the conclusions of the paper with the statement that "the scientific base for confirming the claims made for intergenerational practice is only in its nascent stages in the UK. Without further research and evaluation it is not possible to build a conceptual framework that explains in a rigorous fashion whether [Intergenerational Practice] achieves what it claims and if so, why" (Granville, 2002: 1). The current situation in the intergenerational field in Spain is not far from what the author described for the UK five years ago. This lack of evaluative practice and inspirational models does not help fortify the habit of evaluating IPs. In her study, Granville added that IPs were based too much on anecdotal suppositions, meaning that they lacked a solid foundation, and that the evaluations, when carried out, tended to focus on the measurement of a specific outcome rather than the full impact of the IP. Yet again, the idea resurfaces here that those who carry out the evaluation must broaden their perspective in order to try to view the IP in its totality. They should not keep only some of the components because to do so means to break up an effort that doubtless includes much more than what evaluations tend to show.

In conclusion, let us return to Kuehne's words: "Compared to the rapidly growing number and variety of intergenerational programs in communities internationally, the number of documented evaluation and research studies is not keeping pace… Thus, the intergenerational program literature generally reveals few evaluation and research studies overall; internationally, the numbers are even smaller" (Kuehne, 2003a: 146). This citation and the reflections carried out in the previous paragraphs lead us to conclude, in response to the question that we proposed earlier, that IP evaluations have the particularity of not counting on the support of a field with enough solid knowledge to back the evaluative practice with well-founded models. This lack of referents of demonstrated quality is another of the factors that explains the difficulties of encountering someone who wants to undertake an IP evaluation, since they do not have an easily available response to the question, 'What evaluation procedures and models tend to be used for the evaluation of intergenerational practice, and with what foundation and outcomes'? The authors of this book hope, although modestly, that the publication of a text such as this helps to lessen the deficit of documentation on this subject; even more so once we have presented some examples of what we consider to be effective practices in IP evaluation (see Chapter 8 of this book).

In conclusion, in this day and age, the nature of intergenerational relations and processes (about which there has been limited investigation of a specific nature) as well as the underdeveloped evaluative research of the intergenerational field, represent two important obstacles to the expansion of IP evaluation.

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Chapter 3

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE DESIGN OF THE IP EVALUATION: FROM WHY TO WHAT EVALUATE

Juan Sáez
University of Murcia

INTRODUCTION

Intergenerational Programmes (IPs) are presented, at least in the discourse, as an excellent resource or means to achieve diverse ends related to bringing different generations and ages together, in the different ways that people can mix with each other. Therefore, these actions are complex *per se*, in that a good number of variables enter into play on a social, cultural, economic and political level, all involving very different interests. This is because, as a *regulated and complex action*, this resource is *directed by* and *oriented towards* (at least to a large extent, since all human activity produces some level of uncertainty which cannot be dismissed) *different agents involved* in IPs on different levels, with different degrees of intensity and during the more or less extended time period that these agents are given to carry the programmes out.

These programmes, for the three reasons discussed earlier, serve as a means to achieve an end; they are regulated and oriented complex actions which require time to be carried out and, thus, they need to be planned. IPs must be designed to regulate or direct the practices that they set in motion. Thus the *experience* that will be the end result will somehow be the fruit of the execution of a programme that was designed beforehand. The design of an IP, then, is very important and must be done thoroughly, seriously and credibly, paying close attention to the grounding criteria and conditions without which the program could become a simple organigramme for timing activities. The bibliography about design is increasingly abundant and specific. However, there are at least two points on which all the studies agree: the strength of the design of a project lies both in its *consistency* and in the *results* that it obtains, which demonstrate its effectiveness. From design to execution (experience), lies a (pleasant) path that is worth the while to traverse. The focus of this chapter, then –in the same spirit as the two earlier chapters– is to acquaint the reader with the components of IPs and the need to evaluate them.

1. INTRODUCTORY POINTS. THE NEED AND JUSTIFICATION FOR DESIGNING AN IP EVALUATION

As discussed in the chapter that opens this book, evaluation is a fundamental component of every intergenerational programme or project. Without this step, it is difficult to achieve a broad understanding of how the programme is being carried out and its results, during the process and after it is completed, whether in the short-, medium- or long-term. There are frequent allusions to the fact that evaluations are not necessarily indispensible to obtain information about the course of a project, but these have been seriously questioned (House, 1994) by rigorous, evaluative investigations in the field of human sciences and have contributed surprising data that have altered the (supposed) certainty provided by those initial impressions that are so closely associated with human intuition. Our point of view regarding the relationship between evaluation and the rest of the components of an IP is expressed in Chart 1 (at the end of the chapter).

Evaluation is an activity that is undoubtedly necessary and also difficult to carry out in its full extent and scale, for reasons that do not need to be enumerated or analysed in this section. But despite common belief, its formulated complexity is not one of them, as long as there is good professional preparation for this type of social practice. Only thus, will this social experiment (Weiss, 1991), this splendid learning resource (García, 2000), achieve a large part of the objectives sought by the driving forces behind an IP.

However, there is broad consensus regarding the following fact: it is essential to recognise that the component that is most often missing in the development of IPs is, precisely, evaluation, as we have confirmed in recent meetings led by, among other social agents, IP coordinators: *they know almost*

nothing about the effects of these programmes. We lack empirical studies that would give us a broad knowledge of the results of IPs.

Starting from this supposition, it makes sense to reaffirm the importance of the few but relevant contributions regarding evaluating IPs and to remember, clearly, given what has been argued to this point, that evaluations should not be considered as merely one more appendix to these projects or, much less, as a banal task that is more administrative and formal than fundamental. Rather, they form a *credible and possible praxis that fulfils certain obligatory conditions* in the face of other interpretations that are more speculative, abstract or, when put forward under the label of scientific rules, impossible. These conditions, therefore, are inevitable: evaluations must be *useful* (responding to the practical needs for information according to the different audiences that are going to be taught about IPs and their development); *doable* and *realistic*, i.e., they can be done in the time and space befitting the available resources; *legitimate*, respecting the privacy and rights of the participants who provide the data and knowledge, especially when it relates to the programmes and people involved in them; and, *precise*, meaning that they provide information related to the IP and its different components and processes (Joint Committee, 1988). When all of these conditions are considered to be consistent with social evaluation, it will be considered more as a practice for improvement (Bartolomé, 1990) or transformation (Niremberg and Braverman, 2000) than an act of control and monitoring (Foucault, 1989), as humiliating as undesirable for a good number of contemporary institutions and people.

At this level of the argument, all of these questions lead to one big question, which, while obviously basic, is also critical in an IP. This is the question of goals, of the *whys* of the evaluation –a synthesis and convergence, in turn, of the approaches taken and reflections made regarding a fundamental phase or task in the theorisation (Anguera, 1992) on evaluation. The construction of the design is a step that must be taken before the other phases of the evaluation. The conjunction of *why* evaluate and *what* must be evaluated then acts as the basis, the starting point, for an undeniable requirement. There must be an *a priori*, *ex ante design* of the evaluation that is going to be carried out in order to satisfy the *why*, as well as to propose *what* is to be evaluated in this design, corresponding to the goals of the IP evaluation. It is the *why* that leads us, coherently, to *what* to evaluate: different goals indicate what is necessary to do and what is not.

But if we continue to insist on this level of clarification and credibility in our approaches, one fact must be stressed: without the evaluation design, the evaluative component of the IP will not only reveal the difficulties of knowing how it is developing and learning its results, but it will also reveal the contradictions, limitations and incoherencies that arise when it comes time to *implement* the evaluation. The design of the evaluative practice (plural, coherent and sustainable in terms of the objectives or the *whys* that must be formulated) directs the *evaluative activity of an IP* –its implementation– which is oriented towards what we want it to evaluate. Therefore, there is a two-fold level of coordination to bear in mind when it comes to evaluating an IP realistically, precisely and usefully. On the one hand, there is the coordination of the evaluation with its different components (staff, working in a network, general and specific objectives, administration, institutionalisation and community), and on the other hand, there is the design of the evaluation that must be done before it can be implemented. This two-fold need for coordination promotes the rationality and legitimacy of those practices that must increase our understanding of IPs, to identify both their advances and achievements and their limitations, errors and inconsistencies. Two-fold coordination, in short, reveals the important potential in the essential relationship between *what* to evaluate and the tasks necessary to make it happen (*how* to create it), in the pertinent time (*when* to evaluate), by qualified people (*who* should do the evaluation) and the necessary skills to access the different data and learning sources (*where* to obtain the information), from which to be able to draw up the results of the investigation in comprehensive reports (Sáez and Nieto, 1995). All of these tasks, with their respective elements, are detailed in Chart 2 (at the end of the chapter).

It may be that this essential coordination is exactly what has produced the image of evaluation as a complex and difficult activity. But it is important to relax in this respect. Rationality on paper does not have its parallel in daily life, full as it is of intensity, flight, undeclared feelings and unexpected effects, flows and escapes in human processes and evolution that operate against the 'totalitarian conceptualisations' (Deleuze, 1996) and 'castrating grammars' (Guattari, 1982) that seek to capture reality and an awareness of it. The design of an IP evaluation cannot try to do more –and this is not minor– than to orient the evaluative task based on reality, credibility and coherence in the same way that (however exhaustive and thorough the IP evaluation is) it will never exhaust all the meanings that can be linked to the most diverse human actions (Maggiori, 1986).

It is no wonder that honest scholars of human groups have taken a Copernican turn concerning the supports on which our culture is built, using the subject as its central axis, rather than seeing subjects as the relationships which individuals use to continuously construct processes of subjectivation (Bateson and Bateson, 2000). With this argument, which we support –in the face of the discouragement resulting from the effects and consequences of the behaviour model of evaluation and its ilk– it is a motivating *evaluative focus* based on relationships, activities, and processes which are always fluid and incomplete, which form part of human interactions. In the end, relationships come first, followed by the subject. So much weight and responsibility cannot be loaded on actions, which are not the reflection or result of a particular subject but rather of the relationships that are established with others. This supposition reflects an important change in perspective in studies on human activity and action (Maggiori, 1986) through which it is possible to reinterpret the *whys* and *whats* of evaluative practices as the social practices that they are. The following sections related to the design of IP evaluations take this up further.

2. STEPS PRECEDING THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN IP DESIGN

What is involved in designing an IP evaluation? What steps must be followed, whether to design an IP evaluation from the outside, where an external evaluator will perform the study, or an internal IP, in which an insider will carry out the monitoring and self-evaluation activities? Are there any standard criteria for constructing the design of the evaluation? Does the fact that every IP is different, mean that every evaluation must be different, too? The increasingly large bibliography is usually more or less unanimous –except in the case of those whose focus is as scientificist as rigid, for example Alvira (1991), Cohen (1993), Colas (1994) or Fernández (1995a). Although it is true that each IP, like each evaluation, is unique, it cannot be denied that when it comes to designing the evaluation (regardless of the model used), it is necessary to bear in mind two basic questions:

- The series of *phases that are common to this task*, which are essential, regardless of the underlying philosophy.

- *The decisions taken* regarding what aspects are fundamental in designing the IP evaluation.

These two general regulations or rules to be followed by every intergenerational project demand that the design of the evaluation be different: it may be better or more appropriate to the way in which the phases and decisions are integrated and articulated, as well as able to facilitate the effectiveness and precision of the activities to be carried out. If this were not the case, the evaluation would not be very effective. These requirements confirm, once more, that evaluation is a planned activity and, therefore, in order to carry out its design, careful and thorough planning must be done beforehand (Baker, 1980). Thus, the evaluator, whether an individual or group, must consider at least the following steps in creating the design of the evaluation. These tasks are considered to serve as general orientation, to help in its creation and/or construction:

- *First*, tackle the different aspects of the evaluation that must be anticipated in detail and take into consideration the fact that this is not a banal labour nor one that can be approached with exclusively administrative criteria (Santos, 1993).

- *Second*, analyse, in light of the numerous questions that arise from the first step, the different possible alternatives for each question in such a way that the final choice is rational and coherent with the viability conditions of the evaluation (Hernández and Rubio, 1992).

- *Third*, bearing in mind the most appropriate and pertinent alternatives that result in the creation of a coherent evaluation with a likelihood for success, it is essential to take the appropriate decisions for an unmistakeable choice.

- *Fourth*, and bearing in mind the questions and tasks involved in the earlier steps, it is necessary to *put forward a series of questions* that demand the types of answers that are expected if the design is to be consistent and well-grounded. The three first steps find their synthesis, convergence and conjunction in the fourth step, which is dedicated to reflecting on the different variables involved in evaluation (Ander-Egg, 1994).

At this point, it is appropriate to raise the issue of the reflections, questions and possible answers related to the different aspects to be decided in designing an IP evaluation which coherently integrates its different components (community, staff, funding, etc.).

3. WHY EVALUATE? GROUNDING THE DESIGN (I)

This is the first key question. Without answering this question regarding the purpose of the evaluation, it is impossible to talk about the design, although its main objectives can be increased or added to during the development of the IP. Carballo (1991) laid it out very simply at one time. The first two questions to be clarified in the design of the evaluation are the following:

1) *What are the objectives of the IP evaluation?* This forces the evaluators, whether or not they belong to the IP team, to specify the purposes or goals that they wish to achieve.

2) *What is the IP evaluation going to be used for?* This reveals the intended use of the evaluation.

These questions can be answered beforehand if the institutions involved demand or ask what the programme is supposed to accomplish and what intentions are desirable from the IP team. The administrative perspective always includes the evaluation in the overall social project as a compulsory requirement, more as a question of form than of fundamentals, generally speaking. For that reason, a more thorough and ambitious evaluation requires –in terms of the design needs– an approach and consensus among the different groups and people involved, whatever the degree of their relationship to the IP.

"In addition to considering what the general proposal of the evaluation is, the evaluator also has to bear in mind the interests of the different groups involved, since they will try to use the results in a way that favours their interests. Therefore, it is likely that various objectives will have to be investigated at the same time, some of which could even conflict with each other" (Carballo, 1991: 113).

Therefore, negotiation and consensus are imperative. Given that the diverse objectives put forth by each group or institution are different, it is essential to establish an order of priorities that is the fruit of joint work and agreements between the entities. Thus, the question of '*why evaluate?'* forms the essential starting point on which to ground the design of the IP evaluation.

For this reason, IP evaluators –as well as any others involved in working on an evaluation that benefits everybody– must carry out *the following tasks* related to designing the evaluation (Sáez and Nieto, 1995: 149-150):

First task: *Try to identity the audience implicated in or affected by the evaluation*

This can be, and usually includes, many of the people who are participating, more or less directly, in an IP. Not all of them have the same level of commitment or are playing on the same level or, of course, share the same interests. The basis of the design must reflect the results of this task of identifying the several audiences that will use the evaluation to take decisions: the beneficiaries of the IP, the evaluators themselves, the parties responsible for the IP, organisations and institutions. All of them may have different ideas about the role of the IP evaluation.

Second task: *Determine the information needs of these audiences*

This task implies contact, interaction and communication on the part of the evaluator/s involved in the design. As coordinators of this task, they must ask questions as obvious as:

- what information do you wish to obtain with the IP evaluation?
- how are you going to use the results?
- what proposals, then, can you give us beforehand that will help us to take decisions about what to do and how to do it?

Any other questions that may arise related to this task as a result of group or individual dialogue should be considered as well.

Third task: *Fit the design of the evaluation to the information needs of the audiences*

The task of fitting the design must consider, of course, any necessary conditions (factual, realistic, legitimate, precise) that are applicable to all evaluations if they are to be successful, work well and benefit the different interested parties. Designing an IP evaluation that does not provide the information required by the task is as useless as it is banal and contributes to complicating the development of the IP. It is not absurd to contemplate this situation; it is well known that evaluations are often considered as a requirement 'to be fulfilled and that's all' and therefore, they are not carried out with the necessary seriousness (Del Barrio, 1989; Messick et al., 1993).

A good design for an IP evaluation depends on whether tasks are carried out appropriately or not. Of course, a well-organised design does not ensure that an evaluation will be rich in data and facts, but the opposite is certain: a bad design is more likely to ensure that failures occur.

It is quite clear, then, that the IP evaluation can pursue different ends and purposes and that the range of possibilities, then, is broad. It is important to consider this, since the choices and decisions taken can make the goals effective and specific when it comes to creating the desired evaluation. What objectives, then, can be sought with an evaluation? Which of them should form part of the design to justify and ground it? This was discussed above. Every IP is as unique as the interests of its agents and the evaluation included in it. The objectives, therefore, reflect the desires of the involved parties (regardless of who decides the IP design). Below are *some of the possible objectives of an IP evaluation*:

1) To provide information about the process of establishing the IP.

2) To collect data that make it possible to detect problems and identify holes and limitations in the development of the IP.

3) To contribute 'evidence' to explain the activities and interpret the possible relationships between them.

4) To validate the IP, explaining the philosophy behind it or determining its development. It can also evaluate some of its components (funding, community participation) and the theories that support this, etc.

5) To find out the degree to which the IP activities are followed through and their success or failure.

6) To issue and formulate value judgements on the achievements that are obtained (goals, processes, values, etc.) as well as the different components of the IP.

7) To assess and assist with any problems that may present themselves to IP coordinators and the different participants.

8) To improve the IP processes and fit them to the anticipated timeline.

9) To help to take decisions about the basis of the results that are obtained during the development of the IP.

10) To analyse the degree of involvement of the social community in the IP's activities.

11) To share the experiences obtained with the IP with other potential users, publicising its achievements.

12) To share the objectives achieved in the IP with all of its participants and the community in general.

These, then, are some possible answers to the grounding question regarding the design of the IP evaluation: why evaluate? Many more answers could be provided, but this is not the time. Each party involved in their IP must think about the objectives assigned to 'their' evaluation and the order of priority that 'their' design should include. However, when it comes to justifying the need for evaluating an IP and the use that is going to be made of it, the *delimitation of the objectives* serves, in turn, to determine which methodological strategies for obtaining information are the most appropriate in carrying out the evaluation (Stedman, 1992).

4. WHAT TO EVALUATE? GROUNDING THE DESIGN (II)

We have now covered a large part of the questions regarding grounding the design that will be used to organise the IP evaluation. We know the objectives that we are seeking to achieve with the evaluation, meaning that it is now time to formulate the other key question: *what* should we evaluate to achieve these objectives, these *whys*? What is going to be the subject of the evaluation? And, accordingly, what can be evaluated in an IP?

This task requires care, because we are facing a multidimensional phenomenon insofar as many aspects of different natures interact in its development. This demands careful study since important questions can be overlooked in the process, since they are not considered important, while others may even be overlooked because of their supposed obviousness (Bartolomé, 1990). A trained professional cannot escape these situations, regardless of the fact that they cannot all be fulfilled as needed for many different reasons. In any case, to continue organising the information systematically, the different questions related to evaluations can be grouped together, in order to construct the design for the IP, into *four main categories*, which are presented below.

4.1. The intergenerational project or programme

With a little bit of work, it is not too difficult to recreate the different components that make up an IP. Chapter 1 has tackled this topic. What, then, should be evaluated in a project or programme? What elements and components do we wish to evaluate in the IP in such a way that we can clearly consider how to insert it into the organisational design of the evaluation? One way of answering these questions which, by their nature, are so broad that it is difficult to synthesise them in these pages, would be to adopt the following distinction:

4.1.1. Evaluating the programme from the outset or evaluating its design

This step involves analysing the design of the IP when it is still only in the planning stage. What is the objective of this type of evaluation? To evaluate the quality of the design of the entire IP, studying its coherence and viability. This type of evaluation is justified both because of the frequency with which IPs are proposed rather 'lightly' (with insufficient or contradictory bases in their different components, without justifying the resources that they are going to need, etc., all of which leads to the need for training in this field), and because it is impossible to judge beforehand how IPs that are, on the other hand, well-designed will operate in practice. This is a joint evaluation, which takes a broad view of IPs with all of their elements, variables and components, before being put into action.

4.1.2. Evaluating the process

Establishing and implementing an IP is an activity that involves tasks that are very different from the tasks involved in its design. In this case, what must be evaluated is the IP once it is in action. In this way, the contrast between the design and what is implemented can take place. This makes it possible to reveal the insufficiencies and to act, therefore, encouraging modifications during the development of the IP. In the end, this involves injecting vitality into an IP when it is 'flagging' or confirming any excellent dynamics that are produced. Introducing the possibility and need to evaluate the entire design of the IP is like introducing a unit of measurement and contrast between what is desired and what is obtained.

In any case, this distinction requires that questions of a different nature be asked. We can ask questions relating to the substantive dimensions of the IP, such as the underlying philosophy, the theoretical bases that support it, the objectives that are pursued with its implementation, the contents to bear in mind, the proposed activities, the planned timing, the methodologies to use, the resources it has, the evaluation considered most appropriate, etc., but these questions are not the same when the analysis is of the formal design before the IP is implemented as they are later, when the programme is in action. Concerning the rest, some of the reflections that can be made about the programme and its design can be found in Chart 3 at the end of this chapter.

4.2. Process in the IP

Putting an IP into practice involves a process that is more or less long in terms of the time that passes from the planning stage until its development and final implementation. Here, the evaluation focuses on the process and is therefore usually called, as noted above, the evaluation of the process. The goal is *to provide information about how the programme is really progressing* through continuously verifying and monitoring its practice. This brings us to the stage of contrast and correspondence alluded to above, between the action plan and its execution.

"On the one hand, it is necessary to ask about the real interactions established between the components and the products, to be able to give the most complete and relevant explanation possible of the effects produced by the programme. And on the other hand, it must provide information to the responsible parties and project staff about the activities so that they know if they are abiding by the programme as established, if they are using the resources on hand appropriately and efficiently, in order to detect any possible anomalies and provide the measures to correct them" (Carballo, 1991: 114).

From this reflection, it is easy to reach a conclusion about the large number of questions that must be asked and borne in mind when designing the evaluation, in relation to the functional, personal and organisational aspects that are involved in developing an IP. As above, the questions listed in Chart 3 serve as an example. It would be ideal to investigate this line more fully and increase the number of questions associated with IPs in process.

4.3. Context in IPs

This category entails different elements and variables, since all IPs take place in a specific environment or context which, inevitably, while not determining its development, does condition it by influencing it. What is the goal of an evaluation of the context? Its main objective is to identify and then *analyse the determining factors*, the hidden strengths and limitations of the setting in which an IP is designed, planned and developed in order to provide information that makes it possible to appropriately interpret the results of the evaluation. This first objective leads to a second goal, which is to *provide policy guidelines* that make it easier to take advantage of IPs and their resources. The context of an IP is, then, the combination of the conditions that surround it that might influence how it develops. The question is inevitable: what are the conditions included in the context? They are the political, social, cultural and economic dimensions that create the so-called *framework of the IP*. The

political climate, the features of the population, the cultural situation, the communication infrastructure at the time that the IP is implemented, along with the location where the people function in institutions and organisations, all form the weft and weave of interactions that make up the context of the IP. Again, for the questions asked regarding the evaluation of the context, see Chart 3, created expressly for this purpose. When readers –both coordinators and evaluators– try to respond appropriately to questions of the type presented in Chart 3, they can transfer them, along with others, to their respective projects. This type of question can motivate them to close in on answers about the success or failure of the IP and interpret if one thing or another is due to the lack of motivation in the community about the IP. They also show if the success or failure is the result in some way of economic conditions or, considering yet another situation, of the relationships, whether conflictive or calm, between staff members involved in the IP.

4.4. Evaluating the results of an IP

As in the above cases, it is necessary to consider the evaluation of the results when designing an IP evaluation. This is related to the effects of IPs, their impact and their achievements, which can always be interpreted in different ways. The results are usually analysed in relation to the objectives that were established at the beginning of the programme (Abarca et al., 1989). What was obtained after the efforts and resources invested in the IP? What products have been achieved? What skills? What values have changed and what knowledge has been acquired? And what is most common in the evaluation of IPs: what were the results read according to the degree of satisfaction achieved by the participants? (Blasco, 1991: 61). What are the anticipated and unanticipated effects in the short-, medium- and long-term, either using standards (Messick et al., 1993; Joint Committee, 1988) or, lacking that, turning to objective criteria or observer scales, to qualitative measurement instruments or qualitative techniques for qualification. Evaluations that focus on results use the strategies that are thought to be pertinent to achieve a broad and specific view of the objectives achieved by the IPs. In the field of results, the following tripartite *division referring to the products achieved* is usually used: (i) immediate results, (ii) impacts and (iii) costs. Each of these gives rise to a type of evaluation that is technocratic in nature and well-supported by new computer technologies that are increasingly in use:

(i) *Evaluation of the immediate results*

This evaluates the expected or unanticipated changes that took place for the beneficiaries of the IP. Therefore, it evaluates different types of learning and different levels of abilities that were achieved or encouraged in relation to the plan proposed in the IP. In this respect, the design of the evaluation must determine the focus of attention: if it is going to focus on individuals, on groups or on the overall organisation where the programme is carried out. For this concept of evaluation, sophisticated instruments aimed at measuring capacities, learning, knowledge and attitudes have been developed, along with other dimensions associated with the subject of culture (Fernández, 1995a).

(ii) *Evaluation of the impact*

This evaluates the effects produced in the social setting in which the project takes place. Not much empirical evidence exists for this type of evaluation (Carballo, 1992), and even less for the specific subject of IPs (Bernard and Ellis, 2004).

(iii) *Evaluation of the cost*

This evaluates the costs involved in setting up an IP: the costs for the programme itself (staff, material), capital costs (building, furniture, equipment), users costs (enrolment, housing,

transportation, food), etc. The language is increasingly specific relating to this statistical focus of the evaluation.

In any case, the main idea of the evaluation of the results is to specify the differences between the initial conditions with which the IP began and its intermediate or final conditions. The questions, consequently, to assess the design of the evaluation are many. Chart 3 presents just a sample.

5. WHERE TO OBTAIN THE INFORMATION? WHEN AND HOW TO EVALUATE? GROUNDING THE DESIGN (III)

As IPs multiply, it is clear that new interest regarding the role that evaluations can fill may arise. New objectives can lead us to revise what needs to be evaluated in order to reach them. But also, as a consequence of this, attention must be paid to *how* to obtain the information, from *whom* and *where*, as well as to establish the best time –the *when* – to carry out these tasks. The development of an IP is not linear or mechanical; indeed, it will be more common to have to make constant adjustments in light of diverse variations as they appear. The design, yet again, continues to be not only an instrument for orientation that provides an array of guidelines, but also a guiding light that illuminates a timely understanding of what is taking place. It is, therefore, to be expected that the design must introduce some considerations about *when* and *how* to make the evaluation as well as *where* to obtain the information to carry out these tasks. This contributes to helping the designer to ground the evaluation even more thoroughly.

5.1. How to evaluate an IP?

There are many ways to do this. The key question that determines the other questions in this section is: what methods and instruments are going to be used to do the evaluation? The design includes, then, the way to collect the information needed to answer the objectives and questions associated with the desired IP evaluation. This form must take into account the appropriate methods and techniques for the goals of the evaluation (Ballart, 1992; Guba and Lincoln, 1981). This means, as can be deduced, that there is no unique and valid procedure that can be used to answer all of the questions that are raised at the beginning, during the design phase of the IP, with its different variables and components. Any reflection on or elucidation of which techniques or processes are the most efficient for collecting data cannot be resolved with the pan-methodology (Weiss, 1991) that has been so prevalent recently –the fruit of the ruling 'cookbook logic'– in the social and human sciences. The solution to this question is, instead, extra-methodological. What does this assertion seek to clarify? Several things:

- *First*. Before thinking about the techniques to use in the evaluation, it is best to focus on what it wants to learn, and identify *a posteriori* the best procedure to obtain this information and knowledge.

- *Second*. This means that the selection of one or another technique ought to depend more on the objectives, subjects and questions related to what we want to evaluate than on the nature of the technique itself. In this light, debates on the scientificity of the instrument, its thoroughness, the possibilities for statistical handling, etc. are unnecessary.

- *Third*. If a specific procedure for gathering information is chosen, therefore, it must consider the nature of the data provided and the required methods for analysis. It must not be forgotten that each procedure involves a specific form of recording, storing, recovering data,

knowing how to analyse them and even knowing how to organise them for later information (García, 1992).

- *Fourth*. The experience that usually occurs is that several methods for gathering data are supported by or drawn from several sources of information (personal, behavioural, documentary and contextual) in the search for greater reliability in the results. In this respect, the method of 'triangulation' is recommended, both for techniques and for perspectives and information (Abt, 1977; Bolívar, 1995).

In all cases, in short, the procedures for evaluation that are chosen must be, above all, **practical**, i.e., they can be applied to the given conditions, in such a way that they can be carried out with reasonable effort. Since the development of an IP is usually conditioned by a lack of time –which is not desirable– the procedures that are adopted for the evaluation must be doable or the result will be an atmosphere of confusion and ineffectiveness that may be difficult to escape from. For the rest, the number of techniques that may be used for evaluation are well known (interviews, questionnaires, surveys, diaries, field notes, observation, tests, projective techniques, discussion groups, etc.). The conception of the evaluation as construction and praxis –a conception that may be applied to the IP itself– opens innumerable paths to using procedures more in accord with the nature of what is being evaluated. Chart 3 at the end of the text presents a large number of questions that can help to base the design of the IP evaluation from a methodological perspective. For further clarification: the following chapters in this book go more deeply into the question of *how to evaluate*.

5.2. Where should the information to evaluate the IP be obtained?

Perhaps the central question in this section is the most basic (which does not mean that it is less important than all the questions formulated and argued in favour of the design, its consistency and its grounding): what sources are going to be used to obtain the information needed to answer the questions in an IP evaluation with specific procedures or techniques? The answer, in our contemporary information society, which is so full of resources, is as clear as it is motivating: the possibilities are many. The sources are numerous. Indeed, although it is true that any situation or aspect to be evaluated can be observed or documented, we also have an important number of resources and documentary and personal sources to facilitate the evaluative task (Colas, 1994). In this way, once we are clear on what is to be evaluated, the IP evaluators must turn to the sources that allow them to do so.

What is common is to use various sources, since no single source provides complete and definitive information (Stufflebeam and Shinkfield, 1987). Each source is partial and for that reason **we recommend combining several sources of information** to obtain richer knowledge about the subject of the evaluation. In an IP, it is best to use **documentation** of diverse natures to help to promote it, but it is essential to turn to **personal sources** (coordinators, financers, beneficiaries, various professionals, etc.) so that, with different procedures (interviews, surveys, observations, etc.), we obtain all the possible information, making it easier to compare and contrast all of it and finally, create a more complete image of the subject of the evaluation. These questions, of course, must form part of the design of an IP evaluation (see Chart 3).

5.3. When to evaluate an IP?

When should the evaluation be done? This question brings us to the phase of performing the evaluation, the proposal for which must be included in the design (Alvira, 1991). From a perspective of timing, there are *two types of evaluation*:

- *Evaluation 'for' the development*. This involves evaluating the IP **during** its development: following it step by step with incentives and training plans, introducing the changes considered pertinent, taking decisions, improving the IP, etc. The central question here is: *What is happening?* This is the so-called 'process', 'training' or 'progress' evaluation, which documents the experience that is acquired as the IP is implemented in a systematic way.

- *Evaluation 'of the' development*. This is done at the end, **after** the IP has finished. It seeks to judge the final results of the programme in its different variables. This was referred to in the earlier sections: what achievements, or lack thereof, were obtained after the IP finished?

Usually, this type of evaluation adopts a temporal perspective which is relatively broad with respect to the programme's start-up. Emphasis, from experience, is put on evaluating the results, while the processes are scarcely evaluated. Considering the two types, perhaps the question that would best be formulated on the basis of the design is another: after a certain time has passed since the programme ended, what are the processes and the results obtained and the achievements and failures that we can identify associated with this programme. This is a good guiding question.

Whatever the case, and regardless of the type that is chosen, the execution of the evaluation must be approached with this point in mind, i.e., it must also be part of the design, specifying a programme of evaluative tasks at the same time that the successive phases or stages of the evaluation process are specified with reference to its contents or tasks and its timing or duration (Pérez, 1985; Rossi and Freeman, 1989).

The final chart (Chart 3) shows a list of questions that support this aspect of the evaluation design.

5.4. Who should do the evaluation?

With this question, it is essential to take a decision to determine who should carry out the evaluation, i.e., who is going to be responsible for evaluating the IP: people with a demonstrated ability to manage, direct, and conceptualise? The programme beneficiaries? Professionals? Amateurs? A team? A group? An individual? An outsider? An insider? These questions are going to arise 'naturally', by necessity, as the promoters of an IP begin the task of designing the evaluation.

Of course, whatever the professional adjective that applies to the people that take on this work, it is important to note that the characteristic that they all must show is demonstrated independence and ability. This includes a capacity for management, leadership, conceptualising, and not only technical skills, which, of course, they must have. This is an ideal image, clearly, since this argument reflects the image of a person or group with experience with these problems, who dominates the medium, with a wide yet specific understanding of what to do and how to do it, who bears a set of skills that shows their experience in this field of social action (Cohen, 1993; Guba and Lincoln, 1981).

But reality does not always coincide with the desires or the needs of materialising an IP in the best way. Often, the resources are lacking to carry out specific parts of the IP. This should not discourage people who are motivated to achieve the most beneficial effects for everyone involved, directly or indirectly. But it is also important to note that, even with sufficient resources on hand, it is not possible to ensure the result (Zabalza and Marcelo, 2000). Hiring people outside the IP may be appropriate, since a professional from the field of evaluation can be the figure who, in addition to being a specialist in the field of evaluation, can avoid biases that may arise from an obsession that the results fit the desires of the programme director. This can be a good solution for certain risks that come from 'internal pressures' within the IP.

But if the outside evaluator comes with a philosophy and ideology that are different from those of the programme, does not make the IP 'his or hers', and executes the task from a distance that is supposedly qualified as 'objective', or gets carried away by 'individual interests', to give another example, the evaluating process can also be distorted. The ideal is that a sense of belonging operates among everyone involved in the IP and that all the agents that participate in it, including the beneficiaries, make the evaluation 'theirs'.

In any case, and in summary, the use that is going to be made of the evaluation brings us to the first basic question of *why evaluate?* The evaluation cannot only be a learning resource, as we have said, but a social experience that, like all educational programmes, must constitute a good opportunity for those involved –the participants and those affected by the results– to share knowledge and experience and be involved in the design, the creation of instruments, the analysis and the evaluations of the experiences formed in collaboration (Escudero and Martínez, 1988).

6. FINAL THOUGHTS

As Hatton-Yeo and Ohsako (2001) showed in their study, *Intergenerational programmes: public policy and research implications. An international perspective*, evaluation was considered –in the countries analysed– as the most compelling, urgent need for learning the effects and results of IPs. Evaluation is not a simple activity, but requires specialised knowledge. On the other hand, it is not as complex as some experts would suggest. Bernard and Ellis (2004) have proposed a guide (included in this book as Chapter 9) for carrying out this task, being conscious of the lack of empirical work in the field of evaluating IPs, excepting the fecund contributions that Matt Kaplan has given the field, as seen in the course held by the IMSERSO in September 2006 on the evaluation of IPs. In this course, he reminded participants –largely agents more or less related directly to IPs– that evaluation is a relevant learning resource and that, as such, it can be learned relatively easily. But learning about evaluating IPs –and this is the prod and the philosophy of this chapter– must insist on the knowledge of one of its most important phases, without underestimating the others: the *phase of designing the evaluation*. We hope that these pages have contributed to increasing the understanding of this fact.

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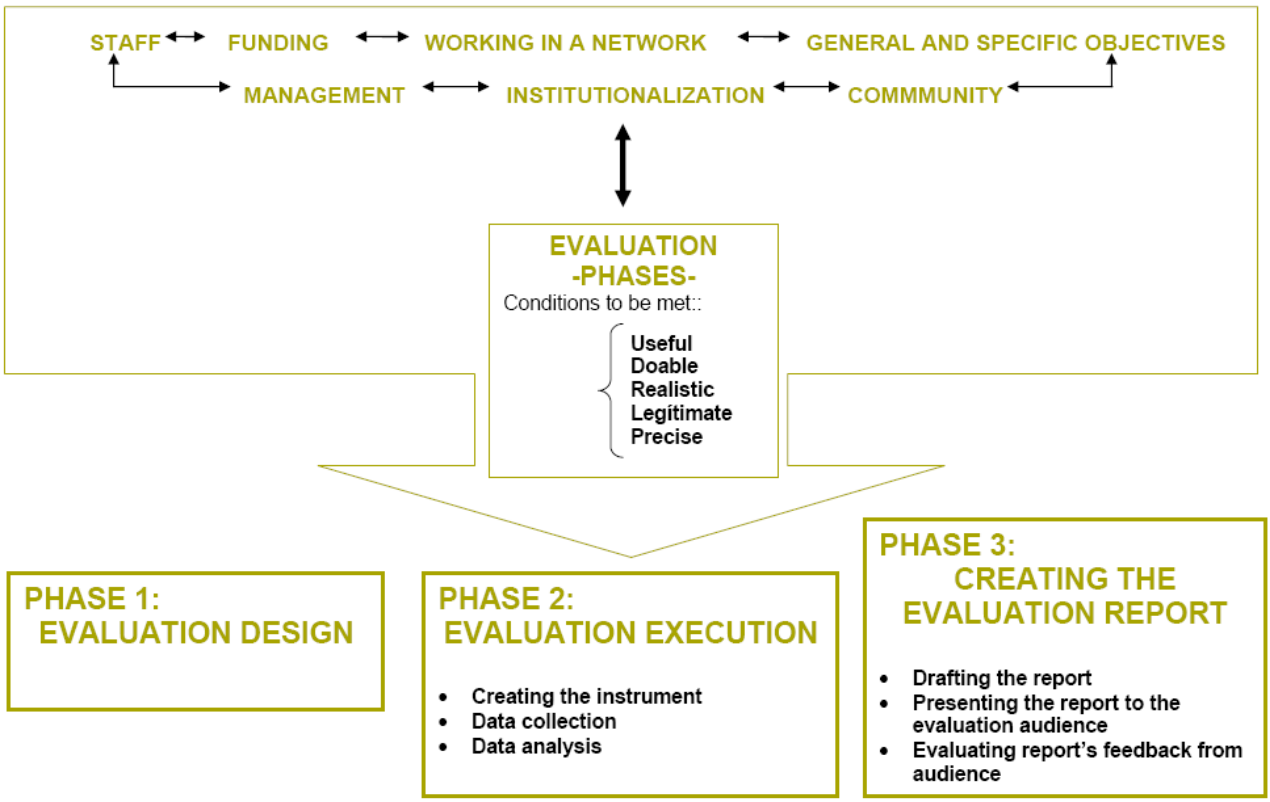
CHART 1

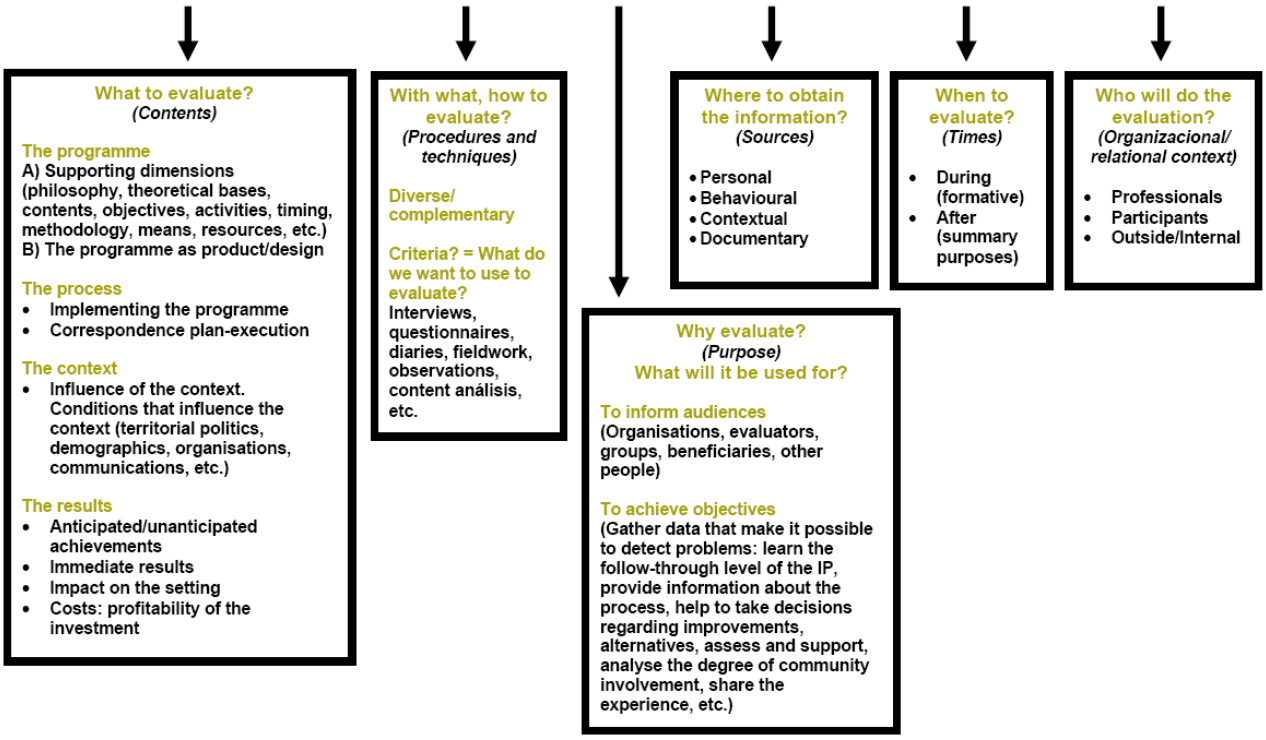
Componentes de un PI: la ubicación del diseño de evaluación



Source: Author.

CHART 2

The design of the evaluation. Elements that legitimise and support its construction



Source: Author.

CHART 3

Questions related to the different design elements

WHY EVALUATE?

- What are the objectives of the evaluation?
- What is it going to be used for?
- Who is it aimed at?
- For what purpose?
- What types of changes are anticipated?
- What type of costs?
- What types of social benefits?

...

HOW TO EVALUATE?

- With what methods?
- How? Using interviews? Using surveys? In group discussions? How will the information be handled?

...

WHAT TO EVALUATE?

PROGRAMME

- To what point have the problems, objectives and activities been clearly defined?
- What was the programme design process?
- Were the needs adequately defined?
- Does the programme respond to the needs of the beneficiaries?...

PROCESS

- How was the programme adopted?
- What group work dynamics were carried out?
- What occurred when the programme and its phases were implemented?
- What factors facilitated or complicated the development?
- What relations were established between the subjects involved?

...

CONTEXT

- What are the basic characteristics of the social circumstances in which the programme was set up?
- And the cultural, educational and political circumstances?
- What is the economic reality?
- What features characterise the population?
- What organisational models and social programmes exist? What part of the context could influence the programme?...

OUTCOMES

- What are the objectives?
- What are the impacts on the social setting? And on the beneficiaries? Short-, medium- and long-term? And on the institutions? And on the organisations (families, residence centres, schools, etc.), related to the participants?

...

WHEN TO EVALUATE?

- What is taking place?
- Why did something take place?
- What were the processes obtained?
- What are the results?
- And the limitations? And the failures?

...

WERE TO OBTAIN THE INFORMATION?

- What personal sources are useful to gather?
- Who should do the evaluation?
- Who will the informants be?
- What documentation should be used to provide information?

...

WHO SHOULD CARRY OUT THE EVALUATION?

- What will be done?
- How?
- By whom? In groups? Individually?
- By institutional request?
- Who? All of the agents involved?
- Only experts?

...

Source: Author.

Chapter 4

INTRODUCTION TO SOME USEFUL METHODS AND TECHNIQUES FOR EVALUATING INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMMES

Sacramento Pinazo
University of Valencia

By now it has become clear that there is no single way of proceeding in the evaluation of intergenerational programmes. On the contrary, there are many methods one can choose, depending on what one wants to evaluate. The different methods offer various ways of approaching and uncovering the specific situation of each intergenerational programme. However, the most commonly used social research strategies are qualitative methods, quantitative methods and experimental methods.

Different authors have praised the use of one or another method. Fabra and Doménech (2000), for example, claim that quantitative methodology, with its mobilisation of powerful statistical packets, makes it possible to manage vast amounts of data. This method, however, would seem to lack resources when it comes to taking into account the symbolic nature of the social situation and the basic role of the meaning associated with it. By searching for an explanation of the facts or causes behind social phenomena from a standpoint beyond that of the individual's subjective interpretation, the quantitative method limits the expressive and signifying ability of the social agents.

It seems clearer to us that each of these methods offers different techniques and instruments from which we can choose, depending on what best meets our needs. The choice of one technique or another will depend, among other considerations, on the goals of the evaluation, on who will be performing the evaluation, and on the prior knowledge those evaluators have of the different techniques. Ruiz (2003) offers us a useful summary of the differences between the two most commonly used methodologies:

Qualitative Methodology	Quantitative Methodology
When one aims at capturing the meaning of things.	When one aims at describing social facts.
When one uses the language of concepts and metaphors, narrations, drawings.	When one uses the language of numbers, tables, formulas, statistics.
When one prefers to collect information by means of flexible, unhurried yet penetrating observation.	When one prefers to collect information by means of structured experiments or surveys.
When one starts out with the data in an attempt to reconstruct a world that is difficult to systematise or theorise about.	When one starts out with a theory and carefully prepared and precise hypotheses.
Holistic and specifying orientation (seeks to capture all the content from experience and meanings arising from a single case).	Particularistic and generalising orientation (attempts to generalise -from a small sample to a large group- any particular element of society).

Source: the author, based on Ruiz (2003: 23).

1. QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

Qualitative observation is used when an evaluation aims at producing an in-depth examination of specific subjects or cases. In general, it is heavily used in exploratory studies seeking to uncover the meaning or significance that a specific programme or project has for its participants. It is not concerned with comparing hypotheses and theories, or with generalising from results. Rather, it aims at obtaining and developing new ideas.

Qualitative methods are especially useful for interpreting the meaning that different events have for a certain group or individuals, as well as for making conceptual or theoretical advances in a certain area or field. These methods require the researcher to immerse him or herself in the field of research –usually for a long period of time– in an attempt to uncover the meaning and significance that the participants attribute to the exchanges occurring in the group.

According to Taylor and Bogdan (1998), qualitative methodology could be defined or characterised as a kind of inductive approximation in which data is not collected in order to compare prior theories or hypotheses, but rather to develop concepts and further the understanding of the phenomena under study –with the research being done from a holistic perspective. The goal is to gain direct access to what people say and do, by observing them in their daily life, listening to them speak and analysing the documents they produce. For this reason, qualitative methods manage to preserve the human aspect of social life, by not reducing people's words and actions to statistical equations.

According to Miquel et. al. (1997), the most widely used qualitative techniques are:

a) those that aim at *directly obtaining information*:

- *the interview:* the goal of which is to obtain in-depth knowledge of the interviewee's experience, feelings and opinions.

- *the focus group:* in which a moderator introduces a discussion subject to a group of individuals, giving them the opportunity to interact with their comments and opinions.

b) those that are characterised by *indirectly collecting information*, for example:

- *Phillips 66:* a group interview technique that emphasises the creativity arising from group brainstorming activities.

- *Delphi Panel or Nominal Groups:* individual interview techniques in which information about other group members' written (anonymous) responses is given in successive rounds to each interviewee, without any direct exchange between them. This technique is based on agreement between the judgements of the interviewees, who are clearly influenced by the results from each previous round. This technique is very useful when working with a group of experts.

c) those that obtain information *by means of observation*. These focus on recording the behaviour of a certain individual or group under specific circumstances and for a determined period of time.

Authors such as Rodríguez, Gil and García (1999: 39) talk about the instrumental character of the methods, given that they "guide and focus the research process and, as such, the choice between one method or another". These authors refer to a method comparison done by Morse (1994), from which we have chosen some columns (while adding certain modifications):

What issues guide our evaluation?	What method to use?	What information collecting techniques or instruments?
Issues of *meaning*, such as specifying the essence of participants' experiences	Phenomenological (Study of life experience, daily life. Attempts to explain the significance, or the essence of things. Does not set out to evaluate the frequency of the appearance of certain behaviours, or the statistical relations between variables)	Written anecdotes of personal experiences
Descriptive-interpretative issues, such as group practices	Ethnographical (Seeks a description or analytic reconstruction of the interpretative character of the culture, ways of life and social structure of a group)	Unstructured interview (without a prior outline) Participant observation Field notes Maps Observation records Documents
Issues *of process,* such as pre/post changes over time	Grounded theory (Symbolic Interactionism) (Attempts to discover theories, concepts and hypotheses by starting directly from the data – with no preconceptions)	Interview Participant observation Diaries Field notes Documents
Issues focused *on verbal interaction* and dialogue	Discourse analysis (Ethnomethodological) (Seeks to understand how individuals acquire the cultural perspectives of their societies and groups, and how they present these perspectives in their daily lives)	Observation Day-to-day conversations
Social improvement or change issues	Action research (A type of research carried out by practitioners on their own practice, in the search for deeper understanding of problems)	Observation
Subjective issues	Biography (Aims at showing a person's subjective testimony, bringing together the events as well as the evaluations that person makes about his/her own existence)	Interview Documents Diaries, photographs, personal objects Life histories

Source: The author, based on Morse (1994), cited in Rodríguez, Gil and García (1999: 41).

For reasons of space, we will focus on two examples from the techniques mentioned above – observation and group discussion. They have been the most commonly used techniques in evaluating intergenerational projects and programmes. Given its importance, an entire section - chapter 6 of this book- will be devoted to interviewing.

1.1. Observation

Observation "is the process of systematically and thoroughly studying how social life develops – without manipulating or modifying it, just as it plays out on its own" (Ruiz, 2002: 125).

Observation aims at obtaining information about a phenomenon, in the same way as that phenomenon occurs. It is a deliberate, systematic and planned data gathering process that is always guided by a particular issue. Moreover, given that it implies non-interference on the part of the observer, it is a very useful technique for evaluating intergenerational programmes. Observation is particularly suitable for collecting the type of information that cannot be obtained in other ways (examinations, questionnaires, tests, etc.) and for dealing with certain aspects in a more natural environment. It can also complement information gathered with other tools, in order to uncover the attitudes of a certain group or the knowledge level of a certain subject, etc. Moreover, some observations focus on subjects that cannot provide verbal information (small children, adults suffering cognitive degeneration, etc.); observation can be quite important in such cases. Newman and Ward (1993), using observation in a project for *Generations Together*, focused on the frequency of different behaviours seen in the children and older adults participating in an intergenerational programme. They used the following table towards this end:

Observed behaviour	Frequency of behaviour	**Observed behaviour**	Frequency of behaviour
Elder provides instruction		Child responds to instructions	
Elder asks questions		Child responds to questions	
Elder offers help			
Elder reviews students' work			
Elder talks calmly to student			
Elder talks spontaneously		Child talks spontaneously	

Source: Older adult-child interaction analysis instrument (Newman and Ward, 1993).

Knapp (1986) defined observation as "a set of records covering behaviour that occurs during the normal course of events, and which stands out due to its significance". By observing the situation in real time, the evaluator can approach the issue and see 'how things happened', without the need to ask the opinion of those who were there –with all the associated biases and losses.

An isolated, chance observation could be of some value, but it would lack the rigour and scientific validity of an observation that is part of a planned evaluation working within a particular theoretical model. Anguera refers to observational methodology: a procedure aimed at formulating a systematic perception of reality as it presents itself, one that produces valid results based on the use of an objective, systematic and specific record of spontaneous conduct within a particular context, all of which is subjected to coding in analysis (Anguera et. al., 1995: 526).

According to Rodríguez (1980) all observation must bring together the following features or requirements in order to be scientific:

a) a clear and concise definition of the behaviours to be observed, in order to leave no doubt as to whether certain events should be collected or not.

b) an explanation of the conditions under which the observation should be done. This refers to the place, the time, the subjects to be observed, the observers and to the specific instruments for supporting the observation.

c) data must be collected in such a way that it can be analysed, for example, by means of quantitative processing.

d) it should be possible to infer or to arrive at conclusions based on the observation, i.e., the observation must be valid.

e) any evaluations, along with the conclusions arising from them, should be stable, i.e., the observation must be reliable.

Before beginning an observation, one must decide on where to observe, when to observe, what to observe, how long to observe and who to observe. In the observation, the sampling is not done before the information is gathered, but is rather carried out simultaneously. Observation is a circular, rather than linear process. The observer arrives on the scene with his/her theoretical knowledge, personal experience and hypotheses –and takes up a position from that point. S/he chooses reporters (those that are able to provide more and better information, those that hold out the promise of richer content, that are unique, that have more information due to their position in the group, those who are closer to the centre of action).

At times one can use *observation records* to measure, for example, the frequency of certain behaviours. *Field notes* and *audio/video recordings* can also be used. Data can be reported after direct observation because it can be perceived by the human sense organs. The use of technical or automatic recording equipment (recorders, cameras) assures more precise records that can be made independently of the observer's perceptual errors, variations among different observers, or the brevity of the conduct being recorded.

Field notes as well as tapes should be safely marked with the date (day, month, year and even the time of the observation). At times it may also be helpful to add a drawing or sketch of the observed situation, showing who was where, with added comments if necessary. Remember that the profusion of notes taken at the time of the observation will prove very useful when writing up reports (Rodríguez, Gil and García, 1999). This collected material will then be ordered, systematised and analysed.

It is important to remember that observation implies a balance between perception, interpretation and prior knowledge, and as such, each observation is specific to the observer, with his/her biases and limitations.

René Zazzo (cited in Anguera et. al., 1995: 530) wrote the following illustrative text about the complexity of observation:

"While Gessell subjected the baby to different tests and the cameras were on, I tried to observe. I took my notes. Afterwards, once the recording was finished, I compared my observations with the facts as recorded by the camera. At once disappointed and angry, I discovered the poverty, the mistakes, the idiocy of my records, and the intelligence of the camera. I learned how to observe, and along with this I learned how observation can fool those who are not truly honest. I also learned that observation is severely limited when not guided by previous knowledge and supported by rigorous techniques. I learned about the vigour –not of rigid outlines, but of the nuances. And I discovered, without any discourse, the infinite diversity of the baby's gestures, and that a subject –whether it be a newborn baby or a donkey– is never exactly the same as another, even in its simplest and most archaic relations".

Discussion on observation procedures centres on different ways of observing, depending on the observer's level of involvement in the observed situation. We can speak of non-participant and participant observation. *Participant observation* is one of the most commonly used kinds of observation in qualitative evaluation. Participant observation is an interactive means of information collection, given that it requires the observer's involvement in the observed events. It is not an easy method, since the researcher must assume the double-role of observer and participant. Yet the procedure can produce a wealth of data; it does not only offer good descriptions of the events, but also the observations of one directly involved in them.

The observer normally carries a journal, book or field notebook to note each observed detail (the record should be detailed, precise and complete), together with a description of the people and contexts. This is all entered together with the observer's own impressions and experiences, including the interpretations that arise during the course of the observation.

Anecdote files are used for the episodic collection of the most noteworthy events that occur during a specific activity, covering attitudes, interests, interactions or any other topic of interest. Anecdote files should not include opinions or value judgements, as opposed to other instruments used for measuring attitudes such as Likert scales and the semantic differential. They are only used for describing events or actions.

These are the steps to follow: select the field of observation (class, programme, information relations, etc.), select the people to observe (all group members, only some members), the time period (a day, a week, a month), prepare a filing card, record the observations and file them. Each anecdote should be described on a file card. The card should include at least the following content:

Observer:
Date/time:
Duration of observation:
Person(s) observed:
Context/situation of the observation:
Incident/anecdote:
Observations, comments:

As information gathering instruments, *diaries* and *reports* can be more or less systematised. They can range from being a simple account or listing of activities to a pre-structured description referring to specific fields that includes evaluations, thoughts and reflections. Such instruments should have at least the following content:

Diary author:
Date:
Activity or situation being described:
Duration:
Summary:

1.2. Discussion or focus groups

Citing Morgan (1991: 13), we can define a discussion group as "an instrument for producing data that would be inaccessible without the kind of exchanges found in a group". The definition put forth by Ibáñez (1994a: 58) is also useful: "a discussion group is a analytic device using a production process that places different discourses into confrontation (discussion), revealing the effects of that discussion on the personal discourses, as well as on the group discourses (consensus)".

Discussion groups can be effectively combined with other techniques, such as, for example, questionnaires. A discussion group can be set up for the purpose of preparing the questionnaire (in order to anticipate problems with question rejection or lack of responses), as well as for a post-questionnaire analysis of the data (in order to corroborate results or arrive at a more penetrating interpretation of them).

According to Canales and Peinado (1998), the main feature of a discussion group is that it is made up of a small group of people, brought together for the purpose of interacting in conversation about the subject of the research. The discussion is not aimed at reaching consensus among the participants, but rather at collecting a wide range of opinions and viewpoints that can be worked with extensively.

The great advantage that discussion groups offer over other techniques is the possibility of generating and exploring qualitative material arising, not solely from the presence of the interviewer, but rather from the simultaneous presence of various interviewees or participants in a group context. The group setting creates a situation in which the comments or responses emerge as reactions to the comments or responses of other members attending the meeting (Valles, 2000: 304).

While discussion groups are a good research and evaluation technique, one should keep in mind a number of recommendations in order to use them properly:

1) **Prior planning is necessary before beginning the evaluation.** This plan should take into consideration the discussion group's objectives. Such a clearly laid out plan helps in thinking about the group composition as well as in choosing participants.

1.a) **Composition and filtering of participating subjects.** When planning group composition, one should try for a balance between participant homogeneity and heterogeneity (Ibáñez, 1979) in terms of the specific area of study. One the one hand, a minimum level of homogeneity is needed for maintaining symmetry in the relations between group components. On the other hand, a minimum of heterogeneity is important for assuring the needed difference throughout the speaking process. Group heterogeneity adds energy (information) to the group dynamic, placing into question participants' links to the evaluated object or situation by stimulating greater internal questioning among those participants (Callejo, 2001: 86).

It is highly important that the individuals brought together for the discussion group not be a pre-existing (or natural) group. There should be no signs of previous group relations, i.e., the discussion group must not exist as such a group either before or after this particular project. Situations in which subjects know each other beforehand tend to result in greater resistance to speaking; people tend to speak in a politically correct (or hyper-correct) manner, or follow the politically dominant line. They tend to "keep to themselves that which is known to create conflict, and is thus not added to the discourse in order not to bother others" (Callejo, 2001: 47). For this reason one must avoid participants who know each other before the group formation. Recruitment of participants and group formation is normally done by specialised professionals. Ideally, one can use (in a diversified manner) actual social networks (friends, neighbours, relatives).

One should try for interconnected viewpoints in a discussion group; each 'social type' represents what is called a '*discursive variant*'. The idea is not to achieve statistical representation, but rather typological, socio-structural representation, in line with the aims set out in the evaluation. Socio-demographic variables are usually employed (gender, age, socioeconomic status, etc.), along with other variables related to the subject under analysis. There should be at least two participants of each class or type.

For example, in order to evaluate an intergenerational programme in which a group of older adults participated as *Storytellers* in 4th grade primary school classrooms (one in the city, the other in a small town), the following discussion groups could be set up, keeping in mind these variables: gender (woman, men); age (from 9-11, from 50-65, from 65-75) and habitat (rural environment, urban environment).

G1: girls, aged 9-11, rural environment
G2: boys, aged 9-11, urban environment
G3: women, aged 50-65, rural environment
G4: men, aged 50-65, urban environment
G5: women, aged 65-75, urban environment
G6: men, aged 65-75, rural environment

Below is an example of a general discussion group diagram that follows the axes of heterogeneity and homogeneity, as used in research into intergenerational programmes in the school developed by Pinazo, Boronat and Máñez (2002):

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="3">SOCIO-CULTURAL AXIS

AGE-GENERATION</td><td>older adults</td><td>GD5 Rural
GD6 Urban</td><td>GD1 Urban
GD10 Rural
GD7 Urban</td></tr>
<tr><td>adults</td><td>GD8 Rural (AMPA)
GD9 Urban (teachers)</td><td>GD2 urban</td></tr>
<tr><td>children</td><td>GD3 Rural
GD4 Urban</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2" rowspan="2"></td><td>School</td><td>Other educational centres (University, Centres for Adult Education)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">SOCIO-SPATIAL AXIS</td></tr>
</table>

Source: Pinazo, Boronat and Mañez (2002).

Sometimes, participants fill out a questionnaire before the discussion group begins. The results of these questionnaires are then processed and can be of help in moderating or encouraging debate. Other times, it is better not to expressly say what the object of the research is, so that people do not 'prepare' their participation. (Callejo, 2001: 97).

1.b) **Number of participants**. The recommended number of participants is from 5-7 and 10-12, in order to represent a variety of ideas and opinions and to provoke group interaction. It is a good idea to contact more people than are needed in case some members drop out.

1.c) **Number of sessions or group discussions to organise.** Authors such as Goldman and McDonald (1987) suggest organising approximately eight meetings.

1.d) **Incentive.** Some kind of remuneration for group participants (gift-cheque, money, other kinds of gifts) helps to assure active participation and commitment, while objectifying the relationship between the group moderator/researcher and the participants (Canales and Peinado, 1998: 303).

1.e.) **Meeting location and duration.** The physical space for the discussion group is also important. The location should have a warm environment, isolated from curious onlookers and noises. It should favour interaction and recording the session, i.e., a round table surrounded by chairs. The location should not be clearly marked with signs belonging to any group –a trade union, political party or religious group meeting place. Rather, it should be neutral in terms of the research subject and the participants. Each session should last from an hour and a half to two hours.

1.f) **Recording in audio and video media**. Discussion group material should be recorded on magnetic tape and/or video (with the prior informed consent of the participants). This not only makes it possible to transcribe the linguistic components, but also to record kinaesthetic (gestural communication) as well as proxemic (distance between people) aspects.

2) **Preparing the group discussion**. One should draw up a *script* or *outline* for the group dynamics moderator, as well as a list of subjects to be addressed in the meeting (each at its appropriate time). The moderator should be able to motivate and encourage each participant to express his/her ideas and to discuss them. As noted by Ibáñez (1979: 306): *It is not enough to simply put the subject on the table. One must also stimulate interest in discussing it.* As the engine of the group, moreover, the moderator must be able to 'let people talk'.

3) **Holding the Discussion Group.** Most groups begin with the participants each briefly introducing themselves. The moderator then gives a general introduction about the aims of the meeting, and a short description-explanation of the situation of the participants.

Here is an example of such an introduction:

"Good afternoon. Before we start, I would like to thank you for your attendance. We have gathered you here today to talk about intergenerational relations. We are carrying out sociological research on this subject, which includes the organisation of a number of meetings like this one. The aim of the meeting is for you to talk about this issue, as in a roundtable discussion, initially treating the subject from the perspective that seems to be the most relevant or appropriate. Later on we will focus on the different aspects that appear spontaneously, along with others of interest for the study. As you can see, it is of primary importance for the research that you contribute your opinions to the discussion, and that you say everything that comes to mind about the subject."

2. QUANTITATIVE METHODOLOGY

Quantitative methodology is used when the goal is to examine many subjects at the same time, extracting from them the greatest amount of information as possible that can be generalised. It is very commonly used when the researcher wants to know the causal relation between two or more variables, as well as the magnitude of that relation (is there a relation between variable A and variable B? Does A influence B or does B influence A?).

Quantitative methodology is based on empirical evidence, and tends to condense information supported by the greatest number of cases possible. Researchers using quantitative methods sacrifice more in-depth information about each case, with the goal of attaining general or typical characteristics of many cases. Analysis of the covariance between two or more variables is called *correlational analysis.* This yields information about the type of relation between the variables. These variables refer to attributes that vary across different levels or degrees; attributes regarded as causes are called *independent variables,* while those regarded as effects are called *dependent variables.*

Researchers are more interested in dependent variables, the others being used as factors in identifying the variation occurring in those dependent variables. The contrast between the ideas and evidence from the data is done by studying these relations between variables.

Quantitative methods are used when research aims at finding the average value of those attributes that are characteristic of many individual cases, eventually issuing in a general outline of the phenomenon under study. These images are obtained by analysing the covariance between two or more variables in a number of cases deemed to be sufficiently representative of the total set of such cases.

Quantitative information consists of data that can be numerically represented for the tasks of organisation, processing and measurement. Socio-demographic variables can be represented by specific numbers (60 years old) or by intervals (between 55-65 years old), gender (1: woman, 2: man); marital status (1: single, 2: married or living with partner, 3: widower, 4: separated or divorced), residence (1: rural, 2: urban), attitudes (1: completely disagree, 2: mostly disagree, 3: neither agree nor disagree, 4: mostly agree, 5: completely agree), and many more. Representing responses as numeric variables makes it possible to do mathematical operations on such data. A number of easy-to-use statistical software packets (SPSS, for example), which rapidly perform such calculations, are available.

Valid and consistent instruments are needed in order to measure the relevant variables. There are many instruments on the market that have shown to be valid and reliable when used with different subject samples. One can resort to such instruments in order to ensure proper measurements. The process of formulating research hypotheses will indicate the kind of test or analysis that one should carry out after the data has been collected. Therein lies the key: knowing which test to use in each situation, consistent with the evaluation goals of each project, is much more important than having extensive mathematical knowledge of the currently available statistical procedures, tests or techniques for quantitative analysis.

There is a wide range of differences between an evaluation based on quantitative data and another on qualitative data. Quantitative techniques should focus on obtaining data from samples that are representative of the population, random and sufficiently large, in such a way that measurements from that data are valid and reliable. This research style, which treats social reality as a set of 'social objects' that can be measured and weighed in terms of their objective value, has led many researchers to the conclusion that only research that is based on quantitative-empirical techniques can be regarded, ipso jure, as 'scientific research'. It is clear, however, that both research methods

and techniques –quantitative and qualitative– are complementary. The use of one or the other type of methodology will depend on the type of information sought after. Both approaches, if used systematically and properly, are perfectly valid and useful for social research –whether employed independently or combined in the same research.

Miquel et al. (1997) distinguish the following quantitative techniques, among others: *ad-hoc* surveys and attitude studies. We will now take a closer look at each.

2.1. *Ad-hoc* Surveys

Surveys or questionnaires are designed in order to obtain a certain kind of quantitative information related to the problem or object of the research. The questionnaire functions as an alternative to the interview as an instrument of data collection. It is usually self-administered and has a 'paper and pencil' form. One of its main advantages is that it makes it possible to quickly and precisely evaluate a number of variables for a large amount of individuals. It is less expensive, takes less time and requires no interviewer training.

The use of questionnaires for evaluation follows the following steps, in this order:

Setting objectives.
Preparing the data collection instrument.
Planning the sample.
Collecting data.
Analysing the data.
Writing up the report.

The goals and variables to be measured should be taken into consideration when planning and preparing the questionnaire. What information is being sought, and why? Variables should be listed such that they may be directly measured, since the questionnaire usually collects the information in the absence of the survey taker. Before preparing the definitive questionnaire, a pilot test (with at least 10 subjects) should be carried out. This test will be of help in better formulating the questions and choosing the items that, due to their pertinence, relevance, utility and clarity, will be best suited for measuring what one sets out to measure. Questions on a questionnaire can be either open or closed:

A. Example of a question with an open answer:
In your opinion, what is the main advantage of intergenerational relations?
……..……...
……...

B. Examples of questions with closed answers:
B.1. Dichotomous, or true/false questions:
"Do you have grandchildren?" Yes □ No □
B.2. Polytomic answers:
"What is your marital status?"
married □ single □ widow/er □ in relationship □ divorced □

2.2. Attitude Studies

In evaluation or measurement scales, one may include qualifiers based on the level of agreement or disagreement, the appearance (or not) of a certain question, behaviour, etc. Among the many different scales of measurement, some classics stand out, such as the Likert scale and Osgood's semantic differential. There are no correct answers to the questions in attitude scales, but rather opinions that one can more or less agree with.

The following is an example of an open questionnaire for measuring attitudes:

Older adults are…?
……
……

What five words come to your mind when you think of older adults?
1…..…… 2…..…… 3…..…… 4…..…… 5…..……

2.2.1. Likert-type scales

Also known as the summated score scale, the Likert scale makes it possible to qualify and quantify survey answers. Data presentation in such a scale can be descriptive, graphic or numeric. The scale is normally made up of a list of items or questions referring to the different aspects included in said scale. Answers are graduated in 3, 4, 6 or 7 steps. They may run, for example, from 1: 'strongly disagree', 2: 'disagree', 3: 'slightly agree', and 4: 'strongly agree'. The subject has to check the answer that comes closest to matching his/her own opinion. Sometimes the scale may appear as a continuum from 0 to 10, or even 0 to 100, and the subject must write the number that represents his/her score. Normally, odd number degrees are established in order to best adjust to normal curves (Gaussian Curve), although even levels (2, 4, 6 or 8 answer options) may be used when one is interested in collecting information that can be easily dichotomised ('good-bad', 'beautiful-ugly', 'fast-slow', etc.).

Example of an answer to a Likert-type scale:

	Total disagree					Total agree
I really enjoy talking to older adults	1	2	3	4	5	6
Older adults do not say or do much of anything that interests me	1	2	3	4	5	6
Older adults have less understanding of the problems of others	1	2	3	4	5	6
Older adults are friendlier than foreigners	1	2	3	4	5	6
Older adults are less tolerant with the failures of others	1	2	3	4	5	6

6: completely agree, 5: strongly agree, 4: slightly agree, 3: slightly disagree, 2: strongly disagree, 1: completely disagree.

2.2.2. The semantic differential

Similar to Likert-type scales, the semantic differential can have different degrees or levels of qualification. It is also easy to put together. It involves choosing one or more topics, phenomena or subjects for the study. A list of qualifying adjectives, along with their antonyms (semantic differential), which have a qualitative relation with the object of study, is drawn up for each topic. This is moved to the scale and applied, and the information is extracted for later processing.

The semantic differential is a scale of measurement designed by Osgood in the 1970s (Osgood, Suici and Tennenbaum, 1976). It is a scale for measuring attitudes, beliefs or opinions concerning a social object. In the semantic differential, attitudes are represented by adjectives that synthesise their semantic load into two positive and negative poles. The semantic differential measures the affective and subjective meaning that the stimuli provoke in the subjects. The bipolar adjectives used in a semantic differential should represent all dimensions of that semantic space. The bipolar adjectives that appear on a questionnaire will be those most frequently used by the subjects.

A semantic differential is a short and simple scale that can be individually completed by people with a minimal level of education. The interviewee indicates where on the scale he/she would place the concept in question after subjecting it to analysis. The concept is described on the upper part of the scale, e.g., 'aging' or 'older adults' in our case. This is the most commonly used tool for measuring attitudes towards old age or older adults. There are scales that have been translated and validated with Spanish samples, with demonstrably high levels of reliability.

For example, in the 'strong-weak' pair, within a scale of seven intervals, subjects can choose whether 'aging' or 'older adults' correspond to 'very strong', 'strong', 'slightly strong', neither strong nor weak', 'slightly weak', 'weak' and 'very weak'. The different intervals are usually scored from 1 (most negative attitude) to 7 (most positive attitude) for each pair of adjectives. This sets the neutral attitude point at 4. The adjective pairs are usually presented in a randomly changing continuum direction, i.e., sometimes they run from the positive to negative pole (beautiful-ugly), while at other times they run in the opposite direction (unproductive-productive).

Two examples are shown below. The first example, from an evaluation of an intergenerational programme with primary school children, used a semantic differential with the generic question, "*What are older adults like?* Each child had to put an X in the box that best fit his/her belief. The spectrum of answers between 'good' and 'bad' included 'they are good', 'they are neither good nor bad', and 'they are bad'. The same spectrum was used with the other pairs.

What are **older adults** like?

Below you will find 11 pairs of adjectives with opposite meanings. For each pair we ask that you mark one and only one of the three white boxes that best corresponds to your beliefs about **OLDER ADULTS.**

There are no right or wrong answers. We simply want you to sincerely tell us what you believe. For example, if you believe that older adults are good, then mark an X in the "Are good" box in column 1:

1. Good	X	Are neither good nor bad	Are bad	Are bad

OLDER PEOPLE ARE

1. Good	Are good	Are neither good nor bad	Are bad	Bad
2. Friendly	Are friendly	Are neither friendly nor unfriendly	Are	Unfriendly
3. Happy	Are happy	Are neither happy nor sad	Are sad	Sad
4. Fast	Are fast	Are neither fast nor slow	Are slow	Slow
5. Beautiful	Are beautiful	Are neither beautiful nor ugly	Are ugly	Ugly
6. Fun	Are fun	Are neither fun nor boring	Are boring	Boring
7. Clean	Are clean	Are neither clean nor dirty	Are dirty	Dirty
8. Smart	Are smart	Are neither smart nor dumb	Are dumb	Dumb
9. Are loved	Are loved	Are neither loved nor hated	Are hated	Are hated
10. Tell the truth	Tell the truth	Neither tell the truth nor lie	Tell lies	Tell lies
11. Polite	Are polite	Are neither polite nor bad-mannered	Are bad-mannered	Bad-mannered

Source: Asociación OFECUM (www.ofecum.com).

The second semantic differential uses a broader range of alternatives (from 1-6 instead of 1-3). Here one can mark the number closest to or farthest from each extreme, as though it were a thermometer. This is the most common type of semantic differential – one that is made up of six to eight response degrees or steps. In the first 'passive-active' pair, marking the number 6 shows that one tends more to believe that older adults are active. Marking the number 1, on the other hand, shows that one generally believes that older adults are passive:

From the following list, choose the degree of the adjective that best describes older adults. Keep in mind that the lowest score corresponds to the negative description, while the highest corresponds to the positive. For example, if I believe that I can put a lot of trust in older adults, I would answer in this way:

NOT VERY TRUSTWORTHY	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	VERY TRUSTWORTHY

"THE ADJECTIVE THAT BEST DEFINES OLDER ADULTS IS..."

PASSIVE	1	2	3	4	5	6	ACTIVE
INCOMPETENT	1	2	3	4	5	6	COMPETENT
NOT VERY INTELLIGENT	1	2	3	4	5	6	VERY INTELLIGENT
WEAK	1	2	3	4	5	6	STRONG
SICK	1	2	3	4	5	6	HEALTHY
SLOW	1	2	3	4	5	6	QUICK
UGLY	1	2	3	4	5	6	ATTRACTIVE
UNFRIENDLY	1	2	3	4	5	6	FRIENDLY
LAZY	1	2	3	4	5	6	HARD WORKING
IRRITABLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	SERENE
BAD-MANNERED	1	2	3	4	5	6	POLITE
SELFISH	1	2	3	4	5	6	GENEROUS
BAD MEMORY	1	2	3	4	5	6	GOOD MEMORY
ISOLATED	1	2	3	4	5	6	VERY SOCIABLE
OLD-FASHIONED	1	2	3	4	5	6	MODERN
IDLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	VERY ACTIVE
UNPRODUCTIVE	1	2	3	4	5	6	PRODUCTIVE
WEAK	1	2	3	4	5	6	STRONG
DEPENDENT	1	2	3	4	5	6	INDEPENDENT
INDECISIVE	1	2	3	4	5	6	DECISIVE
SUSPICIOUS	1	2	3	4	5	6	TRUSTING
INTOLERANT	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOLERANT
PESSIMIST	1	2	3	4	5	6	OPTIMIST
SAD	1	2	3	4	5	6	HAPPY
UNSATISFIED	1	2	3	4	5	6	SATISFIED
NOT VERY TIDY	1	2	3	4	5	6	VERY TIDY
LIAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	ALWAYS TELLS THE TRUTH
NOT VERY WARM	1	2	3	4	5	6	VERY WARM
NOT VERY INTELLIGENT	1	2	3	4	5	6	VERY INTELLIGENT
BORING	1	2	3	4	5	6	FUN
RUDE	1	2	3	4	5	6	PLEASANT
COWARD	1	2	3	4	5	6	BRAVE

Source: Semantic differential taken from questionnaire ISAN-93 (see: Pinazo, Llopis and Calatayud, 1994).

3. THE EXPERIMENTAL METHOD

When social research aims at analysing the causal relations between different factors, experimentation is one of the most useful techniques. Experimentation seeks to manipulate one of the independent variables (experimental treatment) in order to recognise the effect on the dependent variable.

The experimentation technique has the advantage of a high level of *internal validity.* This procedure minimises the many possible odd variables that could affect measurement of the dependent variable, altering its value and leading to errors related to the cause of the effects. The problem with using the experimental technique in the social sciences area lies in the difficulty of recreating social conditions in the laboratory. Experimental situations always tend towards being a simplification of the situation in which social interactions occur. Thus, the biggest difficulty in using the experimental technique is in attaining *external validity*, since such validity depends on the extent to which the experimental results can be generalised to the real world.

Quasi-experimental designs are a good alternative for overcoming the problems described above. These designs make a forced comparison between the experimental group and a control group which serves as a contrast. For example, we can study a group of older adults working in a first grade primary school class (experimental group), and compare what happens to those children with their schoolmates of the same grade in the adjacent classroom without older adult visits (control group). Such a strategy would assume that the two groups of students are perfectly comparable in terms of what we want to evaluate –something that is not all that certain.

It is even possible to design such an experiment with just one Intergenerational Programme group. This can be done by carrying out a pre-test of the group situation before that particular programme begins, along with a post-test once it is finished. Of course, the more randomness that is built into a quasi-experimentation process, the more valuable it will be. Accordingly, having experimental and control groups, and assigning group members on a random basis will serve to strengthen the conclusions reached.

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APPENDIX. SOFTWARE for data analysis

Qualitative programs

ATLAS.ti. This program makes it possible to handle and interpret a large number of texts, as well as audiovisual material.

http://www.atlasti.com/

NVIVO (previously called NUDIST) is currently one of the market leaders in content analysis programs. It allows the researcher to establish lexical and conceptual relations among words, to index files and to carry out search operations.

http://www.qsrinternational.com/products_nvivo.aspx

THE ETHNOGRAPH. This qualitative analysis program makes it possible to analyse text from interview transcriptions, discussion groups, field notes, diaries, meeting notes and other documents.

http://www.qualisresearch.com/

Quantitative programs

SPSS. The most commonly used statistical analysis program in the social sciences area.

http://www.spss.com/statistics/

EXCEL. A database from the Office suite that allows the researcher to analyse data and graphics. Easy to use.

http://office.microsoft.com/es-hn/excel/default.aspx

Chapter 5

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION, REPORT PREPARATION AND OUTCOME DISSEMINATION APPLIED TO INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMMES EVALUATION

Sacramento Pinazo
University of Valencia

One of the most attractive aspects of the evaluating process is analysing, processing and drawing conclusions about data because this data contains information about the circumstances of the subjects. However, the evaluator receives this data in its unaltered form. Therefore, it must be collected, selected, grouped and classified before being analysed and interpreted. Data are like pieces of a puzzle that have to be put together in order to take shape.

Analysis and discussion of the collected data is the next-to-last stage of the evaluation process. The last stage is to generate a report with the most important outcomes, conclusions drawn from the outcomes and recommended proposals.

Evaluation Phases:

Formulation of the problem
Methodological design
Data collection
Data analysis
Research report

When we speak of data analysis, we are referring either to data obtained using quantitative methods or data gathered using qualitative methods, as we saw in the previous chapter.

Quantitative methodology allows us to do data analysis using statistical packages (SPSS is the most popular) or spreadsheets (such as the EXCEL spreadsheet). Databases allow us to compare variables and undertake a variety of analyses depending on our objectives and the type of data that we start out with. In addition to data tables, we can create graphic illustrations (histograms, bar graphs, spread graphs, etc.). Quantitative data analysis is a systematic, careful process.

The data that qualitative methodology offers is quite different. Since qualitative methodology uses interviews, observation, textual analysis, open questioning, diaries, and so forth, the type of data collected tends to be represented by words and/or pictures rather than numbers. The data is verbal by nature and characteristically open to interpretation, thereby making analyses harder to do and more complex.

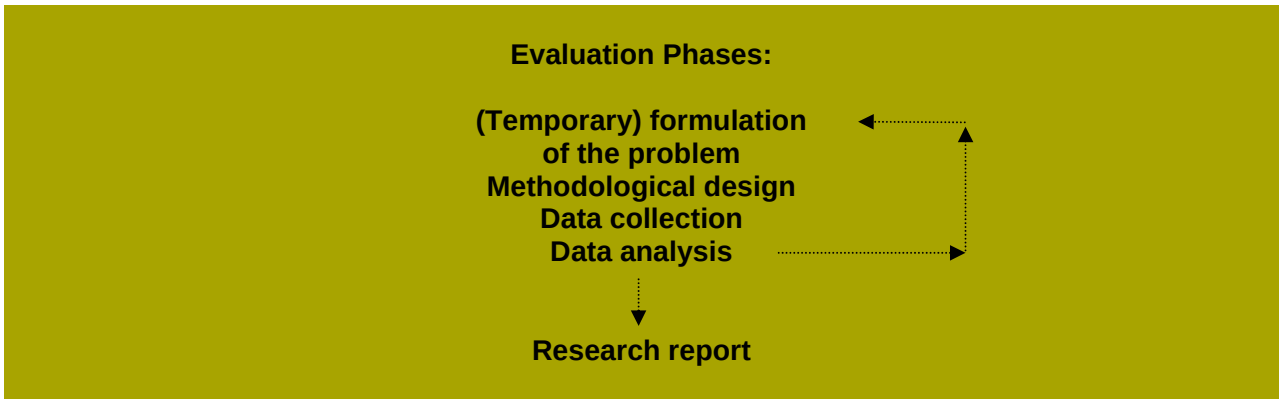
In data analysis, handling, conversions, operations and processing of the data facilitate the extraction of meaning relevant to the evaluation being carried out (Rodríguez, Gil & García, 1999: 200).

Computer programmes can also be used to analyse data obtained by qualitative methods. In the case of programmes such as NUDIST, texts can be coded and coded fragments can be recovered, although obviously they cannot replace the task of doing conceptual work with the data.

Qualitative analysis is a process that is intuitive, flexible and oriented towards making sense of the data. One might say that it tends to have an intuitive-artistic focus, wherein the evaluator's experience, as well as traits such as creativity, imagination, genius, ingenuity and artistic talent are all crucial.

Data analysis inevitably drives us to redefine the problem, since the problem as it is formulated when one begins to think about the programme to be undertaken is always a temporary formulation. To formulate the problem is to "enter into contact with it, not mark its borders" (Ruiz, 2003: 53). The temporary formulation of the problem also includes temporary decision-making that should be guided by prior learning, that is, knowledge from previous experiences, a review of the bibliographical

material, know-how and common sense that proffer advice about the concrete problem to be tackled (Ruiz, 2003: 54). Only at the end of this process, and after weighing different theories, analysing the collected data, processing it and constantly redefining the problem, is it possible to develop a realistic notion of the issue.



1. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Below, we have selected certain intergenerational programmes that exemplify how data analysis is undertaken. We examine which scales of measurement and which type of methodology (quantitative or qualitative) were used in each case and draw on certain outcome charts to assist us in doing a final reading of the data.

1.1. Examples of quantitative analysis depending on the measurement scales used

1.1.1. The *Likert Scale*

Example 1

In some cases, a scale can be used that has shown reliability and validity, internal consistency and test-retest reliability in previous studies, and even has been validated in (that is, translated and adapted to) our native language, Spanish. This is the case with Generativity Scales and the Generative Behaviour Checklist, two self-report opinion scales with Likert-type interval responses.

The first one, a version of the **Generativity Scale** (Loyola Generativity Scale, McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992; an adaptation by Zacarés, Ruiz and Amer, 1999), consists of four response units, or intervals of response, that are exactly the same wherein the first, '1', stands for 'never or rarely' and the last, '4', stands for 'very often or nearly always'. Appendix 1 to this chapter shows the original scale. The other scale, the **Generative Behaviours Checklist**, appears in Appendix 2 at the end of this chapter.

The theoretical framework that both scales are premised on is Erikson's Theory of Generativity (Erikson, 1968), which says that generativity is adults' *concern for* as well as *commitment to* promoting the wellbeing of young and future generations through the former's involvement in parenthood, teaching, mentoring and other creative contributions that make it possible to leave a positive legacy of the *self* for the future. In Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, 'generativity versus stagnation' marks the seventh of eight stages typically associated with middle age. Generativity is a complex psychosocial construct that can be expressed through societal demand, inner desires, beliefs, behaviours and the overall ways in which an adult makes narrative sense of his or her life (McAdams & de St.Aubin, 1998). Additionally, authors such as McAdams and Bowman (2001) have discovered that a relationship existed between high generativity scores and good subjective psychological health.

In Spain, the intergenerational programme **GYRO** (Elderly Persons' Generativity and Social Relevance) run by OFECUM (Cultural Options for Elderly Persons) used a version of the Generativity Scale ([1]) with storytelling workshops. This scale sought to assess elderly participants' changes in generativity after being trained as storytellers in the oral traditions of various countries. The programme involved children from different schools in Granada and from the daycare center at the Penitentiary of Albolote (Granada).

An example follows of how to reflect the outcomes obtained using the Generativity Scale. The data were separated by age groups and the mean and standard deviation were applied to each of the items, thereby allowing us to observe which items correspond to the lowest –or highest– scores for each age group:

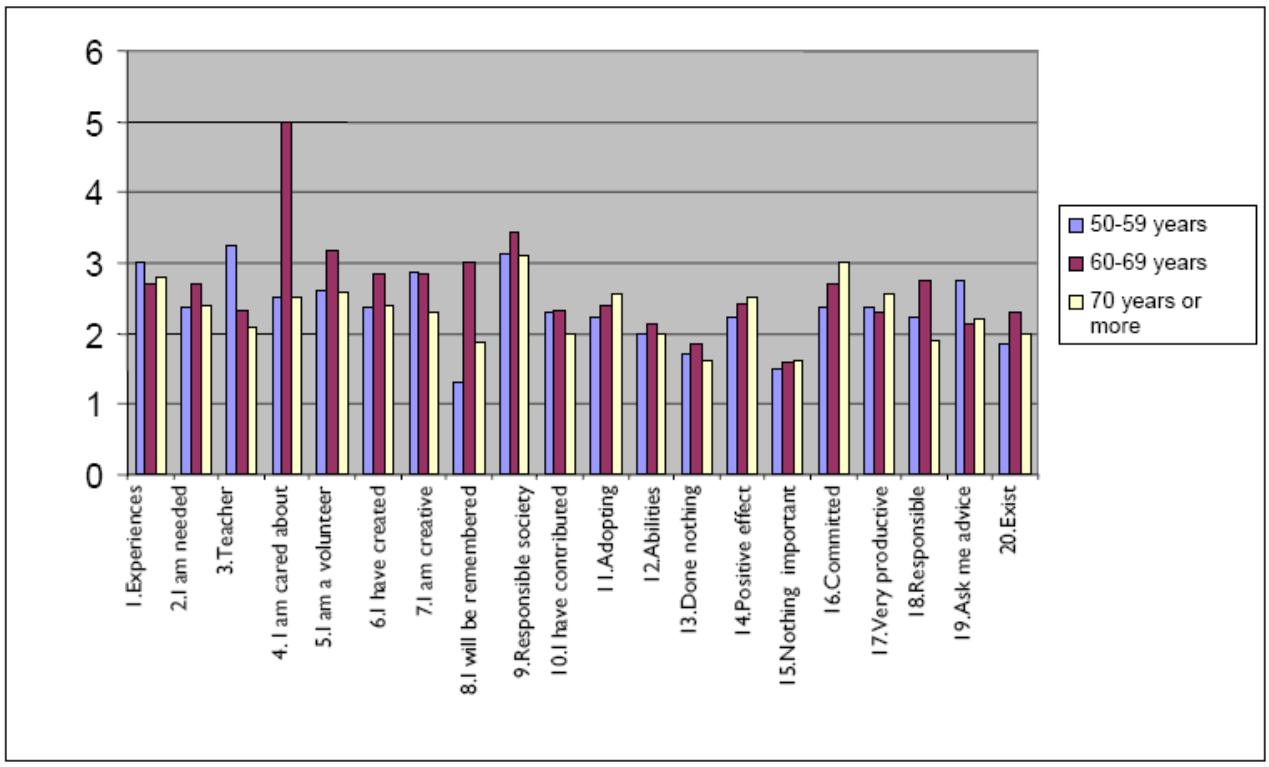
[1] In this case, it was a version of the *Center for Intergenerational Learning's* Loyola Generativity Scale *(Temple University)*, which had been modified by that centre.

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations (SD) on the Generativity Scale According to Age

	50-59 years		60-69 years		70 years or more	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
I try to pass along the knowledge I have gained through my experiences.	3.00	1.06	2.71	0.95	2.80	0.63
I feel like other people need me.	2.38	0.51	2.71	1.11	2.40	0.84
I think I would like the work of a teacher.	3.25	1.03	2.33	0.51	2.10	1.10
I feel like a lot of people care about me.	2.50	1.06	5.00	1.15	2.50	0.70
I am an NGO volunteer.	2.63	1.18	3.17	0.98	2.60	0.84
I have made and created things that have had an impact on other people.	2.38	0.51	2.83	0.40	2.40	0.51
I try to be creative in most of the things that I do.	2.87	0.83	2.83	0.40	2.30	0.67
I think I will be remembered a long time after I die.	1.30	0.75	3.00	0.81	1.89	0.60
I think society ought to be responsible for providing food and shelter for all homeless people.	3.13	0.35	3.43	0.78	3.10	0.87
Others would say that I have made unique contributions to society.	2.29	1.11	2.33	0.51	2.00	0.66
If I were unable to have children of my own, I would like to adopt children.	2.25	0.88	2.40	0.54	2.56	1.13
I have important skills that I try to teach others.	2.00	0.75	2.14	0.37	2.00	0.47
I feel that I have nothing that will survive after I die.	1.71	0.95	1.86	0.90	1.60	0.51
In general, my actions have positive effects on others.	2.25	0.46	2.43	0.53	2.50	0.52
I feel that I have done nothing of worth to contribute to others.	1.50	0.75	1.57	0.78	1.60	0.69
I have made commitments to many different kinds of people and activities in my life.	2.38	0.51	2.71	0.48	3.00	0.66
Others say that I am a very productive person.	2.38	0.51	2.29	0.48	2.56	0.52
I have a responsibility to improve the neighbourhood in which I live.	2.25	0.70	2.75	0.50	1.90	0.73
People come to me for advice.	2.75	0.88	2.14	0.37	2.20	0.63
I feel like as though my contributions will exist after I die.	1.86	0.69	2.29	0.48	2.00	0.81

Source: Project GYRO Outcome Report, OFECUM, 2006.

We can even plot graphs such as the one below, which allow us to better visualise, at a glance, the outcomes by age group and item, thereby emphasising the items in which each age group scores highest (or lowest).



1.1.2. The Osgood Scales (semantic differential)

Statistical data analysis of a semantic differential can provide us with the score of each subject or group of subjects for each pair of adjectives and on a global scale, as well as the mean score obtained by the sample on each item and on a global scale.

It is possible to use a semantic differential before and after starting up an intergenerational programme. In this way, we are able to observe differences, if any, in the subjects' scores before and after they participated in the programme. The presence of differences favoring a more encouraging attitude (greater closeness) towards the other group would be interpreted as the programme's impact or success. Subsequent analyses in greater depth would provide us with better explanations about that impact; for instance, they would make it possible for us to learn whether group differences in the first and second rounds of the differential were statistically important.

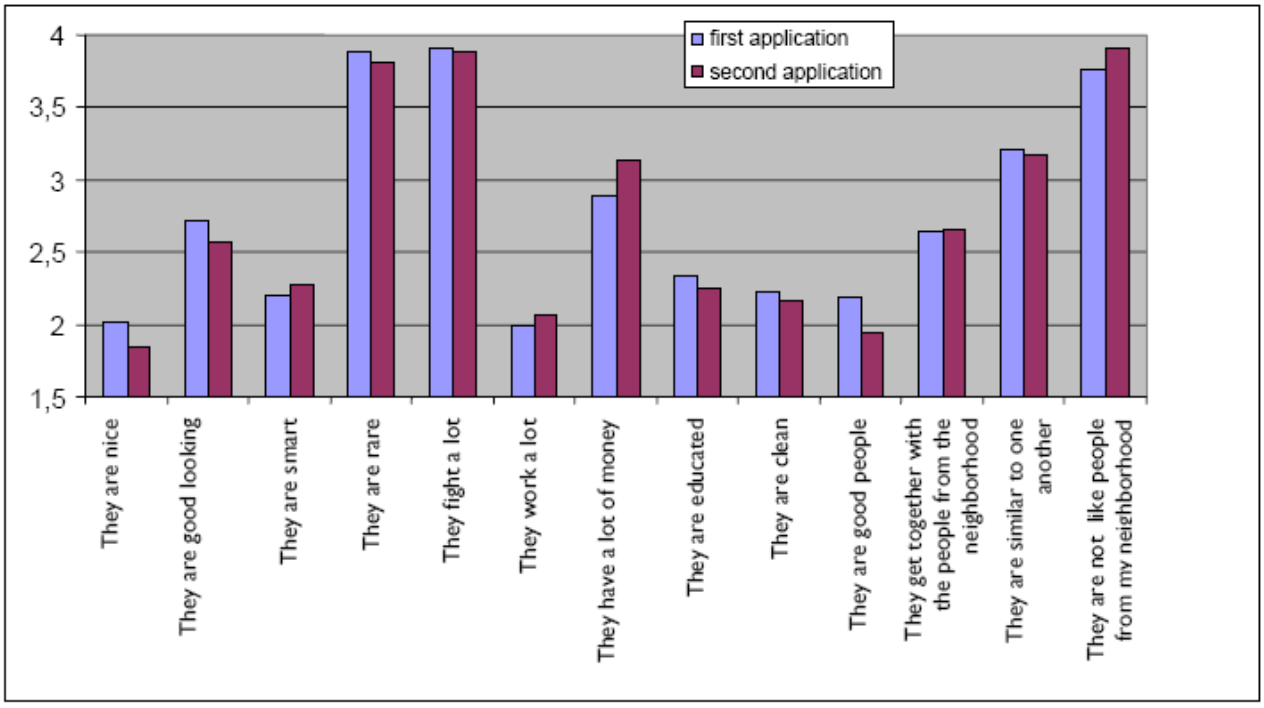
In the table shown below, we observe (in the columns) data relative to the first application or round (with the group mean and standard deviation for each item), and second application. To properly interpret the data, we recommend reading the caption beneath the table.

Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) Scores Obtained with the First and Second Applications Using Semantic Differential Adjectives

Immigrants are	FIRST APPLICATION		SECOND APPLICATION	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
They are nice.	2.02	1.00	1.85	0.95
They are good looking.	2.72	1.43	2.57	1.32
They are smart.	2.20	1.25	2.27	1.24
They are weird.	3.89	1.30	3.81	1.36
They fight a lot.	3.92	1.30	3.89	1.22
They work a lot.	2.00	1.27	2.07	1.31
They have money.	2.89	1.32	3.13	1.27
They are educated.	2.33	1.26	2.25	1.25
They are clean.	2.22	1.53	2.17	1.25
They are good.	2.19	1.21	1.95	1.12
They get together with people from my neighbourhood.	2.65	1.42	2.66	1.49
They are similar to one another.	3.21	1.43	3.17	1.51
They are not like people from my neighbourhood.	3.76	1.17	3.92	1.17

The scores vary between one and five; the higher the score, the less the characteristic applies to them. The scale's theoretical mean is three and corresponds to the alternative response, "*I'm not sure*". Source: OFECUM.

A graphic illustration of the data can also be used such as the one that follows:



1.1.3. Scales for the observation of interactions

As we saw earlier, qualitative research can be done by directly questioning the people involved in it or simply observing their interactive behaviour. Observation allows us to obtain information about a phenomenon just the way it occurs.

One basic procedure for obtaining information is the direct, continuous and systematic observation of interactive activities between subjects, in relationships, in decision-making, in participation, in everyday habits or lack thereof, etc. However, as we saw earlier, the observed, the perceptive system of the observer and the observer's interpretation of the observed intervene in every perceptive process.

Observation is, then, a deliberate process guided by variables such as what is being observed, who is observed, how one is observed, when one observes, where one observes, when and how observations are recorded, which observations are recorded, how the data that comes from observation should be analysed and, even, how the obtained data will be used later on (Rodríguez, Gil and García, 1999).

In data collection, evaluators often use a strategy known as '*del embudo*' [the funnel strategy], wherein a *descriptive observation* is used to help formulate the problem, followed by a *focused observation* that seeks to answer the questions raised by the evaluator, and ending with a *selective observation* that serves solely to contrast the hypotheses raised with the facts observed.

Once the context, moments and samples to be observed have been selected and the data has been obtained, recorded and classified (via audio- and video-taping, from notetaking, using recorded notes, etc.), all that is left is to code it. Categorisation systems are a conceptual construction that helps us to put observed behaviours into operation. Such categories are mutually exclusive and exhaustive.

Example 2. Mentoring Programme: *Generations Together*

Generations Together, housed at the Intergenerational Studies Program at the University of Pittsburgh, promotes the development of intergenerational programmes and their evaluation. In the intergenerational mentoring programme that we chose to analyse here, it was sought to evaluate whether there was a relationship between the interactions that elderly persons had with children and the results of the childrens' school work and conduct.

Consequently, an instrument was constructed to observe the interactive behaviour between the two. The most frequently observed behaviours are shown in the table below:

Observed Behaviours	Frequency
The elder gives instructions	158
The elder answers questions	143
The child follows orders	99
The child answers questions	96
The elder offers help	82
The elder corrects homework	74
The elder speaks to the student slowly	73
The child speaks spontaneously	53
The elder speaks spontaneously	44

Source: Instrument for Analysing Interactions: Elder-Child (Newman and Ward, 1993)

Later, the childrens' teacher was interviewed in order to evalute the impact of the work carried out by the elder mentors. In this interview, questions were formulated such as:

As a result of the mentor's work with the child, have you noticed…
…a difference in the quality in her/his 'housework'?
…that s/he cares more about doing a good job?
…that the child is more sociable?
…that the child is more cooperative?

1.2. Other Observation Techniques

Other common techniques used as instruments for observing interaction are collections of anecdotes and diaries or reports.

What makes working with diaries ideal is the comparison of various diaries or reports; in other words, they have the capacity to be compared and contrasted. With respect to this case, it would be highly advisable to use several diaries created by different members of the same group.

Example 3. Mentoring in Schools

Below, we present evaluator Steven Ellis' (2003) experiences (albeit with adaptations) using diaries in an intergenerational project run in the UK. Diaries written by the mentors were used in the evaluation of the Mentoring Project at schools. Each mentor was given the following instructions for creating the diary:

Why carry a diary?

The goal of the diary is to help you write about the development of your relationship with the youths in the programme and what the good and not so good things about being a mentor are. Your diary is also a place for reflecting on your experience as a mentor and remarking about the changes taking place in you as well as in the young participants.

Hints about filling in a diary

You are more likely to fill in your diary if you write short comments just after your school visit. Do not leave it for later in the week because by then you will have forgotten how you felt that day. Try to say something in each section but do not worry too much if you do not fill in everything. Every once in a while the project coordinator will speak with you about the diary, some of the sections of which can be used in evaluating the project's progress and the mentoring relationship. The confidential nature of what you write will be respected at all times and the diaries will not be assessed in terms of their neatness, handwriting or grammar. Below, you will find certain terms that may be useful to you.

Helpful terms

Capable, secure, messy, very helpful, negative, overburdened, sad, uncertain, confused, dissatisfied, happy, selfish, positive, important, etc.

Useful expressions

I learned something new; I handled that situation really well; I could have handled that situation better; next time I will do this differently; the youth that I mentor really responded to what I told him/her; I feel better about myself.

How to take notes in the diary

Date.

Good things that happened today.

Not so good things that happened today.

I feel happy/sad about how things went today because…

What I could have done differently in order to obtain a different result was…

The best way to describe this day is…

Mentoring notes

Use this section occasionally to note down any significant situation or event that you think matters for the mentoring relationship and/or for intergenerational exchange. You can note down any change in your life or that of the youth you are mentoring –such as feeling more secure, feeling happier or healthier, etc.– or perhaps what one of the two of you learned about the other generation. You can also use this space to write about things that you would like to discuss with the project coordinator or other mentors.

1.3. Discussion or Focus Groups

Although we associate discussion groups with qualitative methodology, the discussions generated can be analysed quantitatively by means of 'content analysis', which allows numeric descriptions of the collected data (such as how often a word appears in a text) ([2]).

If qualitative analysis is chosen, then the first task after completely transcribing the group discussion is to read and underline the texts. The first reading allows us to become familiar with the texts. In successive readings, we mark the margins with whatever captures our attention (words, changes in the conversation's direction, silences, etc.). New readings allow us to establish the categories upon which the report is to be based. With each reading and re-reading of the texts, the most important themes become increasingly apparent. The original material (the sentences that were spoken verbatim by the subject) serves as an example of each statement made in the concluding document. A good strategy would be to underline the sentences that illustrate different categories with different coloured markers. That way, it will be easier to search for and locate something when we want to recover it from the text.

[2] Chapter 7 of this book also discusses the use of content analysis as a technique in intergenerational programme evaluations in which the goal is community improvement.

An example of how to present the case results of a group discussion about intergenerational relationships is as follows:

[SUB006]

'My relationship with young people has been fantastic… It's something that I couldn't imagine before coming here.

[SUB009]

'Finding out how they are –how today's young people think and react– helps me in my daily life with my own children and grandchildren…'

[SUB012]

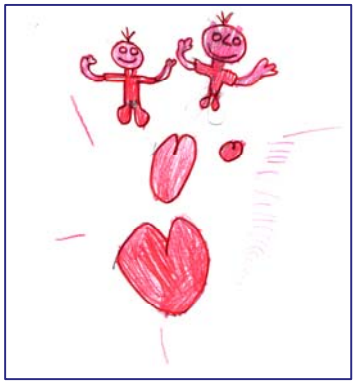
'I've changed…yes, this (pointing to the head)…has changed my way of thinking about them, of seeing them (the young people)… Before, I thought that they were all the same, that all of today's youth didn't respect anything, that they didn't have ideals…and no. Listen, I've realised that they reason, they really value friendship, for instance, and the environment, and I've really enjoyed seeing that.'

1.4. Other techniques: images and drawings

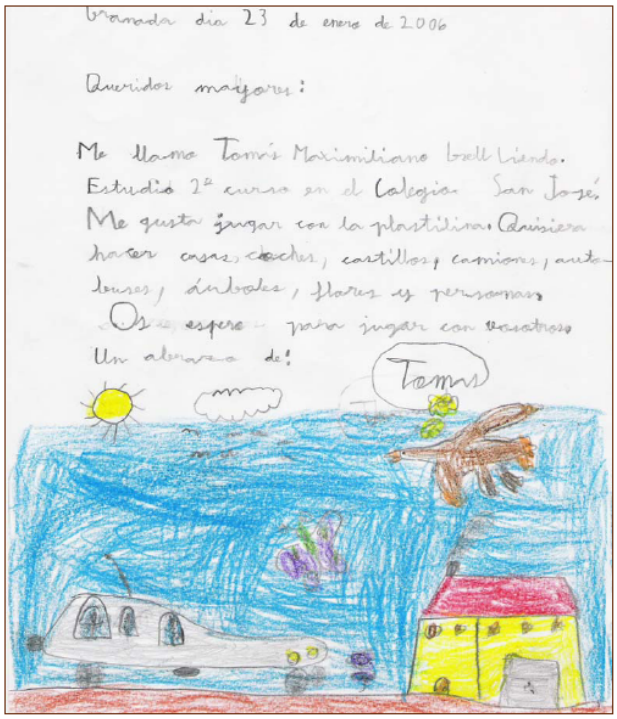
Other techniques that can be used are based on the analysis of images and drawings or written compositions. For instance, a child participating in an intergenerational programme can be asked to do the following:

"Write a letter to the elder mentors that are going to participate in the intergenerational programme saying what you imagine you will be doing when you are together" or, "Describe with a drawing what your grandfather is like".

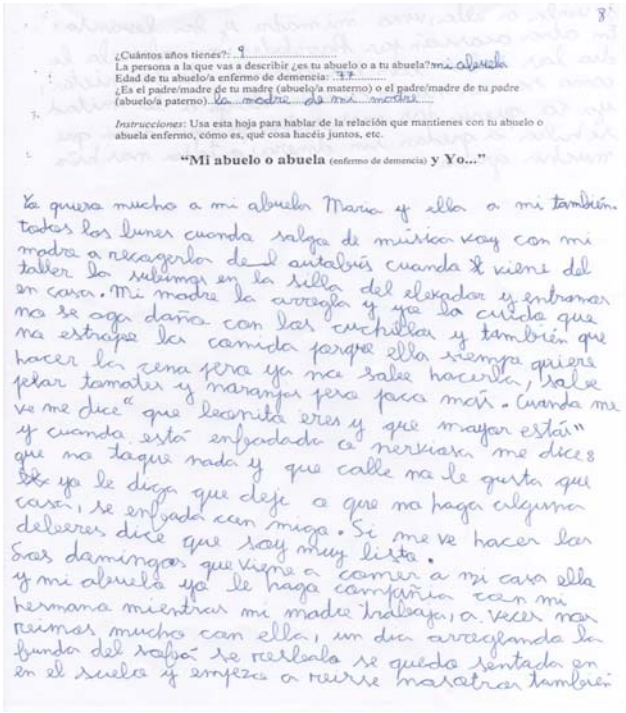
Below, we have selected various illustrative examples of the types of answers that proposals such as the one above can provoke in children:



Drawing: "My grandfather or grandmother (who suffers from dementia) and me…"



Letter and drawing: Dear Elders ([3])



Letter: "My grandfather or grandmother (who suffers from dementia) and me ([4]).

[3] *Granada, 23 January 2006. Dear Elders: My name is Tomás Maxmiliano […]. I am in my second year at St. Joseph School. I like to play with playdough. I would like to make houses, cars, castles, trucks, buses, trees, flowers and people. I look forward to playing with you. Hugs from Tomás*.

Once the materials have been gathered, we can do a content analysis of the texts by looking for words that appear in them, calculating their frequency of appearance, assessing the semantic meaning, looking for relationships between categories, etc. The drawing can also be observed in terms of the colours used, the quantity of colour and the spatial layout on the page or other features. Following this, we can begin to do some interpreting; for instance, in general, figures that are meant to stand out in the illustration (the most important ones from an emotional, functional or semantic point of view) are larger in size than the rest or are drawn with greater detail.

There are no concrete or absolute rules for analysing and presenting qualitative data. However, the qualitative analyst unquestionably should analyse a large volume of texts and make sense of pages and pages of material that first was narrative and then descriptive. The main task of organising qualitative data is developing a method for ordering and classifying the material, such as by date, place or context. Then the texts are codified, meaning that the narrative recording is converted into a system of structured symbols that facilitate its subsequent categorisation or inclusion within categories.

Certain computer programmes can help the analyst with varied tasks that have to be carried out with the texts. For instance, a simple text processor (Microsoft Word) allows words to be 'searched' and 'found' in the sentences in which they were used. Other more specific content analysis programmes (such as NVivo) can connect 'codes and categories' or 'create word lists' in order to calcuate their frequency or 'find key words positioned within the text'. We only need pause to decide which type of tool, if any, suits us best and is easiest for the type of analysis that we plan on doing.

2. REPORT PREPARATION AND OUTCOME DISSEMINATION: THE RESEARCH REPORT, AFTER RESEARCH AND THE PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

At the end of any research project or evaluation, a written report should be drafted that conveys the work undertaken and the conclusions reached. Drafting the report is very important because it is the occasion when the evaluator reports on how the work was carried out and the results that were obtained. The results should be shared with and presented to the participants concerned as well as the study or project sponsors.

---

[4] How old are you? 9
The person who you are going to describe is your grandfather or grandmother? Grandmother
The age of your grandparent who suffers from dementia: 77
S/he is the father/mother of your mother (maternal grandparent) or father/mother of your father (paternal grandparent)? The mother of my mother

Instructions: Use this sheet to talk about the relationship you have with your sick grandparent, how s/he is, what things you do together, etc.

"**My grandfather or grandmother** (who suffers from dementia) **and I**…"

I really love my grandmother Maria and she loves me, too. Every Monday when I get out of Music, I go with my mother to pick her up from the bus [stop] when she comes from the workshop [and] we take her up in the chair lift and we go into the house. My mother fixes her up and I make sure she doesn't hurt herself with the knives and also that she doesn't mess up the food either because she always wants to make dinner but she doesn't know how to do it anymore; she knows how to peel tomatoes and oranges but not much else. When she sees me, she says, "You're such a little lioness and haven't you grown" and when she's mad or upset, she tells me not to touch anything or to be quiet –she doesn't like me to tell her to leave something be or to not do something; she gets mad at me. If she sees me doing homework she says I'm very clever.

On Sundays when she comes to my house to eat with my grandfather, my sister and I keep her company while my mother works, [and] sometimes we laugh a lot with her, [and] one day while fixing the couch cover, she fell and just sat there on the floor and started laughing and we did, too.

Furthermore, the preparation of a report allows us to retain the conclusions and record them in a format that makes it possible to recover them at any time and facilitates their dissemination and presentation to the different interested audiences (Rodríguez, Gil and García, 1999). On many occasions, moreover, the directors of a subsidised project are responsible for submitting an evaluation report accounting for what was accomplished.

The title of the project, the name of the author or collaborating research team, the institution funding the project, the publishing company, the publication date, and so forth, always appear on the cover of the report. The title –which should be no more than twelve to fifteen words– should indicate the nature of the report and the variables researched. Then, at the beginning of the report, an index should be included that lists all of the chapters and the most significant aspects of the report as well as the pages where they can be found.

All research reports should contain the following parts: summary (or abstract), introduction, objectives and hypotheses, method, analysis and results, conclusion or discussion of the results, bibliographic references and appendices. We will briefly explain the content that is generally contained in each of these parts.

a) Summary or Abstract

An abstract or summary is the synthesis of the evaluation that appears at the beginning of the article or project. This part of the report (between five and fifteen lines long and 75 to 175 words) provides information about the project's intentions or objectives and the hypotheses, a sample description, a brief description of what the subjects did or what was done with them and a summary of results. The goal of the abstract is to provide quick information about the report's content. This way, a quick reading can let the reader know what the project is about and whether the subject is of interest to them.

b) Introduction

The introduction should include a literature review of previously conducted projects and a theoretical explanation or grounded research purpose in a clear and orderly manner. This review allows one to understand the current state of the issue and contextualises the project by placing it within a theoretical framework of reference. Moreover, it helps connect the results obtained with concurrent (or not concurrent) results that were previously obtained.

c) Objectives and Hypotheses

In this section, we explain what it is that we seek to achieve. Four aspects should be explained in detail: the purpose of the study, the warrant of the study or the importance of the subject being researched, the purpose of the evaluation and even the utility of the results, and the questions, hypotheses and objectives of the evaluation. The objectives are broad generalisations raised by author in response to his/her research problem. The number of objectives should be small and limited to make it possible to answer each and every question raised. In contrast, the hypotheses should be more specific generalisations about what is being verified in the study. By means of empirical processes, connections are sought between variables or differences are sought between groups.

d) Method

The method reports on the steps taken to complete the project. This information should be detailed and explicit enough for another evaluator to be able to carry out a similar study with another sample.

d.1. Population/Sample

The population about whom the evaluation results are making generalisations should be clearly described, be they studies of a quantitative or qualitative nature. In qualitative studies, the reader will have a better idea of the scene or context and the subjects serving as the object of study. In this section, the clearest possible description should be made of the population and type of sampling used, the explanation for the sampling technique used, the quantitative relationship between the population and the sample, the number of subjects sampled, the levels of sampling reliability and error, the description of the sampling or subsampling subjects' characteristics (age, sex, social class, socioeconomic level, and so forth, if relevant) and the group types (if there are experimental and control groups). In an evaluation that uses qualitative methodology, what matters is the description of the sample: their characteristics, their context, and so forth, so that the reader will have a better idea of the process and evaluation results.

d.2. Design

This describes how the groups are organised to take part in the evaluation and subsequent data analysis (for instance, it explains whether such an intervention was carried out using an experimental group and a control group). Design is an important aspect in experimental and correlative studies. This explanation can help the reader better understand the fieldwork and statistical analyses that are conducted later on.

d.3. Materials or Instruments

This refers to the description of the instruments used for data collection. If the instruments already exist on the market, then the information, although not exhaustive, should include their validity and reliability, the population that they are meant for, the available criteria, etc. If, on the other hand, the instruments were specifically developed by the author for the design of the evaluation (questionnaire, scales, interviews, objective tests, etc.), then the construction process, pilot study, degree of reliability and validity, application level, application norms, and so forth, should be mentioned. If the publication allows for it, it is advisable to include the instruments or a copy of the materials in an appendix at the end of the report.

d.4. Experimental Procedure or Treatment of Data

This aspect is important in an evaluation report because it lets the reader copy the procedure under the same or similar conditions. In this section, for the application of surveys, questionnaires or interviews, we should report on the steps taken in the entire creative process, pilot study, application, data collection, data coding, etc.

e) Analysis and Results

There are diverse ways of showing results:

- The data can be described within the text.

- The data can be shown in a table. For a correct reading of the tables it is important to include a caption below each of the tables that can inform the reader about what it is about, what data is being referred to, etc. Tables are very useful as a summarised presentation of the results.

- A graphic illustration of the data that uses figures or graphs promotes a better understanding of the data.

f) Conclusion or a Discussion of the Results

In this section, the significance of the results should be explained in relation to the objectives and hypotheses raised. The conclusion represents judgements and recommendations. It should be defensible and pertinent, grounded and correct.

g) Bibliographic References

Here, an account of all of the bibliographic references mentioned throughout the project should appear in alphabetical order. Citing sources is important because it provides a way of finding out about other sources that can be consulted in relation to the object of study.

h) Appendices

This section can include the questionnaires and tables used in the evaluation process as well as any other complementary information that we believe can help us to better understand the evaluation process.

Components of a Report:

- **Summary or abstract**
- **Introduction**
- **Objectives and hypotheses**
- **Method**
    - **Population/sample**
    - **Design**
    - **Materials or instruments**
    - **Experimental procedure or treatment of the data**
- **Analysis and results**
- **Conclusion or discussion of the results**
- **Bibliographic references**
- **Appendices**

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APPENDIX 1. Generativity Scale (McAdams and de St. Aubin, 1992)

For each of the following statements, please indicate *to what extent* the statement applies to you, by marking either a "0," "1," "2," or "3".
Mark "0" if the statement never or seldom applies to you.
Mark "1" if the statement only occasionally applies to you.
Mark "2" if the statement applies to you fairly often.
Mark "3" if the statement applies to you very often or nearly always.

1. I try to pass along the knowledge I have gained through my experiences.	0	1	2	3
2. I do not feel that other people need me.	0	1	2	3
3. I think I would like the work of a teacher.	0	1	2	3
4. I feel as though I have made a difference to many people.	0	1	2	3
5. I do not volunteer to work for a charity.	0	1	2	3
6. I have made and created things that have had an impact on other people.	0	1	2	3
7. I try to be creative in most things that I do.	0	1	2	3
8. I think that I will be remembered for a long time after I die.	0	1	2	3
9. I believe that society cannot be responsible for providing food and shelter for all homeless people.	0	1	2	3
10. Others would say that I have made unique contributions to society.	0	1	2	3
11. If I were unable to have children of my own, I would like to adopt children.	0	1	2	3
12. I have important skills that I try to teach others.	0	1	2	3
13. I feel that I have done nothing that will survive after I die.	0	1	2	3
14. In general, my actions do not have a positive effect on other people.	0	1	2	3
15. I feel as though I have done nothing of worth to contribute to others.	0	1	2	3
16. I have made many commitments to many different kinds of people, groups, and activities in my life.	0	1	2	3
17. Other people say that I am a very productive person.	0	1	2	3
18. I have a responsibility to improve the neighborhoond in which I live.	0	1	2	3
19. People come to me for advice.	0	1	2	3
20. I feel as though my contributions will exist after I die.	0	1	2	3

APPENDIX 2. Generative Behaviours Checklist (McAdams and de St. Aubin, 1992)

Below is a list of specific behaviors or acts. Over the past two months, it is likely that you may have performed some of these behaviors. It is also likely that you have not performed many of them as well during this time. Please consider each behavior to determine whether or not you have performed the behavior during the past two months. If you have performed the behavior, please try to determine how many times you have performed it during the past two months. For each behavior, provide one of the following ratings:

Write a "0" in the blank before the behavior if you *have not* performed the behavior during the past two months.
Write a "1" in the blank if you have performed the behavior *one* time during the past two months.
Write a "2" in the blank if you have performed the behavior *more than once* during the past two months.

1. Taught somebody a skill.	0	1	2
2. Served as a role model for a young person.	0	1	2
3. Won an award or contest.	0	1	2
4. Went to see a movie or play.	0	1	2
5. Gave money to a charity.	0	1	2
6. Did volunteer work for a charity.	0	1	2
7. Listened to a person tell me his or her personal problems.	0	1	2
8. Purchased a new car or major appliance (e.g., dishwasher, television set).	0	1	2
9. Taught Sunday School or provided similar religious instruction.	0	1	2
10. Taught somebody about right and wrong, good and bad.	0	1	2
11. Told somebody about my own childhood.	0	1	2
12. Read a story to a child.	0	1	2
13. Babysat for somebody else's children.	0	1	2
14. Participated in an athletic sport.	0	1	2
15. Gave clothing or personal belongings to a not-for-profit organisation (such as the "Good Will," "Salvation Army," etc.).	0	1	2
16. Was elected or promoted to a leadership position.	0	1	2
17. Made a decision that influenced many people.	0	1	2
18. Ate dinner at a restaurant.	0	1	2
19. Produced a piece of art or craft (such as pottery, quilt, woodwork, painting, etc).	0	1	2
20. Produced a plan for an organisation or group outside my own family.	0	1	2
21. Visited a nonrelative in a hospital or nursing home.	0	1	2
22. Read a novel.	0	1	2
23. Made something for somebody and then gave it to them.	0	1	2
24. Drew upon my past experiences to help a person adjust to a situation.	0	1	2
25. Picked up garbage or trash off the street or some other area that is not my property.	0	1	2
26. Gave a stranger directions on how to get somewhere.	0	1	2
27. Attended a community or neighborhood meeting.	0	1	2

28. Wrote a poem or story.	0	1	2
29. Took in a pet.	0	1	2
30. Did something that other people considered to be unique and important.	0	1	2
31. Attended a meeting or activity at a church (not including conventional worship service such as Mass, Sunday morning service, etc.).	0	1	2
32. Offered physical help to a friend or acquaintance (e.g., helped them move, fix a car, etc.).	0	1	2
33. Had an argument with a friend or family member.	0	1	2
34. Contributed time or money to a political or social cause.	0	1	2
35. Planted or tended a garden, tree, flower, or other plant.	0	1	2
36. Wrote a letter to a newspaper, magazine, Congressman, etc. about a social issue.	0	1	2
37. Cooked a meal for friends (nonfamily members).	0	1	2
38. Donated blood.	0	1	2
39. Took prescription medicine.	0	1	2
40. Sewed or mended a garment or other object.	0	1	2
41. Restored or rehabbed a house, part of a house, a piece of furniture, etc.	0	1	2
42. Assembled or repaired a child's toy.	0	1	2
43. Voted for a political candidate or some other elected position.	0	1	2
44. Invented something.	0	1	2
45. Provided first aid or other medical attention.	0	1	2
46. Attended a party.	0	1	2
47. Took an afternoon nap.	0	1	2
48. Participated in or attended a benefit or fund-raiser.	0	1	2
49. Learned a new skill (e.g., computer language, musical instrument, welding, etc.).	0	1	2
50. Became a parent (had a child, adopted a child, or became a foster parent).	0	1	2

Chapter 6

THE INTERVIEW AS A TECHNIQUE TO OBTAINING INFORMATION IN INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMMES

Juan Sáez
University of Murcia

INTRODUCTION. THE POSSIBILITIES FOR INTERVIEWS IN INTERGENERATIONAL PRACTICES AND PROGRAMMES

There is no doubt at this point in the development of the social sciences that interviews are an excellent instrument for gathering information, and often used in different fields related to social action (education, social work, psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, etc.). While it should be noted that this procedure for obtaining data is usually used in social research that is basically qualitative in nature, its more structured version has been used in quantitative research. Its similarity to the questionnaire –the dominant instrument for quantitative studies– has been highlighted by experts on the topic (Rist, 1992; Smith, 1991). But while the interview is an investigative resource, it is also an intervention, as Rosell has shown (1998). It is through processing and relating, therefore, and not only technique, that people exchanging information about a subject of common interest are able to modify, incorporate and augment their understanding and initial perspective (pp. 58-77; and Chapter 7 "The Intervention of the Worker through the Interview"). Perhaps this is one of the features that best explains the success of this technique when it is done properly: two human beings interact, trying to adjust points of view and go beyond what the *partners* in the endeavour usually state at the beginning of the interview. This leads to the psychoanalytical dimension of interviews that theorists on research have found (Coderch, 1987; Sullivan, 1991), where each party reaches levels of mutual satisfaction for their different objectives that manage to satisfy both of them. The emphasis that Reason and Rowan (1981) put on dialogue as intervention in their famous *Human Inquiry* finds its fullest potential and expression in the interview.

Intergenerational Programmes and Projects (hereafter IPs) have used interviews –and this is a recurrent proposal– to try to identify the needs that lead to their being planned. But Intergenerational Practice also uses dialogue and interviews (more often the open type than closed or pre-prepared) to run, to some extent, their projects.

With IPs, the interview makes it possible to access different types of data, information and knowledge, as shown in the following table:

1. **People's perspectives with respect to their experiences and situations, exactly as they express them.**
2. **The interview subject's personal meanings, values, feelings, perceptions and opinions: i.e., 'the personal construction' that s/he makes of the events at the time of the interaction.**
3. **'Reconstructions' of past experiences or events that took place at another time.**
4. **The 'projections' or 'expectations' for the future that the interviewees may have with respect to the programme or project, their life and/or professional goals, etc.**

In short, perhaps the most radical characterisation of this instrument, versus others that are more rigid and closed, is that it makes it possible to penetrate the world of opinions, assessments and meanings. The universe of words is the richest and most complete language that man has created, at this moment in time, to become aware of and explain himself (Tyler and Bolgan, 1986; Spradley, 1999). Interpreting the question in this way, we can contribute some considerations about evaluating IPs:

First. The interview, given that the core of an IP is intervention, is an excellent instrument –perhaps the most powerful– thanks to the nature of this practice (Vercauteren, 1999), which can combine investigation and intervention, unlike other methods which do not foster this relationship.

Second. This does not mean to say that it is the only instrument for gathering information in the evaluation of IPs. However, the aspects that we have just indicated/established in the above table can only be discovered using an interview.

Third. With an interview, moreover, it is possible to expand the information obtained through other procedures. This is the case with, for example, participant observation (Smith, 1991; Sevigny, 1981), another important strategy when it comes to carrying out an evaluative investigation on the diverse dimensions of an IP. Observation can provide crucial information that, collected via the creation of different scales (designed according to what is going to be the subject of the observation), promotes a more solid understanding of the progress and results of IPs. However, *not everything can be observed* (Patton, 1990: 196). Thoughts, feelings, and intentions cannot be observed, nor, clearly, can those events that take place at another time (here lies the 'archive fever' to which Derrida (1997) referred: archives from the past were created with *a priori* criteria that led to a 'selection' and 'interpretation' that the archived material itself did not demand), nor those situations in which, in the final analysis, the involvement of an observer is impossible from the start.

"However much we want, in short, we cannot observe how people have organized the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world." (Patton, 1990: 197).

The interview, then, acquires potential as far as gathering information that, together with other well-known and less well-known techniques (iconic, graphic, representational, etc.), provides a rich and suggestive range to approach the evaluation of IPs thoroughly and seriously.

1. SOME INTERVIEW STYLES

Evaluating some aspects –overall or partial, basic or related to form, quantitative or qualitative– of IPs requires the use of interviews to obtain information about what is going to be evaluated, issuing a judgement (Rosales, 1981). However, the types are different according to the data that is sought; the type of data that we are looking for requires the appropriate interview type. And, indeed, there is a typology that has been thoroughly studied regarding the interview (Smith, 1991). The decision to use one interview type or another must be made according to criteria that bear in mind aspects like the objectives established, the information that we want to obtain, the central question or topic that we are going to evaluate, our economic possibilities, the time that we need or have been given to do the interviews, etc. All of this is must be considered seriously when it comes time to design the evaluation of an IP.

The choice of what type of interview to do in the evaluation of an IP is determined by the decisions that the researcher/evaluator makes about what is already known, what remains to be known, from whom it can be learnt and how to obtain this information (RIST, 1992: 443).

There are, therefore, numerous types, and this section only has space to note some by way of a synthesis. Guba and Lincoln (1992) refer to the following forms: panel interview, structured vs. non-structured, open vs. closed and oral history interview. Patton (1990), like González (1988), formulated three basic types of interview: general-guided, conversational-informal and structured open.

To conclude, and before we move on to our proposals for evaluating IPs, we want to make a timely allusion to another type of interview often considered in ethnographic evaluative research. Synthesising the work by Spradley (1999), already outlined by Sevigny (1981) and González (1988), regarding *interviews in the context of fieldwork strategy*, two basic types of these interviews can be noted:

1) Informant interview:

- Conducted with people who form part of the field of study because they know it and are willing to collaborate.
- Designed based on the culture of the informant, not the researcher's own thinking.

2) Respondent interview:

- Conducted with members of a specific group to complement some of the inferences that the evaluator/interviewer makes about the events that s/he is studying.

For our objectives in this text, which is aimed at IP evaluators, we have opted for another typology, perhaps the one most accepted by experts on the topic, which we will discuss below. To do this, although briefly, we are adopting the following categorisation: characteristics, advantages, disadvantages and final thoughts or *suggestions*, where appropriate.

1.1. The structured interview

Guba and Lincoln (1992: 156ff.) and Patton (1990: 196ff.), among others, have taken it upon themselves to explain this type of interview in their work on social research techniques. For all of them, this consists of a set of specific questions, drawn up and prepared beforehand, with the intention of applying them to each subject being interviewed, following a preset order and specific sequence.

+ Characteristics: here, the interviewer defines the problem or question to be explored, hoping that the interviewee will respond within the framework established by the researcher. It is designed and used when a large number of people must be interviewed about the same question in order to reduce variations and the uncontrolled multiplicity of answers that are common with open questions (Acevedo, 1986).

+ Advantages: systematic data is obtained that is already organised from a subject and their relationship to the topic. For the same reason, the data *are easier to analyse*, since each interviewee's answer to each question can be found more quickly and, therefore, similar *responses can be organised more quickly and effectively*. Established beforehand, this type of interview offers the advantages of *being able to gain access to a large number of subjects and reduce the variability in the responses*.

+ Disadvantages: questions that have not been previously anticipated cannot be asked, nor can different questions be used for people with different professional experience. This makes it impossible to deal with what was not anticipated beforehand –issues that might arise empathetically– and its rigidness limits the possibilities that usually arise in an open interaction. In terms of relationship and process, this type of interview constricts dialogue between two human beings (Arfuch, 1995).

1.2. The semi-structured interview

This process and technique anticipates a series of topics to delve into, but which only act as guides to be used by the evaluator/interviewer according to how s/he understands how the interview is going to progress.

+ Characteristics: the creation of this guide involves identifying the topics that are going to be taken up and their particular aspects, although in this case, they are not dealt with in any preset or particular order (Patton, 1990: 198ff.). The goal for this guide is to act *as a control list* to ensure that we are covering all of the topics related to the IP, and that there is some common information that the interviewees will supply in an open relationship that flows freely.

+ Advantages: if the IP evaluator is capable of constructing a conversation –a dialogue that focuses on the specific area of common interest– spontaneously posing questions and creating an atmosphere of a relationship where knowledge flows, the following advantages can be obtained using the semi-structured interview:

- it is open to unanticipated topics that may arise during the interview.
- it makes it possible to interview a series of people systematically and comprehensively, since the topics that may arise have been established.
- it lets the evaluator decide how to best use the time –which is usually limited– that they have to carry out their task (Amezcua, 2003).

As noted above, this is the most complete way, although it is still insufficient, to obtain information about the *whats, hows, wheres, whens* and *whys* of IPs.

+ Disadvantages: from a technocratic perspective, this instrument clearly needs more time to be created, applied and to analyse the information obtained, which is not very favourable or appropriate for someone whose efficiency is linked to saving time. This is a limitation, without a doubt.

1.3. The unstructured interview

+ Characteristics: as its very name indicates (lack of design and structure), this interview method favours spontaneity over *a priori* determination and expectation, because of the emergence of mutual interests in the natural flow of a conversation against the carefully planned process for obtaining information. As an organisational topic, a broad question about IPs posed by the evaluator will hopefully achieve answers from this relationship (Guba and Lincoln, 1992: 156). The interviewer is not expected to have any prior suppositions about the things that might be asked and may be important for the people who are involved in the different intergenerational practices and activities.

+ Advantages: in the eyes of its defenders, the advantage of this interview method lies in the possibility of using it to obtain *completely individual, unique and idiosyncratic perspectives* versus and/or complementary to standardised information. This involves the presence of a good interviewer who is capable of motivating and establishing a setting for the subject providing the information that facilitates the development of ideas that they consider to be interesting in such a way that, in short, their thoughts about the different situations experienced in the IP slowly develop a structure. Therefore, this method makes it possible to completely adapt the interview to the individual differences and situational changes (Patton, 1990: 199) that occur as an IP progresses.

+ Disadvantages: with this free-flowing interview method, which usually takes a long time (in some cases several sessions are needed) and is more like a conversation than an exchange of questions and answers, *two disadvantages* appear again and again: the excessive time required and, of course, given the diversity of information obtained, the hard work and effort involved in analysing the data.

2. PROCESS IN THE IP INTERVIEW: PLANNING, CONDUCTING AND RECORDING

Conducting an IP evaluation interview must be done *bearing in mind a series of phases*, if the evaluation is to be done coherently and credibly. These phases, which are discussed below, are: planning the interview, conducting it in a real situation, and recording the information and data that are obtained from those involved, whether directly or indirectly, in the IPs.

2.1. Planning the interview

The evaluator or interviewer of the subjects who are going to provide information about the IPs (their activities in them, their progress, the achievements that are being reached relating to their different levels of satisfaction, etc.) needs to plan the interview before the moment of the real situation and interaction arrives (Fear, 1999). This planning involves and requires:

a) clarifying why the evaluation is being done.

b) anticipating who is going to be interviewed.

c) preparing the topics that are going to be included in the interview.

d) anticipating how to explain the reason for the interview and how it will be conducted (records, recording, etc.) to those involved in IPs (Guittet, 1999).

Question ‘b’ is vital in the planning process: choosing the right people will be determined by the problem/question that is under exploration (older people with experience, children without any, key subjects in an organisation or institution, etc.) and this is connected, in turn, to question ‘c’. The question of who is going to be interviewed determines not only what to ask and why but, especially, how to formulate the questions, since a child is not the same as an adult, nor is a prepared person the same as one who knows nothing about the key questions regarding IPs, etc.

2.2. How to prepare the questions?

Asking questions is important and knowing how to ask them is even more so. Preparing the possible questions is essential because they make it possible to elicit a certain type of answer. Thus, some differentiation can be made between the possible questions that are used according to what is being sought when they are formed. González (1988: 17-18) notes the following categories of questions:

- **questions on conduct/experience** refer to what a person does or has done. Their aim is to get the interviewee to describe experiences, activities, conduct, actions, etc. For example: As an older person, what do you usually do with immigrant children in the language class? What happens with the children when you meet in the centre to work with immigrants? Or: When you deal with the topic on the radio programme that you have created, what things usually emerge in this regard? Etc.

- **questions on opinion/value** directed at learning about people's interpretive and cognitive processes, in such a way that their answers reflect what they think about the situation or some aspect of it, what their interests, values, intentions, etc. are. For example, What do you think about that material that you are working with?

- **questions on feelings** formed in order to understand the emotional responses of a person in response to their experiences and thoughts or to what is happening around them. For example: Did you feel anxious at any time with this programme?

- **questions on knowledge** directed at exploring the respondent's factual information. This does not involve opinions or feelings, but exploring what the person knows about a topic. For example: What are the programme's rules? Or, What services are available to you now that you are involved in the programme?

- **appraisal questions**, referring to what is seen, heard, etc. These questions try to explore the stimuli that the interviewees are subjected to in their daily activity. For example: What comments did you hear when this work dynamic was considered? When you work with this material in the centre, what do you see the students doing?

- one final type of questions are **personal/demographic**, directed at identifying the characteristics of the person who is being interviewed (age, education, etc.)

These six question methods can, in González' opinion, be posed about the past, present or future. Combining both dimensions –the type of question and its temporal structure– it is possible to obtain eighteen different types of questions, whose use throughout the interview make it possible to learn about what people do, think, feel, know, in short, we learn about the perspective of the interviewee.

Other authors, such as Guba and Lincoln (1992: 177-8), have offered a different classification for possible types of questions. Both show that in unstructured interviews, open questions must be posed, since they let the subject give a free answer. This type of question suggests a topic, but does not provide any type of structure for the interviewee's response, so that they respond using their own terms and reference points (Fear, 1999).

In the same way, they note that the range of questions that can be posed is determined by the very nature of the investigation, the interviewer's personality and the general responsibility of the interviewee. Several authors (Guba and Lincoln, 1992: 177-178; Patton, 1990: 221ff.; González, 1998: 28-29) have offered a very similar typology of possible questions to be asked in an interview situation:

- **hypothetical** questions of the 'what' type (would you do, would you see, would you say, etc.).

- questions that suggest **an ideal** and ask the interviewee to respond to an alternative hypothetical past, present or future. For example: If you had fewer children in your group, how would you organise the work session?

- **'devil's advocate'** questions, which challenge the interviewee to consider a contrary reference or explanation structure. For example: If you have to act as an educator, what would you think about the work methods in the place where you are going to teach your children?

- **interpretative** questions, which suggest possible interpretations for events that the interviewee has to consider. For example: How do you interpret that relationship to what you just mentioned?

- questions relating to **for what reason?**, which try to elicit explanations of facts or feelings.

- **argument-type questions**, which try to discover information or attitudes that the interviewer cannot obtain in any other way.

- **source-type questions**, which seek to discover the origin of auxiliary documents, data or information. For example: how did this relationship with the programme director or head come about?

- **yes-no questions**, aimed at sounding out the intensity of a feeling or belief about a topic.

- **filter** questions, through which the interviewee is asked to make an additional classification about the information that they are providing (What are the main contents that you try to bring up in this type of meeting?).

These nine types of questions can also be formulated personally or impersonally, directly or indirectly and retrospectively, introspectively or prospectively.

Clearly, these typologies of possible questions do not have a prescriptive value, but knowing and anticipating what can be used constitutes a good starting point when it comes time to prepare the interview, in order to take full advantage of it (Hindle, 1998).

In summary, and broadly speaking, there are *3 types of questions*:

A. The ***what happened*** type: this provides basic descriptive information: what do you feel, do…

B. The ***what and how do you think*** questions: these require the interviewer to put a series of mental processes into play in order to learn about the interviewee's thoughts.

C. The ***exploration or delving*** questions: these are formulated to go more deeply into an answer given earlier that requires clarification.

These three types of questions *can be specified with the following outline*:

A) Questions of a descriptive nature (describe things that are felt, assessed, done, etc.):

- questions on experience and conduct
- questions on knowledge
- appraisal questions
- questions on feelings
- questions on sources
- yes-no questions
- personal/demographic questions

B) Questions requiring elaboration (not only to describe, but a request is made to elaborate the response in order to learn what is thought):

- questions on opinions
- hypothetical questions
- interpretive questions
- questions on 'for what reason'
- 'devil's advocate' questions

C) Exploration questions (to obtain additional information, to contrast other answers/ideas/topics these questions search for alternatives/relationships and connections and, in short, for critical/evaluative statements)

- questions for clarification
- questions on expanding
- questions on refocusing
- questions on assessment and criticism/position

2.3. Questions that we should ask people involved in an intergenerational programme: features and characteristics

If we want to properly evaluate the different elements and dimensions of an IP and use the interview to obtain information about the different people who are to some extent involved in it, the questions have to present a series of convincing features, as Patton made clear (1990: 221ff.) in his time and which has been more broadly systematised today (Guittet, 1999; Fear, 1999). Thus, if the intention is to avoid manipulating the process of obtaining information and the evaluation is going to be thorough (in order to avoid the accusation of being tendentious, biased and other negative adjectives), it is essential for the questions *to have certain characteristics* like the following:

+ Be open: a question is open when predetermined answers are not imposed upon the interviewee regarding the whats, how and whys of the IPs. It is important that interviewees respond in the direction and using the terms that they wish.

Example: if the question *Are you very satisfied with the programme?* is asked, there is a presupposition of a degree of satisfaction that may not exist. The objective question, to our opinion, would be: *What do you think of the programme?*

+ Be singular: this is key for avoiding confusion and tension –and so that the question is formulated to include only one topic or idea, otherwise the interviewee may not know what is being asked. This situation may have consequences: the interviewers may give the impression that they do not have a clear idea of what they want to ask and they may even lose control of the interview. Multiple questions, therefore, should not be asked.

+ Be clear: closely related to the preceding characteristic is another which requires that the question be formed so that it is easy to understand by the subject and according to their comprehension level. Any labels that the specialist may use are dangerous, because the interviewee may or may not know them and the answers will be scant and limited (García Ramos, 2000).

+ Be neutral: because this avoids tendentious questions that subtly end up suggesting the desired or appropriate answer to the interviewee. This fact runs parallel to another need: to be impartial in the face of the answer given, i.e., not to act surprised, criticise it or otherwise evaluate it (Cardinet, 1988).

Example: The interviewee says: “Well, I don’t like the fact that they’re using the school classrooms to tell Spanish immigrants’ stories!” and the interviewer responds, “But they’re the best places to do that!”

2.4. Conducting the interview: the *in situ* relationship

Once IP evaluators know what they are going to evaluate, it is necessary to think about the type of people that can and are going to provide the information. With the people identified and the interview prepared, the evaluators begin to contact the interviewees. They must make sure that they are willing to be interviewed, agree on a place, time and date and, as a prelude to the interview itself, tell the participants about the subject of the investigation and what information is being sought, all in order to ‘break the ice’ (Quesada, 2001) before the upcoming interactive situation. What is important is to create an atmosphere, before and during, that shortens distances and promotes interpersonal relationships. Any suspicion or mistrust, insecurity or doubt must give way to mutual trust, a common

feeling of being involved –although on a different level and to a different degree– in the same IP that is being evaluated.

In this respect, the *in situ* development of the interview must keep the following aspects in mind:

1. **Clearly explain why the interview is being conducted.**
2. **Find a space where the interaction is real, face-to-face, away from possible observers or listeners who could inhibit the conversation.**
3. **Pay good attention to the responses, so that the interviewer can penetrate the interviewee's syntactic and semantic structure: 'know how to hear' and 'listen' to ease communication.**
4. **Introduce specificity and vicariousness in questions and answers (use both: the value of the example to clarify what is said).**
5. **Avoid interruptions or sudden changes to the process, for example the direction that the interview is going.**
6. **Record the information obtained efficiently.**

Much theorising has been done on this last point, in that experts consider that it is equally important to conduct the interview correctly and to record the information, since this makes it possible to analyse and issue the important opinions, given the knowledge obtained (Rossell, 1998).

In this phase of the evaluations, which is related to recording the information, two topics are of special interest: notes and the equipment that is used to obtain them, store them and work with them.

With respect to notes, there is interest in distinguishing notes taken down at two points: those taken during the interview itself and the notes written up afterwards. Experience has shown that during the interview, notes should be taken on what the people are saying (being careful, of course, that the note taking does not distract from the face-to-face interaction) to be faithful to the spirit of what is being said and, also, obtain more data –not planned *a priori*– to use to delve into the relationship.

The fact that a good interview is related to notetaking on data and information during the course of the interview itself has led some authors to adopt principles that take the importance of this act into consideration. Spradley (1999), for example, has pointed out two fundamental principles:

- 'language-identification principle', according to which the language used in each field note entry must be identified parallel to the identification of the person speaking. The interview would reflect the same differences in the use of language as in a real situation.

- 'verbatim principle', wherein what the interviewees say must be recorded literally, instead of paraphrasing it according to external criteria.

With respect to recording. While these two basic principles that must be borne in mind when taking notes are very important, equally important is the idea of using, or not, equipment, especially tape recording equipment to record (video is usually used, also, with an eye towards its publication). The advantages and disadvantages of using this equipment have been discussed (Quesada, 2001; Swan, 1991):

+ Advantages?

- Makes it possible to record exact responses, without any type of distortion.
- Makes it possible for the interviewer to pay more attention to the subject and respond to their needs.
- Makes it possible to pay more attention to non-verbal signs, like facial expressions, hand movements, position, etc.
- Favours the subsequent transcription of the tape and makes more complete information available.

+ Disadvantages?

- Possibility of producing inhibition or rejection.
- Possibility that some answers will be distorted.

This is all in respect to notes *during* the interview. What about afterwards? The second period alluded to above comes after the interview has been conducted. At this point, the notes are extended and elaborated on, including more details and information. For this task to be effective, it must be carried out *immediately after* the interview. The interview is revisited, outlines are filled in, suggestions and reflections added, new questions are formulated for later contacts. The personal diary where fears, advances and retreats are confessed is enriched, ideas are recorded or new problems are announced, etc. The casuistry can be long and it is not possible for us to include everything. It is necessary to explore the final phase of the process: *the analysis of the information obtained* which is, in the final analysis, what will bring us to issue solid, weighty judgements about the design/planning, progress and results of an IP.

3. HOW TO USE THE INFORMATION/DATA OBTAINED FROM PARTICIPANTS IN INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMMES

3.1. Using codes

As the title of this section indicates, the question before us here, after everything discussed above, is how to **begin the data analysis** to extract meaningful categories (Ezpeleta, 2006). One possible first methodological strategy is that of content analysis of the information produced by the different participants in the IPs. What does this task involve? After transcribing the interviews and reading them, *coding begins*.

“Coding is systematically transforming pure data and gathering it into units that make a precise description of the important characteristics of the contents possible. In this respect, one of the first tasks in analysing interviews is that of coding them in order to create categories for analysis” (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 52).

Coding, then, basically consists of assigning a symbol or abbreviation to the different fragments of the notes or transcriptions that we are working with. Our own methodologists, cited above, explain the three types of codes (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 55-56; González, 1994: 27-28):

A. *Descriptive codes*. These are used to describe the characteristics of the contents of the information that we want to code. Example: if an interview subject refers to 'the reasons' that they became involved in an IP in a fragment of the transcription of an interview, we can use a code like REAS to indicate that this is the basic and central content of this fragment. Noted in the margins of the transcription (like when we read a book and make notes on the ideas that seem most important in the margins), we can end up with a 'topical index' of what each person discussed in the interview. The analysis is highly inductive. These codes and the following form the **first level of coding.**

B. *Interpretative codes*. These do not only describe what is in a text, but also interpret it. Following the earlier example: if the subject that participated in an IP and its different activities describes his or her reasons for becoming involved, we can refer to the reasons as **official/institutional in nature** and, at another point in the interview, show the **personal or private reasons** that led that the subject to become involved in intergenerational work. The coder/evaluator could use the codes, **REAS-OF** for the first case and **REAS-PRIV** for the second.

C. *Inferential codes*. These are usually done after the earlier codes, when the analysis has advanced, in a **second coding level**. Here, a pattern, theme or an emerging explanatory connection in the transcription is identified. This involves grouping the different codes from level one into a smaller number of themes or a construct that subsumes the earlier codes. This, then, reduces the large number of data to a few analytical units. In this way, turning to examples, inferential codes can lead us to an explanation like the following: 'one important ingredient in the success of an IP seems to be the role played by the older people in it'.

3.2. The task of coding data

For this task, Bogdan and Biklen (1992: 157ff.) proposed a list of families of codes that can be used as a source of suggestions when it comes time to code the interviews.

Some of these families of codes are very interesting in the context of intergenerational practice:

a) **Framework/context codes**, which include the data referring to the framework susceptible to evaluation and study, subjects, declarations that were made to describe this context/framework, etc. For example, if we have the information which discusses the characteristics of the neighbourhood where the centre that hosts different intergenerational activities is located, this information can be coded, using the category 'setting characteristics' or 'environment features' as a reference point.

b) **Codes to define the situation**. This category includes codes that are used for the data that reflect how the people describe their environment, what view they have of the world and how they see themselves with respect to the activities that they do. For example, when an older person speaks of how s/he sees his or her participation in a specific activity (storytelling in an IP, for example), this information can be coded in this category, creating a code like the following: 'personal view of my participation in the IP'.

c) **Codes for the subjects' perspectives:** coding information relating to people's perspectives towards rules, shared norms, general points of view, etc. For example, a code like 'prevent conflicts between older people and administrators' of the IP could belong to this family of codes.

d) **Process codes**, through which data referring to sequences of events, changes in time, phases of an activity, chronology, etc., are coded. One example: 'the process of creating and planning an IP in this centre'.

e) **Activity codes**. This includes any codes created to report specific activities that occur within a programme. For example: 'outings with children to residential home for the elderly'.

f) **Event codes**. This family of codes covers what can be referred to as types of conduct that do not occur often. For example, the arrival of the Public State Employment Service Director to learn about the IP and its progress, or the local Minister for Social Policy (who is in charge of several residential homes as well as some centres for abused children) and could be coded as 'Director visit' or 'Minister visit' and others such as 'training course for older people', 'visit from children', etc.

g) **Strategy codes**. These are created to include information referring to forms of achieving things, modes of behaviour (tactics, techniques, etc.). The 'organisation' code can serve to explain or describe the control and discipline demanded and used during the development of the IP.

h) **Social structure and relationship codes**. Coding information relating to regular patterns of conduct (formal or informal) between people. Example: 'relationships between elderly-young', 'relationships between the Coordinator-Elderly-Young' would form part of this category.

i) **Method codes**. This category includes those codes aimed at explaining the information relating to procedures, dilemmas, problems, etc. that appear in the IP.

In an attempt to summarise all the information on this topic in one table, we provide a synthesis of the questions that have been emphasised in what we call the '**8 commandments of coding'**:

1. **We can code using a pre-established list, creating our own *ad hoc* codes or using a list-guide of codes that can suggest ways to work.**
2. **In the same way that we create codes, *we can change them*, expand them, create subcategories, etc., according to the information that we want to code.**
3. ***Codes should be clearly defined*, so that they can be applied consistently over time.**
4. **Hence, it is critical that once a code is established, we write down what it includes or *what type of information we have included* in it.**
5. ***Each code has a name*, which reflects the contents clearly. ELD for elderly and not ADULTS or OLDER PERSON, etc. These may create confusion.**
6. **It is essential to take notes on any *reflections that may emerge* during the interview, its transcription, its coding, etc., because they add meaning and clarity to the information. Something that the interviewee has suggested, a connection with another idea relating to their expression and other reflections of that nature.**
7. ***Additional comments* are essential when they present ideas and theories about relationships between codes: a paragraph, a phrase, several pages, etc. These must be done at the moment they spring to mind to enrich the evaluation using the subjects involved in the IP.**
8. **It is essential to *file the information* and store the data to have everything at hand when we need it. In this way, it can be reviewed. A notebook is sufficient if there is not much information, but it is most useful to put it into computer *files* (indicating what interview corresponds to what category) in differentiated *folders* (with fragments of information and each one containing material from one category, a family of categories or topic).**

At any rate, the fact is that this entire task presents a very clear goal for qualitative evaluators/interviewers/researchers: all the information must be well organised in such a way that it can be used thoroughly and when necessary.

3.3. The use of matrices in the evaluation of intergenerational programmes

The analysis of the interview as an excellent qualitative technique for evaluating IPs does not end with coding and categorisation. The data categorised up to now must be analysed.

"The data categorised up to now must be analysed, exploring not only each internal category, but also the connection between categories. This is the time when we look for patterns of relations, check those emerging patterns in the light of the information obtained and establish relationships between the different parts of the data and the dimensions of the analysis as they emerge" (González, 1998: 23-24).

This is a new phase of the evaluation of IPs. It involves continuing to go deeper into the information/data obtained to issue solid and thorough judgements about it. But this task is not easy; it requires work and time, which may be the reason –or one of them– that qualitative evaluation is not used as often as it should be. Below is a discussion of a deeper level of the analysis procedure: the creation of a matrix. It is not the only one, since as the literature shows, there are many matrices available with very different features, but this one is notable for its simplicity and its potential for providing organised information.

3.3.1. How to create matrices

We believe that our call for the appropriateness of having procedures for systematising, ordering, exploring and relating information at hand has been heard clearly. To that end, we advise using tables and matrices, which facilitate the analysis to the extent that it makes it possible for us to present the information in a condensed and focused way. Miles and Huberman (1994) have worked with this question extensively. What they, specifically, call 'matrices' is a procedure that, in our opinion, offers numerous possibilities when analysing interviews.

A matrix is a double entry table which synthesises and condenses data on subjects, people, places, times, etc. using several rows and columns. A simple example of a matrix that presents information on general opinions on the intergenerational programmes entitled, *'Intergenerational Relations in the Act: the elderly in schools'* appears below.

Subjects	Most notable features	Difficulties in the organisation of IP activities	Changes achieved in the 'intergenerational classroom'	Possibilities of running the complete programme for a few years
Professionals: teachers, social workers, psychologists…				
1				
2				
...				
N				
Directors, administrators...				
1				
2				
...				
N				
Older people				
1				
2				
…				
N				
Etc…				

This matrix, for example, gathers data about an event (in the form of quotations, summaries, etc.), thus condensing a lot of information in a relatively simple and easy-to-handle format, from which we can establish comparisons between the aspects of the event, trying to extract conclusions and write our analysis.

This means that looking at the matrix as a whole, we can detect where the contrasts, connections, similarities, etc. are. If we observe row by row, we can analyse, in our example, the opinion of each subject about the Intergenerational Programme, while if we pay attention to the columns, we can learn about the features of the IP that are considered most notable by all the subjects, what was achieved in the intergenerational classroom and to what extent they believe that the project can be run for some years. We could also compare some subjects with others (rows with rows) and some columns with others and see the relationships or contrasts between them or compare this matrix with another similar one created at a different time or place.

The possibilities for exploring a matrix, then, are many, as are the number of matrices that can be created. There are, however, some aspects to bear in mind in the creation of matrices (Miles and Huberman, 1994; pp.221 and ff.):

- we must know initially if our desire is to create a descriptive matrix, which lets us 'see what there is' or an explanatory one that makes it possible to 'extract some conclusions' regarding why things are as they are. In the latter case, the way that the data is ordered is more important.

- the matrix can refer to a single case (individual, centre) or to several; this aspect must be anticipated when arranging the rows and/or columns.

- the data in the rows or columns can be ordered according to some criterion (place, role, time, etc.), as we have shown.

- if the matrix is ordered following a time criterion, we can analyse flows, sequences and even cycles of events.

- the matrix can have very different types of rows and columns according to what our focus of attention is (individuals, roles, contexts, acts, strategies, perspectives, etc.), which can be subdivided, if necessary (for example, we can subdivide what roles, or what strategies or what contexts, etc. are included in the matrix).

- the matrix usually has two dimensions, although its rows and/or columns can also be subdivided to create three or four dimensions.

- a decision must be made about what type of data we are going to enter in the matrix: quotations, summaries, our explanations, evaluations or judgments, or a combination thereof.

Once the important decisions have been taken, to construct the final matrix, the *following suggestions can* serve as a guide:

- to use, if necessary, a large file. This does not mean including all of the variables in one matrix, only five or six.

- to design a preliminary format and enter the data, knowing that this format may not necessarily be the final one.

- to establish clearly what 'rules of decision-making' we are following when we enter some data but not others.

- to ask for assistance from a colleague who suggests alternatives or thoughts about the suppositions on which we are building our matrix.

- if for some reason we do not have some data or they are ambiguous, to indicate this expressly in the matrix.

The analysis of a matrix that is already created begins with an exploration of the columns and rows several times, so that our first impressions can be verified. The conclusions that we are forming should be written down, since the process demands classifying them, formulating them appropriately and, finally, making them available for analysis. When we write, we must illustrate what we are saying with specific examples drawn from our notes or transcriptions, as well as decode the conceptual meaning of these conclusions.

4. FINAL THOUGHTS

Intergenerational programmes are continuing to grow, beyond the attention that a good number of them have received. In these times, when we are obsessed with controlling and ensuring the success of what we embark upon (with more or less effort and cost), there is a demand for programmes and projects to be evaluated in order to show the relevance of the undertaking (House, 1994). Mirian Bernard, who was in charge of evaluating a number of innovative projects such as the 'Elderly support group' and the 'Platform for medical assistance in aging projects', recognised the path that still remains to be covered before we have a broad and comprehensive idea of what intergenerational means and the potential that this word holds (Bernard and Ellis, 2004). Clearly, this is not being done well. Governments do not pay enough attention to IPs, nor do institutions of recognised prestige and significance, except for some which are recognised as being alone in this

challenge to establish, reconstruct and foster ties between the ages to promote or ensure the social fabric.

However, what is available, at least on paper, is relevant in educational, sociological, cultural and political –i.e., human– terms. All around the world, countries with different regimes, led by born leaders or professionalised bureaucrats, voluntarily, in elderly associations or simply with groups of people interested in intergenerational relationships, promote, administrate and coordinate programmes and projects of a social nature whose contents, development and achievements we scarcely know about. Beyond their titles and, perhaps, some Internet synthesis or specific publication, these programmes rarely cross the limits and borders of the academic space and the administrative-local sphere. There are programmes whose titles are really suggestive and hopeful, such as: 'Intergenerational Solidarity. Toward a Better World' (Terence Seedsman, in Australia), 'Grandparents - an intergenerational resource for families' (Generations United), 'A Matter of Age: Law and Relationships Between Generations' (Lorraine Pelot et. al. in Canada), 'Regaining intergenerational obligations in the modernisation of Asia' (Leng Leng Thang, Singapore), 'Bridging the Gap' (Nora Zylstra-Savage, Ontario), and 'Beyond programs: Moving towards age-integrated communities' (Nancy Henkin, USA). All of these are committed –and this is formulated in their objectives– to starting up intergenerational strategies (workshops, classes, trips, etc.) that contribute, to a greater or lesser extent, to building integrated, comprehensive communities where different age groups have the chance to meet and interrelate. We need Intergenerational Programmes and we need to evaluate their effects, more in order to visualise their potential than to control the investments that accompany them. The interview, along with other powerful instruments to explore what human beings think, is presented here as an excellent instrument associated with evaluation that makes it possible for us to know more about Intergenerational Programmes and their effects.

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Chapter 7

EVALUATING INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMMES TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY [1]

Matthew S. Kaplan, Ph.D.
The Pennsylvania State University

[1] I would like to acknowledge and thank Elizabeth Larkin at the University of South Florida for her thorough review and insightful comments on an earlier draft of this chapter.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the literature on intergenerational programs, the rationale used to justify these initiatives has traditionally been derived from human development theory. Emphasis is placed on how children, teens and young adults need nurturance, positive role models, a secure value system, recognition of their worth, and a sense of their place in history. Likewise, it is suggested that older adults need opportunities to nurture others, have a sense of purpose, and recognize their own self-worth. Most studies of intergenerational programs tend to focus on the interaction itself and on the psychosocial and educational benefits afforded the older and younger participants ([1]). This chapter adds to that foundation by offering suggestions for how to evaluate the effects of intergenerational programming on communities as a whole.

Certainly, intergenerational programs do fulfill many needs for both age groups, yet, the significance of intergenerational programming often goes beyond benefits to the participants themselves. Intergenerational programs are increasingly bringing community residents together to discuss, evaluate, envision, plan, and improve their shared existence. For instance, participants have worked together to document and preserve local history (Generations United, 1994), influence the legislative process (Friedman, 1999; Ingman, Benjamin, &Lusky, 1998/99), provide a service to others in need (Hammack, 1993), and infuse multi-generational perspectives into plans for local community development (Kaplan, 1997).

Whether it is through raising awareness of local assets and resources across age groups, joint service to others, activism around an issue of common concern, or providing input into community planning, some intergenerational approaches have been found to contribute to desirable changes in the community, such as increased safety, healthier environments, and improved recreational facilities (Generations United, 2002). In addition to benefiting the community at-large, such initiatives benefit participants by teaching youth and seniors –both frequently disempowered groups– that they have something to give to society. Participants feel valued, empowered, and socially engaged (Kaplan, 1997; Hatton-Yeo & Watkins, 2004). This kind of reciprocity needs to be better understood.

There are many dimensions of program outcomes to consider, including participants' conceptions of community and their role in it. Looking at outcomes for the community as a whole adds to the complexity of program evaluation and the need to be creative in what we call "data." Interviews, questionnaires, and observation are the primary methods used by intergenerational researchers, and other methods can be added to the mix to enrich documentation of how communities change through intergenerational practice. Accordingly, this chapter will explore some other evaluation strategies such as collecting "mental map" data from participants, conducting a "stakeholder analysis" of the community, "digital storytelling," and "intergenerational options mapping." By drawing attention to such diverse evaluation approaches, the intent is to provide intergenerational specialists with more tools at their disposal for learning about the civic engagement and community-building implications of intergenerational work. Practitioners can choose from a variety of methods to flesh out different dimensions of community life, and then "triangulate", or cross-check how each one contributes to a reliable and comprehensive picture of the changes taking place. The process of triangulation will be discussed further in the section on employing diverse data collection methods.

[1] Research into intergenerational programs has illustrated how the participants make meaningful contributions to each other's lives. In schools, for example, senior adults have been found to contribute to student learning in virtually any curriculum subject and academic skill. They influence student learning in math, English language arts, fine arts, science, physical education, and social studies (Friedman, 1999; Kaplan, 2002). Other ways in which children and youth benefit from intergenerational programs include: increased school attendance (Brabazon, 1999), improved social skills (Rossberg-Gempton, von Dickinson, & Poole, 1999), enhanced awareness of aging issues (Davis & Westbrook, 1981), and improved attitudes toward aging (Aday et al., 1996; Corbin, Kagan, & Metal-Corbin, 1987). Some ways in which older adults benefit from their involvement in intergenerational programs include: increased memory function (Newman, Karip, & Faux 1995), enhanced physical mobility (Fried et al. 2000), and an increased sense of social connectedness (Freedman, 1999; Short-DeGraff & Diamond 1996).

2. ASSESSING CHANGE IN INDIVIDUALS

Programs that provide multi-generational groups of participants with intensive community assessment, planning, and action experiences are bound to influence what program participants know, and how they feel, about their community.

In terms of evaluation, a big question that comes up right away is *What kind of program outcomes do we want to measure?* Some variables related to participants' attitudes toward their community include:

- A sense of "belonging" to the community.
- A sense that others value their views and ability to contribute to the community.
- How they feel about people of other generations, their community views and their concerns (This includes the degree to which participants recognize that residents of different generations have overlapping quality of life concerns).
- Their attitudes toward civic engagement (including their own responsibilities).
- A sense of community pride and identity.

If the desired outcome is an increase in participants' knowledge about the community, then it is relevant to ascertain what they learn related to topics such as local history, social issues, demographic composition, local geography, community organizations and services, and decision-making processes that determine what will be built or changed in the community. In many cases, what is learned about the community can be measured by constructing questionnaires or conducting interviews with carefully focused questions. However, there are some areas of knowledge that require different types of methods. For example, to gain a sense of the program impact on participants' geo-spatial awareness of the community, a "mental mapping" technique, such as the one described below, can be useful.

2.1. Using "mental maps" to assess knowledge of the local community

We all form impressions and images of our physical surroundings, including our homes, the local supermarket, our community, and even places to which we have never been. These impressions are what geographers call our "mental maps." The idea of trying to use mental maps to assess how people perceive and organize spatial information was first developed by Kevin Lynch in his landmark book, *Image of the City* (Lynch, 1960). Lynch was primarily concerned with how the study of mental maps could provide insight into characteristics of the man-made environment such as its "legibility," that is, the ease with which people can understand the layout of a place. He was also concerned with how we locate ourselves within the city and how we find our way around.

Insofar as mental maps reflect an individual's familiarity with a local area, a comparison of pre- and post-program maps can provide insight into how program experiences change the participants' knowledge of their local community. The typical mental mapping project requires the subjects to color or draw maps on paper using pencils. Alternate methods for investigating the mental maps of individuals involve having them state the directions to a landmark or other location, or listing as many places as possible in a short period of time. Clearly, these tasks test memory as well as knowledge, and thus they may not be appropriate for some members of the community who might feel stressed if they cannot recall the information.

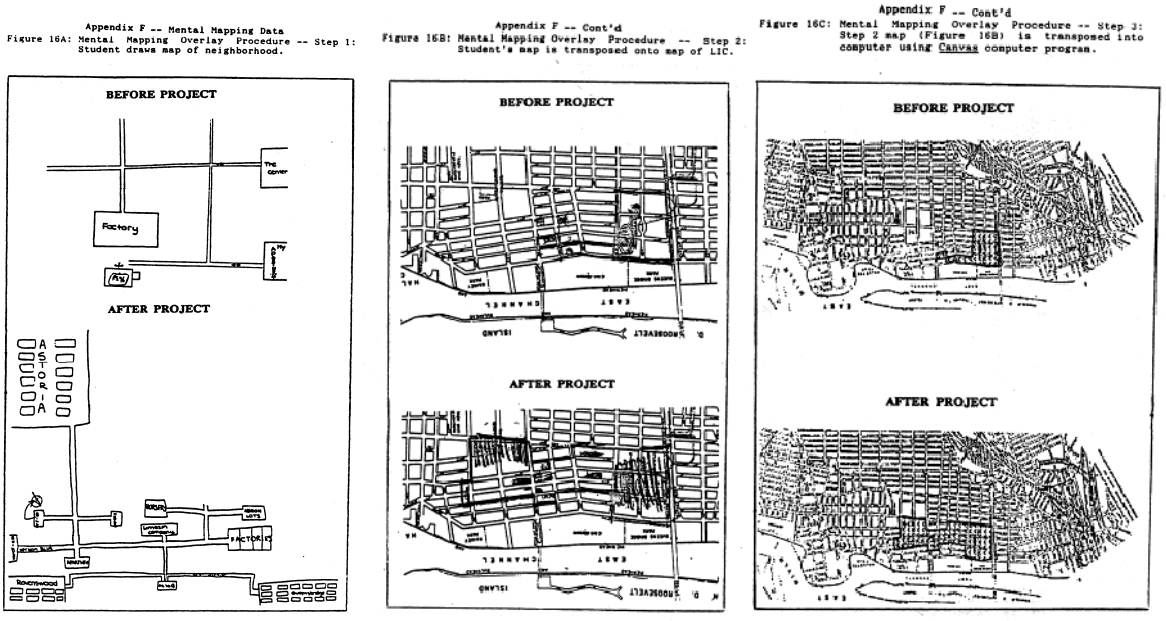
A mental mapping procedure was used as part of the evaluation of Neighborhoods-2000, an intergenerational community studies project piloted in Long Island City, in New York (Kaplan, 1991). At the beginning and the end of the program, sixth grade students were asked to map out and label "as much of their neighborhoods, including the school and their homes, as possible" (p. 83), using an 11 inch by 17 inch sheet of paper. Another set of maps was collected by students from another class at the end of the school year, as a "developmental check," for comparison with the post-project maps drawn by youth participating in the program ([2]). All maps were compared with NYC Department of City Planning land use and zoning maps to determine the students' geographical awareness, the maps' geographical accuracy, and the number and type of labeled features in the maps. To determine the physical boundaries of the students' knowledge of their communities, or the range covered in their maps, lines were drawn around the clusters of the labeled elements in each map. Bounded sections were not connected if separated by a distance of three or more blocks. *Canvas*, a computer software package, was used to:

- develop a computer record of each student's mental map;
- create mapping overlay figures representing aggregate data with various sample configurations; and
- when used in conjunction with other software, to determine the area within the boundaries of the students' maps and test for statistical significance when comparing the three mapping groups.

The three images in Figure 1, below, represent a student's hand drawn map of the local community (left), transposition of the student's map onto a base map of the community (center), and transposition of this map into a computer program for analyzing aggregate spatial data (right).

FIGURE 1

Pre- and Post- Project Visual representations of Mental Mapping Data for One Student



[2] Several maps were disregarded because they were either too incomplete or inappropriately filled out to allow for pre-project/post-project/"developmental check" group comparisons. This left a total of 75 maps: 25 pre-project maps, 25 post-project maps, and 25 "developmental check" group maps.

A three-point scale was developed to rate the geographical accuracy of the students' maps ([3]):

a) "Disorganized": reversal of spatial relationships, extreme display of confusion, and/or disorientation for at least one third of the map.

b) "Inaccurate": two to four elements out of place; minor disorientation.

c) "Accurate": generally accurate sense of orientation; no more than one element off when over ten elements were identified.

To summarize the results of findings from the mapping data, it was found that the project experience had a substantial impact on students' awareness of neighborhood geography. In comparison to their pre-project maps, students' post-project maps of their home communities included significantly larger areas and incorporated a larger number of accurately labeled features (Kaplan, 1991).

At the root of the process described above, participants are provided with simple instructions, before and after their projects, to draw their community with as much detail as possible. As an alternative to statistical analysis, an informal method of visual comparison between pre- and post- project maps can be done to look for increased accuracy and detail.

2.2. Using "content analysis" to assess participants' values and visions for community living

Through "content analysis," a systematic process for organizing and analyzing qualitative data, the evaluator can gain insight into how a multi-generational group of program participants think and feel about their community. The content from discussions, presentations, performances, and displays that focus on community issues and plans can all be analyzed to show common themes (Haggarty, 1996).

The content analysis process first involves creating a "data set." This might consist of the text from written documents, transcription of key discussions about the community, and select aspects or characteristics of displays, performances, and events. The process then involves:

- reviewing (looking or listening to) all content in the data set to look for themes.

- identifying coding categories to sort the data from the various sources (e.g., concerns related to limited recreational opportunities, positive views about the local school system, references to increased water pollution).

- sorting the data from all sources into the coding categories.

- looking for emerging trends or patterns in the responses.

To address the issue of reliability, it is customary to have one or more coders (generally individuals with an academic background) to make independent coding decisions for a randomly selected portion of the text. When they agree, the interpretations have reliability.

[3] Insofar as these categories represent values on a continuum of accuracy, with "1" being the least accurate and "3" being the most accurate, to compare accuracy levels of the different sets of maps, an ANOVA statistic was used to analyze the data.

Content analysis is a “grounded process” and herein lies one of the strengths of this evaluation strategy. The following is an example of how this process can generate new and useful insights related to program design. A study was conducted of two “Futures Festival” special events. They were based on an intergenerational program model developed at the Center for Human Environments at the CUNY Graduate Center in which many community groups and individuals come together to develop, display, and discuss exhibits and performances that illustrate their visions for the community (Kaplan, Higdon, Crago, & Robbins, 2004). A content analysis of key characteristics of the various displays, as well as of the transcripts of participants’ discussions about the displays, indicated that participants spent as much time focusing on the history of the community as on its future. Participants chose to set up activities and exhibits to examine community life as it was in the past and as it looked in the present, as well as how it could be in the future. For example, in one community, participants organized a “Test Your Knowledge” trivia game, and an interactive display of historical photos, as part of their effort to highlight local assets and cultural heritage. The senior adults were particularly active in sharing stories and information, and this provided a valuable historical perspective (a living history) which helped others to frame discussions about the future of the community.

Such a finding would not have been possible if the research team had looked at the data with a prescribed set of expected outcomes. The point here is that the evaluator needs to spend a lot of time looking (and “puzzling”) over the data rather than being quick to identify patterns in the data. Quickly formulated coding categories will likely remove “outlying” data, or unanticipated subtleties, from consideration in the analysis. This might bias the results to provide a reaffirmation of previous conceptions about the phenomenon of interest, so it is essential to take the time to look for disconfirming evidence.

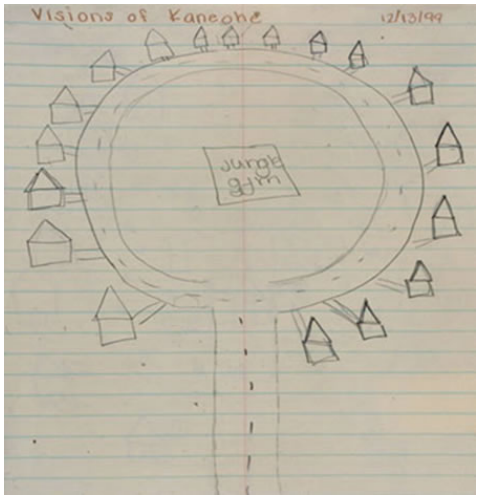
That said, depending on program objectives, there are some specific themes that the evaluator should be on the look out for in the writings, displays, drawn images, and conversations of program participants. For instance, if a program has the goal of instilling in participants a sense of intergenerational camaraderie and shared citizenship, it behooves the evaluation team to be prepared to establish coding categories to “capture” responses that provide an indication of how aware participants are of the needs and interests of other age groups. The following is an example of how such a slant for examining data can bear fruit.

Fifth graders who participated in an intergenerational local studies program were asked to draw sketches of their “ideal community” before and after the 6-month long project (Kaplan, 1997). A content analysis of the pre- to post-project changes in participants’ drawings indicated an increased interest in accommodating the needs of community residents of other age groups. In one student’s drawings, as illustrated in Figure 2 below, the pre-project conception of the ideal community was one of everyone living around a playground that consisted only of his favorite play equipment, a jungle gym construction. In his post-project depiction of the ideal community construction, although the housing units still surround a community park, the park is designed for a broader segment of the community. The park then included equipment and resources to accommodate usage by multi-age, multi-interest, and multi-ability populations.

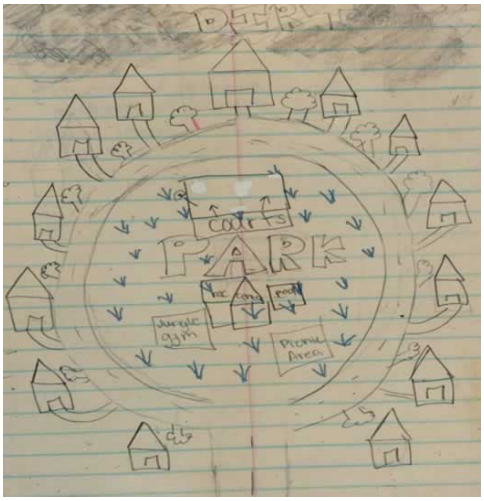
FIGURE 2

Pre- and Post-Project Sketches of the “Ideal Community.”

Pre-Project drawing



Post-Project drawing



There are various other examples of studies which used content analysis to illustrate how programs shape participants’ values and visions for community living. For example, in Shih Tsen (Nike) Liu’s dissertation research (Liu, 2004), she analyzed students’ daily journal entries. Her findings reinforced conclusions about how youth who participated in an intergenerational outdoor education program were more likely to develop heightened values of environmental stewardship.

2.3. Assessing program impact on attitudes and actions related to community involvement

For most intergenerational programs that aim to improve the community in some way, a concurrent goal is to increase participants’ involvement in community affairs. There are various dimensions of community involvement to consider. The evaluation team can construct a simple checklist of *community involvement behaviors* that are relevant to the program and its objectives, and ask participants to fill it out before and after a period of program participation. Here are some sample items that might be included in such a checklist:

- Collecting information on community issues (includes attending meetings and reading position papers and news articles).
- Researching the views and positions taken by elected representatives on community issues.
- Discussing community issues with family or friends.
- Signing petitions on a particular social or community development issue.
- Distributing information on community issues to others.
- Volunteering for groups or organizations that work to improve the community.

- Encouraging friends to join or volunteer for community groups.
- Donating money to community organizations or events.
- Writing letters to newspapers to articulate personal/group positions on community issues.
- Participating in protests regarding a particular social or community development issue.
- Taking part in events that aim to build awareness and collective action regarding a particular community issue.
- Giving lectures or talks on community issues.

To assess how a program changes participants' attitudes toward community involvement, an evaluator can use the Activism Orientation Scale (AOS) that is available from the University of Notre Dame Department of Psychology Social Cognition Lab (Corning & Myers, 2002). This measure aims to assess an individual's propensity to engage in social action. The AOS begins with the question stem, "How likely is it that you will engage in this activity in the future?," followed by 35 items such as, "display a poster or bumper sticker with a political message" and "engage in an illegal act as part of a political protest." Respondents indicate their likelihood for each behavior using a scale with points from 0 (extremely unlikely), to 1 (unlikely), 2 (likely), or 3 (extremely likely). The formatted scale and an accompanying letter to users are available online as pdf files (See http://www.nd.edu/~acorning/AOSFormattedforUse.pdf and http://www.nd.edu/~acorning/AOSLettertoUsers.pdf, respectively).

In assessing participants' anticipated and actual involvement in the community, a distinction should be made between the community actions taken by individuals (on their own behalf) and "collective action." Wright, Taylor & Moghaddam (1990) define collective action as any action aimed at enhancing group status rather than individual status. This distinction is likely to be particularly important for programs that aim to promote a greater sense of shared citizenship and unity in the community. In a similar vein, specific interview items might be developed to determine the extent to which participants recognize possibilities for intergenerational cooperation in the community.

2.4. Assessing how well programs help to build participants' skills

To be an effective agent in advocating for and facilitating community change, a person needs skills to generate desired change –change within themselves, change in their organizations, and change in their communities. Accordingly, another important dimension of program evaluation is the assessment of skill development throughout the change process. Of particular relevance to intergenerational programs focused on studying community improvement are questions about participants' skills in the following areas: program planning, group leadership/facilitation, coalition-building, problems solving, and conflict resolution.

It is possible to chart the development of these or other skill sets over a period of time using a process of self-reflection and journaling to record how participants' thinking and actions evolve over time. Another approach involves scheduling skill-building workshops at regular intervals to assist participants in refining and assessing their skills for problem-solving and planning for change. Both of these approaches require individual commitment to invest personally in seeking to improve the community.

3. ASSESSING CHANGE IN THE COMMUNITY

3.1. Impact on community conditions

Intergenerational programs with a community focus try to address issues that local residents care about most, whether tied to concerns about safety, the local economy, recreational opportunities, the natural environment, the aesthetics of the community, or racial and ethnic relations. The focus is not only on how people feel about these aspects of the community, but also on changing the conditions themselves. In this context, intergenerational programs serve as distinct strategies for civic engagement to enact change at the community level. Accordingly, evaluation efforts need to assess many different variables and levels of community activity, which is a very complex undertaking.

The first thing that is necessary for assessing outcomes of community change efforts is to have a clear set of specific and measurable objectives. Then, evaluators must decide on what indicators can be used to measure progress toward those objectives. An interest in making the community safer might translate into the specific objective of reducing vandalism to private property, and this can be measured by accessing police crime records.

When objectives are "murky," it is hard, if at all possible, to determine whether the objectives have been met. For example, what does it mean to "revitalize" a community, to improve the "quality of life" for residents in the community, or to "beautify" the environment? These terms allude to general goals, and they need to be translated into specific objectives before evaluators can begin laying out indicators and measures to assess program efficacy.

Community level outcomes include the degree to which programs help meet real community needs such as increased safety, improved transportation, and the protection of natural resources such as lakes and streams. It is also relevant to examine changes in community decision-making processes, including how local organizations function to provide residents with opportunities to influence decisions about what is funded and what is built in the local community.

The following list (from Kaplan, Liu, & Steinig, 2005) highlights some potential outcomes of intergenerational programs that focus on protecting or raising awareness about the natural environment.

- Increased recycling.
- Implementation of best environmental management practices along waterways to improve water quality.
- Remediation of indoor air quality hazards in public and private buildings.
- Protection and remediation of stream corridors and wildlife habitat.
- Reduced use of pesticides and fertilizers (adoption of organic gardening principles).
- Protection of endangered and native species.
- Conservation and management of a community's cultural and historic resources.
- Trees planted.

- Removal of litter.
- Restoration of a walking trail.
- Population growth of endangered butterflies.
- Removal of invasive species.

3.2. Impact on community capacity for change

In the sense that intergenerational work can be viewed as a dynamic process of program development that moves toward deeper, more sustainable interpersonal relationships and inter-organizational partnerships aimed at addressing community priorities (Henkin & Kingson, 1998-1999), it is also relevant to consider how programs contribute to the "capacity" of a local community to initiate a basic plan for change.

Variables related to building such community capacity include:

- the number of community institutions that are involved in the community improvement enterprise (intergenerational collaborative).
- the capacity and ability of community leaders to recruit and motivate people to take part in civic activities and to engage in critical dialogue about community issues.
- the extent to which the organizations represent a diversified audience (in terms of cultural and ethnic background, age, etc.).
- the extent to which partnering/collaborating organizations have complementary community improvement goals, objectives, interests and beliefs.
- the extent to which partnering/collaborating organizations build consensus for community action.
- the extent to which a commitment to collaborative action is sustainable over time.

A technique called "stakeholder analysis," described below, can serve as a valuable tool for assessing many of these aspects of how local organizations function and contribute to social cohesion. It is also a strategy for identifying issues of local concern to create an agenda for change.

3.2.1. Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholders are the people, groups and institutions in a community that have a genuine interest in the development of a project or program. A stakeholder analysis identifies the project's key stakeholders, assesses their interests, and evaluates how their interests affect the project's chances of success (Allen & Kilvington, 2001).

The stakeholder analysis process has three main steps:

1. identify major stakeholder groups.

2. determine interests, importance and influence, and

3. establish strategies for involvement.

At all stages, the project team attempts to capture a wide range of opinions from the local community. The project team uses a key informant approach to identify major stakeholders throughout the community (including representatives of youth organizations, elderly groups, ethnic groups, civic organizations, schools, social service agencies, business groups, and local government officials). In the process described in Kaplan et al. (2004), key public and non-profit agency participants (the informants) were interviewed using a semi-structured protocol to probe their concerns, hopes and ideas in regard to intergenerational communication and community concerns. As part of the interview, participants were asked to identify up to five other members of the community who might have an interest in an intergenerational program. This "snowball" sampling technique allowed the project team to quickly build a sample of community contacts and identify an initial set of key stakeholders in the project.

Interviews with local stakeholders provide a sampling of community voices expressing interests and concerns that indicate problems facing the community, and moreover, provide a realistic sense of the issues that intervention strategies should address. The interview can be designed to tap into variables such as community development priorities, perceptions about the concerns of other local residents in the community, and the different views about the value of working with age-diverse groups and promoting intergenerational dialogue.

The data collected from a stakeholder analysis process can be used as a starting point -a baseline for understanding how local residents might begin to tailor the overall organizing effort to bring local organizations together and develop their common agenda. A pre-/post-program comparison of stakeholder data would provide a sense of change in the number of stakeholders engaged in critical dialogue about community issues, and the degree to which they are working collaboratively to improve community conditions.

4. A PARTICIPATORY ORIENTATION FOR EVALUATION

One general strategy for increasing the sense of ownership for the evaluation results is to get team members more involved in the evaluation process, from formulating questions to collecting, interpreting and presenting the data. If they participate in the process, they can accept the results, even if there are some uncomfortable conclusions. A high level of participant involvement in the evaluation process is conducive to what Hatton-Yeo & Watkins (2004) refer to as "reflective practice." Feedback that provides practitioners with timely information about what is and what is not working gives them a chance to reflect upon their role in how the project is functioning, including how their own values and behaviors are influencing the outcomes, and to take corrective action.

Participants can be involved in, and control, the evaluation process to different degrees. A low level of involvement might include attending a meeting in which the evaluation team *informs* the project participants about the evaluation effort and what information is needed from them. A moderate level of involvement might entail giving program participants a chance to comment on things such as the research questions that are to be asked and the way in which data is collected, analyzed and interpreted, although this input is not necessarily taken into account by evaluators. On the intensive side of this continuum is a method called "Participatory Action Research" (PAR), where the

participants help to conceptualize and drive the evaluation effort, including how it is planned, implemented, and applied. PAR is described in more detail below.

Stoecker (2005) notes that participatory approaches to research "are called a variety of different things in different places: action research, participatory research, participatory action research, collaborative research, community-based research, and popular education" (p. 30). Although there are some important differences among these approaches, they have in common an emphasis on being practical (for those engaged in the community work), they employ diverse methods, and they emphasize collaboration. To provide more detail about some of the commonalities of participatory evaluation methods, Stoecker lists Patton's (1997) principles for participatory evaluation practice (pp. 185-186):

1. Involving participants at every stage of the research process.
2. Making sure they own the evaluation.
3. Focusing the process on the outcomes they think are important.
4. Facilitating participants to work collectively.
5. Organizing the evaluation to be understandable and meaningful to all.
6. Using the evaluation to support participants' accountability to themselves and their community first, and outsiders second if at all.
7. Developing the evaluator role as a facilitator, collaborator, and learning resource.
8. Developing participants' roles as decision makers and evaluators.
9. Recognizing and valuing participants' expertise and helping them to do the same.
10. Minimizing status differences between the evaluation facilitator and participants.

4.1. Participatory Action Research

The Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach diverges from the traditional research paradigm in which outside "experts" control the process of investigation and knowledge generation (Selener, 1992). In PAR, program evaluation is seen as a collaborative effort involving community residents and participating organizations. Any number of techniques can be used in participatory research including interviews, observations during on-site tours, monitoring environmental conditions, documenting oral histories, and recording planning sessions (Chambers, 1994). Beyond helping participants to gain a greater understanding of how community conditions and decision-making structures affect their day-to-day lives, PAR has an action orientation. Participatory action research is directed at both helping participants to understand community conditions and to influence them (purposeful action).

Considering that young people and older adults are so often ignored when it comes to making decisions about their communities, the empowerment and relationship-building characteristics of PAR make it a compelling strategy. However, PAR is not without its challenges. It involves a major commitment on the part of the participants, many of whom may not be interested in taking a central role in framing the inquiry, collecting data, interpreting the data, and working to apply findings in ways that lead to social and community change. Nevertheless, there are some examples in which intergenerational program participants have determined the research and action objectives (e.g., Krasny & Doyle, 2002).

4.2. Emphasis on dialogue and critical reflection

A key methodological feature that distinguishes participatory research from other social research is dialogue. Sohng (1995) provides incisive commentary about this distinction:

Through dialogue, people come together and participate in all crucial aspects of investigation, educational and collective action. It is through talking to one another and doing things together that people get connected, and this connectedness leads to shared meaning.The dialogic approach differs from conventional "interviewing" in several respects. Interviewing presupposes the primacy of the researcher's frame of reference. It offers a one-way flow of information that leaves the researched in the same position after having shared knowledge, ignoring the self-reflective process that the imparting of information involves. The dialogic approach and self reflection require the inevitable engagement of the researcher in the critical process, in the discussion of meanings and perspectives.

Continual and effective communication among participants provides them with a vehicle for discussing options, expressing and negotiating individual perspectives and preferences, and making decisions about what to advocate for in their community visioning statements. Effective communication with local planners and public officials is vital for ensuring that community development is something that is done *with*, rather than *to*, community residents.

5. CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO ASSESSING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

5.1. The need to pay attention to the physical environment

A community assessment includes attending to the environment-behavior interface. Here are some examples of questions that members of the program team might try to address:

- Are the various settings in the community user friendly for all age groups?
- Are they conducive to a narrow or a wide range of intergenerational interactions?
- Are there cues in the environment (e.g., murals, notices, charts of rules and regulations) which suggest certain modes of interactive behavior and discourage others?

To address such questions, it is important to choose evaluation instruments that include some analysis of visual as well as written materials. There are various visual tools (including photographs, charts, maps, tables, and graphs) that groups can use to document their community concerns, rank priorities, and keep track of their community improvement accomplishments. Earlier in this chapter, we noted how content analysis can be used to analyze the program participants' drawings of the "ideal" community, and how a "mental mapping" exercise can be used to assess one dimension of participants' knowledge about their communities. To extend the discussion about how to collect and analyze data with geo-spatial characteristics, it is useful to consider geographic information systems (GIS), a wide array of computer-based applications that map and analyze information relative to geography or location.

5.2. GIS (Geographic Information Systems): A tool for collecting, organizing, and using spatial data

GIS (Geographic Information Systems) resources have been used in various capacities including community development and social services (Kirschenbaum & Russ, 2002). With GIS capability a database could be established to provide detailed information (with spatial parameters) about where community needs are the greatest. Conversely, taking an "asset mapping" approach, a system can be established to inventory community resources such as civic organizations that can be leveraged to assist with community improvement efforts.

An emergent practice in the use of GIS is termed "Participatory GIS" (PGIS). This refers to a merger between participatory learning and action research methods with Geographic Information Technologies and Systems (GIT&S). The goal is to enhance the capacity of underrepresented groups in society to generate, manage, analyze and communicate spatial information (Rambaldi, Kwaku Kyem, Mbile, McCall, & Weiner, 2005). PGIS is geared towards community empowerment through user-friendly and integrated applications of geo-spatial technologies.

An excellent example of how GIS technology can be used as a community planning, organizing, and evaluation tool is the East Somerville Community Mapping Project (Massachusetts, U.S.). Project participants and partners developed an interactive, multimedia, community generated, trilingual website (see: http://www.somervillecdc.org/communitymap/) which included data on the temporal as well as the spatial dimensions of life in the community. The process of creating this on-line map of the East Somerville community involved the following:

1. Collecting Personal Stories: residents participated in a series of workshops to identify places of personal significance in the community. These participants learned how to use digital cameras and mini-disc recorders to collect photographs and audio clips to describe and show the places they considered important.
2. Conducting a Survey: the survey was designed to find out things such as where people spend their free time and where they shop.
3. Observation: project team members walked up and down all the streets of the community to take note of things like the location of mailboxes, public art, and graffiti.
4. Documentation of "A Day In The Life" of the Community: the team documented community use patterns (e.g., number of pedestrians walking by) at 12 different spots, at four different times of the day.

6. EMPLOYING DIVERSE METHODS

From ethnography to narrative analyses, and from participatory action research to textual/ archival studies, there are many methods that can be employed to generate rich, descriptive information about program activities, intergenerational encounters, and the context in which the exchanges occur (Ward, 1997).

Besides using traditional social science research methods such as interviews and questionnaires, there are other creative ways to gain information from participants. For example, evaluators of the Habitat Intergenerational Program (Massachusetts, U.S) ([4]) created *story boards* and *scrapbooks* to illustrate feedback obtained from participants and partnering groups (Kaplan, Liu, & Steinig, 2005).

[4] This organization works to promote awareness and conservation of the natural environment through a range of educational programs and community service projects.

Some other methods include:

- Collecting video footage of various ways in which people use a park. One technique for analyzing the video is "behavior mapping", a systematic way of recording peoples' locations, such as where they sit, or how often certain equipment is used. Two main types of mapping are place-centered mapping and individual-centered mapping.

- Studying participants' journals to see the significance that they attribute to their intergenerational learning experiences. Program staff/facilitators can periodically review the journal accounts and lead focus group discussions about the community based on patterns and themes in the journals.

- Using the semantic differential technique to assess how people feel about certain places in the community or its overall culture, such as whether they see the community as run down or attractive ([5]).

- Using the by-products of human behavior (trace measures) to assess how community residents use a public area, such as looking at the amount of graffiti, litter, and other signs of how well an area is kept.

- Conducting a "design charrette," which is a participatory technique for approaching a design problem focused on a particular facility, community, or city. Through intense and possibly multi-day meetings, it involves consulting with and obtaining feedback from a group of stakeholders. Although the facilitator typically works with municipal officials, developers, professionals and adult residents, the method has been creatively applied as a community participation tool in work with children (Sutton and Kemp, 2002).

Two additional methods are described below.

- **Digital Storytelling**. It is a strategy that can help people to articulate how the local community affects their individual and collective experiences. The phrase refers to a grassroots movement in which new digital tools are used to help ordinary people tell their own stories in a compelling and emotionally-engaging form. It blends photographic images and artwork with sound bites in the creation of mini-autobiographical movies that illustrate the individual's experience. Photos of community sites, local maps, and other place-based images can be used to help illustrate points about community experience. In the context of using digital storytelling as an innovative participatory community development strategy (Marcuss, 2003), digital stories can provide useful information for helping to guide the planning process.

- **Intergenerational Options Mapping** (IOM). It is a technique developed as part of a study of intergenerational programming in retirement communities (Kaplan, Liu, & Hannon, 2006). OMAS represents a strategy for identifying potential partners in an organization's multi-faceted intergenerational program. The following steps are for an organization that serves older adults, although the process can be modified for use by organizations that serve children and youth as well:

[5] The semantic differential technique is used to measure people's feelings about a particular topic or object. They are given a series of scales, each with contrasting adjectives at each end (e.g., "good" and "bad", "inviting" and "foreboding"), and asked to indicate how they would rate the particular object or item of interest.

1) Create a list of all local schools, organizations, and centers serving children and youth.

2) Collect information on each site, including geographic location, program objectives, and activities/curricula. This can be done by sending out surveys or gathering brochures.

3) Insert this information into a database that is accessible to administrators, staff, and participants of the host organization ([6]).

4) Contact organizations with complementary goals, and with locations that are accessible to members of the organization, and begin exploring potential intergenerational programmatic links.

Because communities are so complex, multiple methods are needed to complete a comprehensive picture of the whole. Drawing data from different sources and using different methods to document changes taking place allows the evaluation team to create a rich, textured view of program effectiveness. The process of triangulation brings all the data together to check for confirming or disconfirming evidence in support of conclusions. It is far more compelling to report on outcomes when the interpretations are supported by several pieces of evidence.

An evaluation plan that takes into account many different levels of community activity, from individual participation to institutional practices and policies, will demonstrate the rippling effects of intergenerational program interventions within an interconnected web of human relationships. A community does not change because of one organization, one person, one policy, or one action. And so, the evaluation efforts that capture multiple slices of life in the community need to be organized into a coherent documentation record that answers the question "How has our work made a difference?" One option is to create a chart that identifies specific directions for the inquiry. Each column, or level of investigation, will have identified indicators that will add to answering the question. The following example of what such a chart might look like is based on a conceptual framework for community-wide intergenerational intervention developed by Elizabeth Larkin at the University of South Florida:

Table 1. Conceptual model for assessing community-wide outcomes (Larkin, 2006)

Organizational Innovations	Changes in Roles, & Responsibilities	Shifts in Policies, & Cultural Norms	Positive Outcomes for All Ages
New partnerships Celebrations Inclusive planning meetings Shared resources	Participatory evaluation plan Collective advocacy planning Democratic decision-making	Inter-age housing Multi-use recreation facilities Funding for intergenerational initiatives	Reduced age-bias Reduced crime Increased interaction Improved quality of life

[6] To strengthen the utility of this database, it would be helpful to install Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software, but this depends on the availability of resources and technical support.

7. IN CLOSING

This chapter explored various methods and considerations for evaluating intergenerational programs with community assessment and improvement objectives. Recommendations fit into the following general themes:

- Document everything, including program activities, written and pictorial accounts of participants' experiences and perceptions, and their plans and recommendations for community improvement.
- Be creative in what you call "data." This includes collecting mental mapping data, content analysis of displays and exhibits, and use of other research strategies, such as digital storytelling and building interactive websites.
- Provide participants with meaningful opportunities to influence the evaluation process, including the questions that are asked, as well as how data are collected and interpreted.
- Consider how the program contributes to physical changes in the community as well as to changes in people's perceptions of life in the community.

When people put personal effort into improving their communities, they want to know that their efforts matter. Share the evaluation results broadly and loudly! Recognition of success will snowball into increased participation and infusion of resources. Once initial inertia has been overcome, the change process can move ahead at a more gratifying pace.

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Chapter 8

EFFECTIVE PRACTICES IN THE EVALUATION OF INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMMES. SIX EXAMPLES FROM AROUND THE WORLD [2]

Mariano Sánchez (University of Granada) & Carmen Tallada (INTERGEN Reserch Team)

[2] We would like to express our gratitude to Professor Juan Sáez Carreras, of the University of Murcia, for his generous and insightful comments, which contributed to improving some of the ideas included in this chapter.

"I've developed a real aversion to … the notion of 'best practices.' My friends in Great Britain have developed a nice phrase that I have now incorporated into several of the World Cities Project papers — 'Good Practices and Interesting Failures." (Gusmano, 2002)

Our initial intention was to name this last chapter "Some best practices in the evaluation of intergenerational programmes." However, we soon changed our mind. When we thought about it, we decided that the expression *best practices* is not the most appropriate way to transmit to readers that:

- All intergenerational practice, whether it is good, okay or even bad, can teach us something; therefore it is not just the best practices that we should examine.

- There is no such thing, except in mere word games, as *perfect* intergenerational practices; they are, by nature, incomplete and they all have their limitations (unless we decide, as is often the case in the world of social intervention, to reduce the totality of the practice to that part of it which we are capable of understanding).

- It is not wise to establish, in relation with intergenerational practice, a supposedly universal scale that goes from best to worst, as if it were possible to make such assessments objective, somehow putting them beyond the reach of the opinions, mindsets and subjectivities of the people performing them.

- Along the same lines, there is no good or bad intergenerational practice *per se*; the practice will be the best, good or bad according to an assessment framework (whose? used by whom?), in a specific context and, most importantly, depending on the experiences of those who have participated in the practice.

- It is not true that the supposedly best designed intergenerational practices will be the ones that turn out the best; the rule saying that the results (effects) of intergenerational practices depend, above all else and in a linear fashion, on certain previous steps (causes) does not apply here. Good designs can guide the practices but they do not determine or control for the unexpected, which tends to arise on a daily basis when we bring two generational groups together.

So what is the reason for a chapter like this? It is not that we hope to establish models (*it's best to…*). Rather, we believe that a chapter like this one can broaden the learning opportunities that we hope this book has given its readers. How? By adding some examples of intergenerational programme evaluation practices (*so and so did this and they say that it went well for them*). Of course, the examples are ones in which:

- Their being deemed *effective practices* (Kaplan, 2007) is solely the responsibility of the author of the chapter, who has selected them as such.

- We will look at the effective parts, with the awareness that we are leaving aside the not-so-effective parts that the selected practices may also have. To put it even more clearly: the focus will be on the features we wish to highlight, from among a much broader set of elements, knowing that the others are there but that their description and analysis are beyond the scope of this chapter.

The procedure that has led to these pages has been laborious but quite simple. We have selected, from the literature on Intergenerational Programmes (IP) evaluation that we are aware of and have been able to consult, a few cases that we believe have something to teach us (each reader will discover for him or herself what that something is) and which may help to improve the way we ourselves engage in evaluation. We have not attempted to be exhaustive by any means; what we have done is attempt to bring together practices with different aspects worth highlighting (we believe that diversity may help further increase the knowledge obtained by reading these pages).

A final issue before taking a look at the selected practices: *how can we know if a practice that someone tells us is effective in a given context will also be effective in ours?* This question is a crucial one for those of us who are involved in IP, for at least two reasons:

- In the case of Spain, the field of intergenerational practice in its current state of development needs to *open up to* and *nourish itself with* what has been happening in this area in different contexts, in different countries, over the last three decades or so.

- When the time comes to innovate, a typical strategy consists of learning about what others do and how they do it (in their context), reflecting on our own practice and seeing if we can improve upon it (in our context) with the help of those experiences had by others; indeed, one of the aims behind the implantation in 2005 of the Intergenerational Network (by Spanish National Institute for Older Persons and Social Services - IMSERSO) was to foment this kind of exchange of practices and learning experiences.

So, it would seem that the question put forward is indeed vital and the question thus becomes *how shall we respond to it*? Doing so is not easy, but here are some elements that we believe must be taken into account while drawing up a response:

a) The borrowing of a practice from another context and using it in our own context must be a thoughtful process; anything resembling a mechanical procedure of *cut and paste*, like the ones used by word processing programmes, must be avoided. Such acritical automatisms could not be further from what is needed here.

b) The recreation of an IP in a new context requires, first of all, an understanding of the particular culture and contexts to which that IP was linked.

c) As a general premise, it must be acknowledged that intergenerational practices from other places can help us to better understand our own; therefore, the idea is not to *import* practices that are then simply placed in a new context. No, the basic idea is to know that our local practices can take in and be transformed by practices from elsewhere: “We believe that a global perspective is not just about looking at what others beyond our place do, it is mainly about accepting the idea that by knowing others’ thoughts and practices, we will be able to understand ours more fully” (Newman, 2003: 2)

d) Ethnocentric postures, consisting of assessing other practices always and exclusively from the perspective of one’s own axiological framework and rules, are incompatible with the task of incorporating a practice from elsewhere; acting in accordance with only one understanding (mine, ours) is always a bad idea. Instead, we must know how to make use of diverse and multiple cultural artefacts and guidelines.

e) In fact, diversity and the way in which each IP deals with it is one of the keys for comparing intergenerational practices and knowing if they can be *exported* successfully; we need to ask ourselves about our own local diversity and also take a look at diversity in the other practice, in order to see if there are comparable ways of responding successfully to such diversity

which, at the end of the day, is what all contexts have most in common; this can be done by examining, in both contexts, what the people say about their own identity (is such identity considered to be intergenerational or not?), how they behave culturally (are there symbolic intergenerational rules?) And how institutions address relevant issues (do the institutions make use of intergenerational responses?) (Dietz, 2003)

Now we will take a look at the six selected examples and let readers draw their own conclusions.

Example 1. Creating Community (*Elders Share the Arts*). An example of what can be done *from inside*, taking evaluation seriously (Perlstein & Bliss, 1994).

Elders Share the Arts (ESTA) is a community development organisation founded in 1979 in New York. Since then it has been transforming oral histories told by elderly people, young people and children into works of art shown to the public in the form of theatre, dance, writing, storytelling, etc.

ESTA is in charge of the intergenerational programme "Creating Community" by means of which elderly people (usually from residential homes, community-run social services or day centres) and school-age children/youth first spend a year learning to construct an oral history and developing their artistic talents; then they prepare together an artistic performance of their life stories to be presented to the rest of the community. The programme, which is based on weekly work sessions, hopes to make this initial experience become, in the medium term, a permanent intergenerational artistic group for these young and elderly people, with everything that this implies in terms of relationships, learning and experiences.

None of the participants in this programme is an expert in evaluation. However, the programme is evaluated and the evaluation is performed *from the inside*, that is, by the participants themselves, without the assistance of an external expert evaluator hired for such purpose.

The IP is reviewed on a weekly basis (formative evaluation): "During the last five minutes of every workshop session, we ask the participants -young people and seniors together- how they feel the programme is going, what worked that day, what needs to be clarified, what we need to work on. In this way, it's the participants who determine the direction the group moves in. This discussion session also allows the teacher and artist to evaluate the development of critical thinking and cooperative interaction among the participants" (Perlstein & Bliss, 1994: 57). Afterwards, the artist and the teacher think about how to apply to the IP what has been learned at the evaluation session.

At the end of the IP, there is a formal evaluation (summative evaluation) that attempts to answer two questions: What have we given to the organisations that have participated in the programme? What have we given to ourselves? In the case of the first question, the evaluation is adapted to the needs of the participating organisations:

- "In hospitals, for example, we write process notes in the medical records which document attendance, activity participation and level of creative response. Such a note might record that a patient improved her ability to interact and that the workshop stimulated her creative imagination" (Perlstein & Bliss, 1994: 57).

- "For schools, we create a portfolio of each student's work that might include journal writing, the family tree, neighbourhood map, written monologues, and interviews. The teachers and students sit down together to review these materials, and the teacher gives a grade based on them" (Perlstein & Bliss, 1994: 57).

- "Senior and community centres don't usually require a formal evaluation process. For them we create a report base on the group discussions at the end of each workshop session and at the programme's conclusion, or on questionnaires" (Perlstein & Bliss, 1994: 57).

In addition to the evaluation for the benefit of the groups that collaborate with the programme, ESTA carries out an evaluation for internal use:

- "After our presentations, everybody stays for a party. We walk around, listen to what people are saying, talk informally about the project. After a while we sit everyone down and do a more structured review, in the form of a go-around in which each person gets to evaluate our strengths and make suggestions" (Perlstein & Bliss, 1994: 57).

- "Some time later, we do a more specific closure with the seniors alone […] The seniors meet separately at the regular workshop time with the teaching artist to reaffirm what they learned and decide where they would like the project to go next" (Perlstein & Bliss, 1994: 57-58).

- "Finally, we hold an administrative evaluation meeting at which all the partners are present. […] The partners discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the programme, using examples from the participants' evaluation" (Perlstein & Bliss, 1994: 58).

Example 2. *Magic Me.* Creative, yet grounded evaluation (Langford & Mayo, 2001)

Magic Me, like ESTA, is an organisation that works to merge various forms of artistic expression with intergenerational activity. It has been doing so since 1989 in its sphere of action, East London. A few years ago it received a subsidy to write a book about the way the organisation works, and the book includes a section on the evaluation of intergenerational artistic programmes (although it also contains reflections we believe could be of value to any IP). This publication, whose authors had their feet firmly on the ground, is the source of the following notes.

The experience gained at *Magic Me* has taught them that the evaluation of a project must be:

- enjoyable, not considered a burden.

- useful for the participants and for those who direct the programme.

- an effort that people take seriously and to which they devote the necessary time because they recognise its usefulness.

- helpful in terms of planning what the next step to be taken by the programme might be.

Practical issues to be kept in mind, according to *Magic Me*, when an IP is being evaluated:

- What the IP participants say during the evaluation should be taken seriously: this is a way to help them feel comfortable and encourage them to express their points of view freely.

- Allow enough time for the evaluation so that it does not have to be done in a hurry, at the last minute; a part of each work session can be reserved for talking about how the programme is moving along and for making suggestions about what needs to be changed.

- The IP coordinators should keep a journal in which they write down what was said, what the most difficult moments were, etc. We do not always remember everything we think we will.

- If you are going to take pictures or make videos you may need to obtain the participants informed consent in advance.

Some guiding principles that *Magic Me* offers to ensure an efficient evaluation:

- Help people find the language they need to express their ideas, viewpoints and feelings; do not forget that many people are not used to making evaluations in public.

- Praise the group for its achievements and encourage the participants to ask themselves why certain activities worked better than others.

- Do not focus only on problems. Help people find a constructive way to move forward.

- Suggest that everyone involved in the evaluation should accompany any criticism with a proposal for positive change.

- Do not try to evaluate the entire programme after the first session; evaluation is a process that takes time.

- When a participant has a good idea that is used or cited later, its source must be acknowledged.

- It is a good idea to foment awareness of the importance of evaluation and implement specific evaluation practices from the very beginning of the programme: If evaluation takes place when everything is going well it will be easier, later on, for problems to be evaluated also.

- Do not be afraid of the final evaluation; it can be an excellent opportunity to take an honest look at the programme.

- In the final evaluation, try to maintain a balance between specific data and the less measurable aspects of the programme, the programme's stories.

- Do not shy away from evaluating the artistic part of the programme.

Ideas from *Magic Me* for performing an on-going evaluation of the programme and for documenting its development:

- An *applausometer*: programme participants are asked to applaud more or less intensely depending on how much they liked each of the aspects that are named (and that the participants themselves were asked to put forward in advance).

- Each participant is asked, after a session, to choose a single word that expresses how s/he feels; these words can be useful in breaking the ice and can lead to deeper reflections on the work done.

- The participants can write a letter to a friend (real or imaginary), telling him or her about the programme, what they have done and how they feel about it.

- Each participant, and the evaluators if they are external, can keep a journal about the programme and their experiences. This can be very useful during the regular reviews on how the programme is progressing.

Ideas from *Magic Me* for performing a final evaluation of the programme:

- Evaluation questionnaires or forms can sometimes be hard for the elderly or for young people to fill out, so if they are to be used it is important that they be well written and presented in a way that is easy to understand.

- Make use of the IP participants' memory: explore with them what they remember about their experiences during the programme.

- It is a good idea to have some figures about the participants and their characteristics; funding institutions often want to look at this type of information.

- All the groups that participate in the programme have to agree, in advance, about the criteria that will be used to judge whether the programme has been a success or not. Some examples of criteria that can be used are the following:

    - Regularity of attendance and participation.
    - Increased confidence of participants.
    - Improvement of social and communication skills.
    - Expressions of interest in the programme outside the work sessions.
    - Capacity to express ideas and feelings.
    - Quality of the artistic work produced, both during the process and as a result.
    - Suitability of the artistic activities carried out by the group.
    - Capacity of the people in charge of the programme to support and encourage the participants.
    - Benefits obtained by the organisations associated with the programme.

Example 3. Intergenerational Community Action Group. Using theory in the evaluation (Lawrence-Jacobson, 2006).

This example is qualitatively different from the previous two. In this case we are not referring to an organisation but to a person who has been able to combine her research interests with the start-up and evaluation of an IP. What we would like to highlight here, as an efficient practice, and quite a rare one by the way ([1]), is the use that the programme creator makes of theory when justifying her work and guiding the evaluation of the intergenerational community action that has taken place.

[1] "Historically, few intergenerational programs have relied on theory to determine program processes and intended outcomes" (Lawrence-Jacobson, 2006: 138).

The theory used is that of *empowerment*, and the author attempts to connect it with what she calls "intergenerational community action" (action in which young people and the elderly work together to address a community issue that concerns both). The underlying question is the following: Can an intergenerational programme empower the young people that participate in it? ([2]).

To answer this question, the author organised, co-ordinated and evaluated an Intergenerational Community Action Group made up of eight elderly people and five university students. The group met weekly for 21 weeks to discuss a community problem that concerned all thirteen members and to plan and carry out an action to alleviate the problem.

Data with which to evaluate the programme was collected mainly in four ways:

- Semi-structured in-depth interviews with each participant, before and after the programme.
- Separate discussion groups with the elderly and the students halfway through and at the end of the process.
- Participant observation in the group.
- Semi-structured in-depth interviews with students and elderly people who chose not to participate in the IP, and with the staff of the residential home.

Among the results of this IP was an increase in the students' psychological empowerment (interactive dimension), and the students showed improvement in the following areas:

- Their leadership skills.
- Their skill in dealing with people in positions of authority.
- Their skill in expressing their opinions in public.

The author's conclusion, following the evaluation in which she combined a theoretical analysis of empowerment with intergenerational practice, invites us to do further work along the same lines: "empowerment can be a useful framework for intergenerational programmes, particularly those that involve community action. For student participants, the older adults involved may serve as role models for maintaining empowerment in old age. Participants can gain important skills necessary for action, and can benefit from the opportunity to work together with others towards change" (Lawrence-Jacobson, 2006).

[2] The author takes the definition of empowerment from the *Cornell University Empowerment Group*, which conceives of it as "an intentional, ongoing process centered in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring and group participation, through which people lacking an equal share of valued resources gain a greater access to and control over these resources" (Lawrence-Jacobson, 2006: 139).

Example 4. Intergenerational Mentoring Project. Complete long-term evaluation, step by step (Ellis, 2003, 2004).

Steven Ellis is perhaps the external evaluator of intergenerational programmes who has most published on the subject. Based in the United Kingdom, he has worked very closely with the Beth Johnson Foundation, the leading organisation in the development of intergenerational practice in the United Kingdom.

Below we will comment on the evaluation reports of two intergenerational programmes, called *Intergenerational Mentoring Project* and *Generations in Action*, respectively. The first project was started by the aforementioned Foundation in 1997 and it became the first case in the United Kingdom of an IP of this type to be implanted in most of the secondary schools of a given school district (Stoke-on-Trent). The first report (Ellis, 2003) evaluated the progress of this IP between 1999 and 2002; the second report (Ellis, 2004) arose from the evaluation of the execution of the second IP, which took place in the region of Salford between 2001 and 2004.

If we have chosen these two reports it is because they represent examples of long-term IP evaluation that evolves as the project's implantation grows. And nowadays this is something quite exceptional: there are not many examples of long-term IPs nor are there many evaluations such as those that Ellis has performed. In addition, we believe that Ellis' work (and we must not forget that he is an external evaluator, a university researcher with specific technical and methodological preparation) displays a feature that, albeit at a different level, should be shared by all IP evaluations: the use of multiple methods of data collection and analysis.

The objectives of the first of these two evaluations are detailed below (Ellis, 2003: 8):

- "Identify what impedes and what facilitates intergenerational mentoring relationships;
- Elicit children's and older mentor volunteers' views on the ways in which the scheme has enhanced their self-esteem and well-being;
- Articulate the perspectives of older people and children and identify areas where they feel empowered to move on with their lives;
- Assess the contribution which participation in intergenerational mentoring makes to the quality of life of older volunteers."

This first evaluation took place over a period of eleven months and was divided into three phases: (a) initial collection of secondary information, (b) collection of quantitative and qualitative information, and (c) analysis, preparation of the report and publication of the results. The following chart shows, at a glance, the methods, timetables and samples used in the data collection necessary for this evaluation:

Methods	Timing	Sample
Internal monitoring data (BJF), including occasional papers, review of various newspaper articles (Sentinel), taped interviews (Radio Stoke), volunteer support group meetings, school mentor feedback sheets, minutes of school liaison meetings, annual project reports (1999-2002), development plan and budget plan, project advisory group meetings.	March-June, 2002	BJF Staff/Mentors/ Minutes steering and liaison
Mentors' reflective diaries (1999-2001)	March-Aug, 2002	Mentors
National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) Questionnaire: evaluation of the mentor bursary programme, sample questions for mentees (1999).	May, 2002	Children Secondary Schools
Short Form (SF12) Health Survey	May, 2002	Mentors
Quality of Life Measure (CASP-19)	May, 2002	Mentors
Qualitative Focus Groups	May, 2002	Secondary Schools, Children, Mentors and Coordinators
Participant Observation	March-July, 2002	Borough Arms, Newcastle-u-Lyme Intergenerational Mentoring Event Celebration Event Steering Committee
BJF Steering Group	March, 2002-3	MMU/Keele Researchers/ BJF Management
Dissemination	Oct, 2002-Mar, 2003	Interested Groups/ Schools

Source: Ellis, S. 2003. *Changing the Lives of Children and Older People: Intergenerational Mentoring in Secondary Schools. Intergenerational Mentoring Project: Phase 3*. Stoke-on-Trent: Beth Johnson Foundation. Pg. 9.

Ellis (2003) explains in the report that one of the requirements of this evaluation was to link it with two previous ones that he had performed in 1998 and 1999. The question of the continuity of evaluations is one of the issues in which IP evaluations clearly need to work harder.

Ellis also set out to meet the challenge of ensuring that both the elderly people who acted as mentors and the children would collaborate in the evaluation. A well-known shortcoming in the analysis of IPs is the failure to listen to the voices of the children who participate in these programmes: "researchers have not given children the opportunity to express, in their own words, how intergenerational programmes have affected their attitudes toward and their relationships with the elderly." (Bales, Eklund & Siffin, 2000)

Because of this, Ellis decided to organise some discussion groups in which both children and their mentors would participate. This is a very rare practice and therefore deserves special mention. What

does this evaluator highlight about the experience of working, in the same discussion group, with children and elderly people? (Ellis, 2003: 13):

- "Each child was first asked to introduce their mentor and to give some indication of the ways in which their mentor help them and why they thought they had been given a mentor. This acted as an 'icebreaker'.

- Some of the younger children (Y7s) were initially quite shy but, through careful prompting, support from their mentors, and specific direct questioning, the children gained in confidence and were really quite forthcoming and insightful in their comments.

- There was however a slight tendency for the mentors to answer for the children at times and, in one case, a mentor who used the occasion to chastise the child for some poor behaviour during class in the week prior to the meeting.

- We also tried to make sure that when the interviewer attempted to 'tidy-up' and summarise the inputs that this was not reinterpreted erroneously thus altering the group order effects.

- Once settled, most of the children were able to articulate their thoughts clearly and interact with the group."

As we can see, these comments seem to transport us to the place where Ellis was doing his work. And this is possible because in his report, which is very detailed throughout, he chose to include this type of comment and to fully explain each aspect of the evaluation process. A fine example, definitely worth following and especially beneficial to those who need to know how others evaluate intergenerational practice. In this regard, Ellis' work can teach us a great deal.

The second of the evaluations mentioned above has the format of a final report, contains a summary of various previous evaluations and attempts to answer the following questions:

- What are the benefits for the elderly volunteers?

- What impact have the various programmes had on the community?

- Is there any evidence that the volunteer work done by elderly people has an additional characteristic to that of the young people?

- How do intergenerational programmes differ from other volunteer work or mentoring programmes that are clearly similar?

This time the evaluation work took place in two phases, one between July of 2002 and April of 2003, and another between May of 2003 and February of 2004. Again, the effort to evaluate the programmes over the long term is very evident. And, as in the previous case, we reproduce a table, prepared by Ellis, that shows the methods, timetables and samples used:

Methods	Timing	Sample
Internal monitoring data including end of year. Programme reports and minutes of management meetings	July-Sept 2002 July 2003-Feb. 2004	Director BJF/Programme Manager Salford
Steering Group Meetings/Salford BEP	July 2002-April 2003 July 2003	Managers and Programme Coordinators/BJF
Individual Semi-Structured Interviews/BJF	Oct. 2002	Programme Coordinators (5)
Short Form (SF12) Health Survey	Dec. 2002-Feb. 2003 Jan-Feb. 2003	Volunteers/Five Programmes
Quality of Life Measure (CASP-19)	Dec. 2002-Feb. 2004 Jan.-Feb. 2004	Volunteers/Five Programmes
Qualitative Focus Groups	Dec. 2002-Feb. 2003 Jan.-Feb. 2004	Volunteers/Four Programmes
Participant Observation and Evaluation Group Training Intergenerational Practice Conference Keele University NW Intergenerational Network	Oct. 2002 June 2003 Feb. 2004	BJF Training Events/ Programme Coordinators Various Coordinators Wigan Coordinators/BJF
Interim Report Interim Report (digest)	April-May 2003 June 2004	Director BJF/Programme Manager Salford/Programme Coordinators
Extra-ordinary Meeting Final Report	July 2003 May 2004	All Partners Director BJF/Programme Manger Salford/Programme Coordinators

Source: Ellis, S. 2004. *Generations in Action. Final Evaluation Report.* Stoke-on-Trent: Beth Johnson Foundation. Pg. 7.

Again, we are not suggesting that evaluation plans like these two should be the norm. That is why we do not call them *best practices;* they are *efficient practices* given the conditions in which they were carried out and the expectations and experiences of some of the people participating. We believe it is to precisely this that we must aspire, each at our own scale; to ask ourselves how we should design and execute our own IP evaluations. Works such as those by Ellis can serve as inspiration.

Example 5. Impact of IPs on the elderly. Including dependent elderly people in the evaluation (Xaverius & Matthews, 2003).

Can dependent people participate in intergenerational programmes? Yes, of course. Are they doing so in some cases? Yes. So, when it comes time to evaluate, should these people participate in the process? Our answer is again yes, at least in principle.

We will now give an example of how it is perfectly possible for elderly dependent people to be involved in the evaluation of an IP. In fact, one of the interesting features of the work by Xaverius & Matthews (2003) that we have chosen is that it demonstrates that the intergenerational strategy can somehow help improve the situation of such people.

More specifically, these two researchers (the first is a woman, the second a man) performed two evaluation studies of IPs in order to learn about the effects that intergenerational activities can have on the level of engagement and the expressiveness of the participating elderly people. To do so they used a quasi-experimental design (pre-test/post-test), comparing the engagement and the expressiveness of a group of non-dependent elderly people to those of a group of dependent elders, without the presence of children and then again when the children had arrived at the centre to carry out certain activities. In both studies the data collection technique chosen was observation.

The first of the studies took place in what can be called a day centre or a senior citizens centre, where non-dependent elders go to participate in various types of activities. The second study, on which we will focus more closely, took place in a special care unit for people with dementia, located in a residential home. The participants were 25 residents aged between 75 and 98. In a programmed manner, 28 children aged 7 to 8 took part, in small groups, in some kind of activity (conversations, handicrafts and games) along with the aforementioned residents.

Trained observers set out to obtain (for periods lasting 30 minutes) information regarding the behaviour of these elders and, specifically, their level of engagement (Is the elderly person present? Does he or she participate appropriately in the activity?) and their expressiveness (Does the elder show affection through signs such as smiling, laughter, nodding, raising their hands or, if the children are present, having one sit on their lap?). In one of every four observation sessions, a second observer performed the same task as the first one so that they could later compare their results and confirm the reliability of the observations. This is a strategy often employed to monitor the quality of observation when this kind of data collection technique is used.

This case is of special interest for another reason as well: after the first visit to the residence, the researchers, the residence staff and the children's teachers all spent some time explaining to the children what dementia is and how to behave with an elder who is affected by it. We clearly have before us a case in which the interest in evaluating the effects of an IP not only put the IP into effect but also promote specific and intentional lessons in its participants; here intervention and education walk hand-in-hand.

Furthermore, as the authors explain, this evaluation reached some hopeful conclusions: "This intervention represents a promising strategy for increasing the levels of engagement and expressiveness of institutionalised older adults with probable Alzheimer's Disease, in intergenerational activities. The effect of structured activities with children had a significant impact on levels of engagement and expressiveness. Elders were most engaged and expressive during the Intergenerational Activity condition" (Xaverius & Matthews, 2003: 65).

The authors encourage others to carry out similar projects. Their initiative is an example of how the evaluation of an IP can serve as a stimulus not only in terms of carrying out new evaluations but also in terms of promoting intergenerational practice in and of itself.

Example 6. Provider Standard for Intergenerational Programmes. Introduction to quality standards *(Centre for Intergenerational Practice,* 2005).

This final example is very different from the ones that have come before it. In this case, the evaluation of the IPs is contemplated within an overall process aimed at improving the quality of the intergenerational practice that takes place in the United Kingdom, where, by the way, such activities are quite common.

The Centre for Intergenerational Practice (http://www.centreforip.org.uk/) of the Beth Johnson Foundation (BJF) is currently at the helm of an effort in the United Kingdom to determine which organisations are doing the best intergenerational work. And this assessment is being made by means of an open invitation to organisations to submit their intergenerational practice, if they wish, to an external evaluation based on a quality standard.

This procedure, implanted just one year ago, has already begun to bear fruit. In the first phase, eleven organisations have received certification as quality providers of IPs.

Below is the questionnaire that was used in the accreditation process.

Provider Standard for Intergenerational Programmes (*Centre for Intergenerational Practice, BJF*)

(Information requested from the bodies that engage in IP)

Approved Provider Standard

Intergenerational Programme(s) Information

Q1 What is/are your current intergenerational programme(s) called?

Q2 What is/are the aim(s) of your intergenerational programme(s)?

- Aims and objectives
- Description of (types of) activity
- Needs assessment (how do you know programme is needed?)

Q3 What internal organisational and management structures do you have in place to support your programme(s)?

Q4 What support mechanisms are in place to ensure staff overseeing the programme are operating effectively?

Q5 How do you identify, prepare and involve partner organisations?

Q6 How do you identify the people to participate in your programmes?

Q7 How do you prepare participants for your programme(s)?

Q8 How do you recruit volunteers?

Q9 For projects that match volunteers to individuals of a different generation what method is used to determine the match?

Q10 How are volunteers prepared and supported so they can operate effectively?

Q11 What screening and personal protection arrangements do you operate?

Q12 How do you provide ongoing support and monitoring to programmes?

Q13 How do you measure the outcomes of programmes?

Q14 How do you evaluate the overall effectiveness of your programmes?

Q15 How do you ensure the intergenerational nature of your programmes?

We have been told that this initial instrument for collecting information is now being revised, with an eye to improving it. However, we think it is interesting to cite it in its current form as an example of a pioneering effort, made at the state level, of beginning to clarify which IPs organised by which bodies might be the most efficient. It clearly represents another way, and in our opinion an interesting one, to attempt to evaluate intergenerational practice.

Here this chapter comes to an end. As we said at the beginning, readers will be able to draw their own conclusions. As for our conclusions, they are set forth below in the form of a reflective list of guidelines. And here is one final thought: only by evaluating can one learn how to evaluate. In other words, one way or another, the main thing is that evaluation be put into practice.

6 simple guidelines for (new) sailors exploring the seas of IP evaluation

1) **There is never only one way to proceed with the evaluation: making choices is inevitable, so you will have to take the leap.**
2) **Be creative: a good evaluator is one who instead of following a certain method, invents the most appropriate method.**
3) **Be careful not to fall into *methodolatry*: some adore methods, worship methods and follow them blindly. But we are the ones that must use methods, and not the other way around.**
4) **Using common sense is fundamental: many people not specialised in research believe they are starting at square one. This is not true: we all have common sense and we have to use it.**
5) **The best evaluations are not the most complex ones: we have to adapt and look for what we really need according to the aims of the evaluation**
6) **The best evaluations are not the ones carried out by expert researchers: in fact, the opposite is often the case.**

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