

INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMS AND INTERGENERATIONAL CONTACT ZONES

Aligning Notions of “Good Quality”

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Introduction

In this chapter we are dealing with a methodological question: how may we enhance good quality in Intergenerational Programs (IP) through the application of Intergenerational Contact Zones (ICZ) as programming tool? ICZ is a framework that can serve as conceptual tool, programming tool, and design tool (Kaplan, Thang, Sánchez, & Hoffman, 2016). However, we'll be just looking into the practical potential of ICZ as programming tool. Our initial question might be formulated more precisely as follows: Which quality indicators should ICZ present to be able to enhance the quality of Intergenerational Programs (IP)?

In this volume's Introduction it has been noted that the ICZ concept “represents an endeavor to integrate what is often portrayed as separate spheres of transient intergenerational programs” (see p. 3). Obviously, ICZ and IP are connected since all IP need a space.

Consequently with the programmatic nature of ICZ, we contend that it makes sense to align the introduction of good quality planning and implementation of programs aimed at purposefully bringing different generations together for individual, group, community and societal good – IP's ultimate mission – with efforts to set up spatial focal points for intergenerational meeting, interaction and engagement – as ICZ intend to do.

Since to the best of our knowledge there is no available list of quality indicators for ICZ, in this chapter we initiate the process to develop such a list in accordance with the suggested ICZ-IP alignment. How? By paying attention, first, to quality guidelines for intergenerational programs. Why? Because we understand that these guidelines may serve as conditional principles to establish indicators of quality for ICZ as programming tool. Otherwise said, if ICZ are approached as programming instruments contributing to the planning and implementation of high-quality IP, it makes a lot of sense carrying out the suggested exercise of mutual alignment between programs and settings. In fact, when developing their standards and guidelines to ensure effective intergenerational professional practices, Rosebrook and Larkin (2003) already noted the need for “thinking about the importance of the environment” (p. 142).

Quality Standards and Guidelines for Intergenerational Programs

Lists including features and components of successful intergenerational programs abound (Bressler, Henkin, & Adler, 2005; Epstein & Boisvert, 2006; MacCallum et al., 2006). We have as well examples of standards and guidelines of intergenerational practice (Larkin & Rosebrook, 2002; Rosebrook & Larkin, 2003; Sánchez, Díaz, Sáez, & Pinazo, 2014). What is more recent is the emergence of systematic efforts to create

singular instruments that incorporate a range of quality features for IP derived from diverse streams of intergenerational theory and practice. In what follows, we'll focus on two such models.

TOY (Together Old and Young) for Quality Program

What is a good quality intergenerational program and how do we recognize it and promote it? This question has triggered partners in the Together Old and Young (TOY) consortium to develop the TOY for Quality Program, “a participatory process of reflection, discussion and action ... that can be used by practitioners and organizations engaged in any stage of planning or implementation of intergenerational learning initiatives” (TOY-PLUS Consortium, 2018, p. 9). The TOY approach to quality and evaluation of intergenerational learning, including an explanation of TOY for Quality Program, is one of the units in the TOY Online Course.

TOY approaches intergenerational programs as initiatives involving older adults and young children, therefore its quality dimensions focus specifically on the interaction of these two particular generational groups.

At the core of the TOY for Quality Program are six dimensions of quality:

- Dimension 1. Building relationships and wellbeing.
- Dimension 2. Respect for diversity.
- Dimension 3. Interaction with and within the community.
- Dimension 4. Learning with and from each other.
- Dimension 5. Professional development and teamwork.
- Dimension 6. Monitoring, evaluation, and sustainability.

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The TOY for Quality Program’s six dimensions of quality are described in Appendix 24.1.

ICIL Quality Standards

The International Certificate in Intergenerational Learning (ICIL) is an online course established as a partnership between the University of Granada, in Spain, and Generations Working Together, in Scotland. ICIL presents its students a set of nine quality standards in intergenerational work.

These standards were initially informed by The Beth Johnson Foundation’s Approved Provider Standard framework (The Centre for Intergenerational Practice, 2008); Rosebrook & Larkin (2003)’s standards and guidelines; Kaplan, Larkin, and Hatton-Yeo (2009)’s list of personal dispositions for professional intergenerational practice; Sánchez et al., (2014)’s research about the professional profile of intergenerational program managers; the MATES Guide of Ideas for Planning and Implementing Intergenerational Projects (Pinto, 2009); and guidelines developed by ECIL (European Certificate in Intergenerational Learning) on intergenerational learning best practices. They represent proven principles and approaches that, over the years, have been shown

to be present in good intergenerational programs. Not in order of importance, these nine standards are as follows:

- Standard 1. Intergenerational work encourages reciprocal intergenerational learning.
- Standard 2. Intergenerational work values generational diversity.
- Standard 3. Intergenerational work confronts age discrimination and stereotypes.
- Standard 4. Intergenerational work adopts a life-course perspective.
- Standard 5. Intergenerational work fosters intergenerational relationships and bonding.
- Standard 6. Intergenerational work relies on a cross-disciplinary knowledge base.
- Standard 7. Intergenerational work meets principles of good program management.
- Standard 8. Intergenerational work has to be evaluated.
- Standard 9. Intergenerational practitioners involved in intergenerational work demonstrate certain values, attitudes, and beliefs that influence their behaviors.

A description of each standard is available in Appendix 24.2.

TOY and ICIL Combined

There is much overlap between the TOY Quality dimensions and the ICIL standards. TOY's dimensions #1, #2, #4, and #6 clearly overlap with ICIL standards #1, #2, #3, #5, #7, and #8. There are also some distinctions between these systems; ICIL's list emphasizes the cross-disciplinary knowledge base required for good IP and the need to adopt a life-course perspective, whereas the TOY framework places greater emphasis on interaction within diverse community contexts. However, we argue that both proposals may be combined into four Quality Domains (QD) of IP quality:

- QD1. Intergenerational relationships and wellbeing across generations.
- QD2. Generational diversity.
- QD3. Intergenerational program planning, implementation, and sustainability.
- QD4. Intergenerational practitioners' know-how.

Quality Guidelines for IP

Now, taking into account all standards and dimensions introduced above, the TOY for Quality indicators, and other significant findings from research (Drury, Abrams, & Swift, 2017; Jarrott & DeBord, Naar, 2014; Weaver, Naar, & Jarrott, 2017), these four quality domains may be organized into nine guidelines (S) and 25 indicators (I) as follows (Table 24.1).

Aligning Quality in IP and ICZ

Finally, we get to the core step and most valuable contribution in the process that we are carrying out. We are at last in a position to wonder how conditions for quality ICZ may be aligned with the quality domains, guidelines, and indicators for intergenerational programs just presented (Table 24.1). For each of the four quality domains and nine guidelines outlined above we suggest some indicators that ICZ should integrate for such alignment. As it has been the case with Table 24.1, in the process of elaborating Table 24.2 we have incorporated some relevant research findings from a diversity of disciplinary

fields (Jarrott et al., 2014; Kaplan, Haider, Cohen, & Turner, 2007; Kaplan, Thang, Sánchez, & Hoffman, 2016).

Limitations

We acknowledge that the process carried out to align notions of “good quality faces several limitations. Firstly, the selection of TOY?’s and ICIL’s models as primary cornerstones of this review and integration of ideal quality tools for IP reflect the authors’ experience and perceptions of the intergenerational field. Considering the rapid expansion of the intergenerational field in recent years, it is difficult to maintain awareness of the full range of quality assessment tools that exist at any one time.

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TABLE 24.1 Quality domains (QD), guidelines (G) and indicators (I) for intergenerational programs

QD1. Relationships and wellbeing across generations

G1. The program fosters intergenerational relationships and bonding (e.g. friendship)

I1 The program enhances cooperation (e.g., through sharing goals) and reduces competition

I2 The program makes possible the sharing of personal information across generations

I3 All generations involved think positively about intergenerational relationships formed in the program

G2. The program promotes reciprocal intergenerational learning

I4 All generational groups are given the opportunity to teach and learn from one another

I5 Exchange of resources (e.g., knowledge, skills) is at the matrix of the program

G3. The program increases the wellbeing of all generations involved

I6 Program participants enjoy engaging in the program and consequently are improving their sense of wellbeing (e.g., psychosocial and physical wellbeing)

I7 The program benefits all stakeholders, not just children, youth, and Elder participants

QD2. Generational diversity

G4. The program values generational diversity

I8 The program gives opportunities for generations from diverse backgrounds to share their knowledge, culture, and experiences

I9 All generations feel acknowledged, accepted, and welcomed

G5. The program confronts age discrimination and stereotypes

I10 Pre-intervention tools are used to identify and confront potential age discrimination and stereotypes

I11 Program participants have developed more positive views of generations involved

QD3. Intergenerational program planning, implementation, and sustainability
G6. Program planning, implementation, evaluation, and sustainability pay attention to specificities required by intergenerational approaches

I12 There is evidence of attempts to identify and meet the needs of all generations involved, and of the wider community

I13 Program environment is accessible to and adaptable for people of all generations

I14 All activities in the program are age- and role-appropriate

I15 The program carries out continuing evaluation with participation of all generations
Involved

QD3. Intergenerational program planning, implementation, and sustainability

I16 The quality of engagement in the program is strong and makes likely the continuity of intergenerational relationships formed

G7. The program facilitates interaction with generations with and within the community

I17 The program welcomes collaboration with generations in the community

I18 The program is contributing to the development of new connections between disconnected generations in the community

QD4. Intergenerational practitioners' know-how

G8. Practitioners rely on a cross-disciplinary knowledge base

I19 Intergenerational practitioners have been trained to know the intergenerational field (theory, research, and practice)

I20 Intergenerational practitioners understand the distinctive features of intergenerational programs

I21 Intergenerational practitioners are skilled at promoting contacts, social relationships, interactions, and bonds between different generational groups

I22 Intergenerational practitioners are skilled at establishing and strengthening social networks and partnerships between services working with different generations

I23 Intergenerational practitioners approach aging as a lifelong, dynamic, and contextualized process of human development

G9. Practitioners involved in the program demonstrate certain values, attitudes, and beliefs that influence their behaviors

I24 Intergenerational practitioners are reflective and caring professionals, with vision and passion to facilitate intergenerational encounters

I25 Practitioners demonstrate a commitment to collaboration and partnership through effective networks

Secondly, we are aware of the non-systematic review of ancillary sources that we have introduced to enrich TOY's and ICIL's models at the time of listing guidelines and indicators. However, it has not been our intention to produce a definitive set of indicators but to show how the process may be methodologically carried out to connect quality requirements for IP with quality features for ICZ. If ICZ is a good programming tool and therefore may help to settle better IP, ICZ will have somehow to be connected to IP's quality indicators.

Finally, the applicability level of indicators in Table 24.2 varies. For one example, I2 (“The ICZ counts on structured space that fosters both structured and unstructured intergenerational interactions”) and I19 (“Intergenerational practitioners understand the distinctive features of ICZ”) require a different type of translational effort to put them into practice.

TABLE 24.2 Quality domains (QD), guidelines (G), and indicators (I) for ICZ as programming tool

QD1. Relationships and wellbeing across generations

G1. The ICZ fosters intergenerational relationships and bonding (e.g., friendship)

I1 The ICZ’s physical and built environment has been staged to promote interaction and relationships

I2 The ICZ counts on structured space that fosters both structured and unstructured intergenerational interactions

G2. The ICZ promotes reciprocal intergenerational learning

I3 The ICZ’s learning environment (built and natural) is equipped with various accessible and appropriate materials that stimulate the agency of participating generations to explore, learn, and interact

I4 The ICZ’s learning environment (built and natural) is one that is experienced as physically safe and accessible for people of all ages and easily supervised

G3. The ICZ increases the wellbeing of all generations involved

I5 The ICZ allows participants to explore choice, autonomy, and agency in pursuing their needs and interests for personal growth and development as well as social engagement

I6 The ICZ strives to contribute to an intergenerational environment encouraging positive feelings of social engagement, value, self-esteem, selfconfidence, and/or purpose (e.g., through visual cues reminding the benefits of being together)

I7 The ICZ increases the level of emotional comfort for generational groups through providing opportunities for safe access into and withdrawal from spaces where intergenerational interaction is taking place

QD2. Generational diversity

G4. The ICZ values generational diversity

I8 The built environment is flexible to accommodate generations from diverse backgrounds

I9 The ICZ facilitates for the different age groups appropriate access and amounts of cognitive, social, and physical stimulation and activity layering according to their capacities and degree of commitment

I10 The ICZ is able to hybridize conventional and modern elements to make the space meaningful to all generational groups involved

G5. The ICZ confronts age discrimination and stereotypes

I11 The ICZ contributes to locate the intergenerational program in a neutral environment where all participants feel welcome and the equality of status between generational groups may be achieved

I12 The ICZ gives visibility to positive images of different generations (e.g., using artwork, photos) both at the space where interactions take place and at adjoining spaces

QD3. Intergenerational program planning, implementation, and sustainability

G6. The ICZ's planning, implementation, evaluation, and sustainability pay attention to specificities required by intergenerational approaches

I13 The ICZ's design, management, and evaluation practices are participatory and empower all generations involved

I14 The ICZ affords opportunities for program participants to engage at different levels of involvement, including with mere observation, and to disengage

I15 The ICZ has been planned and organized in such a way as to facilitate interaction without violating people's need for privacy

G7. The ICZ facilitates interaction with generations with and within the community

I16 The ICZ takes advantage of proximity of mono-generational spaces in the community to connect them while respecting the necessary level of personal and program autonomy

I17 The ICZ facilitates the sharing of premises or outdoor spaces among different organizations representing different generational groups

QD4. Intergenerational practitioners' know-how on ICZ

G8. Practitioners rely on a cross-disciplinary knowledge base

I18 Intergenerational practitioners have been exposed to comprehensive knowledge (tying into areas of theory, research, and practice from different fields such as environment behavior studies, environmental psychology, and related sub-disciplines) to become aware of the importance of space and place in intergenerational endeavors

I19 Intergenerational practitioners understand the distinctive features of ICZ I20

Intergenerational practitioners are skilled at using ICZ to promote contacts, social relationships, interactions, and bonds between different generational groups

G9. Practitioners involved in ICZ demonstrate certain values, attitudes and beliefs that influence their behaviors

I21 Intergenerational practitioners are able to include elements to do with spaces in their vision and passion to facilitate intergenerational encounters

I22 Practitioners include spaces and places as significant elements whenever entertaining efforts to make collaboration and partnership through effective networks possible

I23 Practitioners understand the need to incorporate flexibility into environmental designs so that ICZ spaces can evolve to accommodate changes in program priorities, local demographic and social dynamics, and participants' social, emotional, and intellectual capabilities.

However, it is our hope that the many tips and examples included in this book may be helpful in further developing and refining the 23 quality indicators for ICZ outlined above.

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Appendix 24.1 TOY for Quality Program’s Six Dimensions with Summary Description (Kernan & Cortellesi, 2019)

- **DIMENSION 1. Building relationships and wellbeing.**

Intergenerational learning initiatives build relationships between older adults and young children and reduce the separation between generations. This is an enriching experience for all generations, counteracting isolation and bringing disparate age groups together.

- **DIMENSION 2. Respect for diversity.**

Intergenerational initiatives facilitate connection and understanding between citizens of diverse communities, providing a space for collaboration, connection, and acceptance between different age groups and people with different backgrounds, in this way

contributing to social inclusion. Through interaction with each other, stereotypes about age, gender, and culture are challenged, fostering values of solidarity, respect, and acceptance of the “other.”

- **DIMENSION 3. Interaction with and within the community.**

Intergenerational learning initiatives take shape within a community and contribute to create different levels of interaction among citizens of often disparate age groups as well as among various community services, initiatives, and groups. These interactions can originate at an institutional level

(e.g. cooperation between early childhood education and care services and centers for older adults), among different agencies (intra-agencies) or as informal cooperation.

- **DIMENSION 4. Learning with and from each other.**

Intergenerational initiatives offer more active learning opportunities, where old and young can experience fun and enjoyment when engaging in both teaching and learning roles. Young children are creative in their learning and can be active agents in areas such as technology, creativity, and innovative thought. Older adults, on the other hand, can be teachers in crafts, folklore, and behavior modelling, and can pass down important life experiences to younger generations. Each age group has a unique outlook that can be of value to the other. It is important that the design and layout of the physical intergenerational environment (outdoors as well as indoors) is supportive of the physical and emotional wellbeing of all age

groups, to allow for these rich learning relationships to form.

- **DIMENSION 5. Professional development and teamwork.**

The composition, qualities, skills, knowledge, values, and attitudes of the people who facilitate intergenerational initiatives (paid staff, volunteers, community leaders, etc.) are essential to ensure quality intergenerational practice. Quality intergenerational initiatives are implemented by people who are engaged in professional and personal development, reflect on their practice and work cooperatively with others.

- **DIMENSION 6. Monitoring, evaluation, and sustainability.**

The sustainability of intergenerational initiatives refers to their durability and the chances of maintaining and continuing them in the short and long term. Participatory monitoring and evaluation of the service is the best way to ensure the quality and sustainability of the intergenerational initiative, taking into consideration the views and experiences of staff, children, older adults, and their families.

Appendix 24.2: The Nine ICIL’s Standards in Intergenerational Work (Sánchez, Clyde, & Brown, n.d.)

- **STANDARD 1. Intergenerational work encourages reciprocal intergenerational learning.**

Good intergenerational work emphasizes and fosters reciprocal learning – i.e. learning through an exchange of resources between different generations.

- **STANDARD 2. Intergenerational work values generational diversity.**

Intergenerational work works across generations, valuing diversity and inclusion throughout the life cycle, and promotes social cohesion through intergenerational justice and equity.

- **STANDARD 3. Intergenerational work confronts age discrimination and stereotypes.**

Preventing and challenging age discrimination and stereotyping is a key component of all good intergenerational work.

- **STANDARD 4. Intergenerational work adopts a life-course perspective.**

On the one hand, this standard means that intergenerational work approaches ageing as a lifelong, dynamic and contextualized process of human development. On the other hand, intergenerational work does not focus just on age groups but on generational groups living in particular social structures, at a particular time and with particular life trajectories.

• **STANDARD 5. Intergenerational work fosters intergenerational relationships and bonding.**

Intergenerational work not only focuses on facilitating intergenerational interactions: their real aim goes further and is to build mutually beneficial, interdependent, ongoing relationships between participant generations. Hence, intergenerational work is able to enhance social capital through social connectedness and trust. Therefore, intergenerational practitioners must support the development of intergenerational relationships and employ effective communication in doing so.

• **STANDARD 6. Intergenerational work relies on a cross-disciplinary knowledge base.**

Intergenerational work integrates knowledge from a variety of relevant fields of theory, research, and practice (from social sciences, humanities, the arts, and so on). For instance, such practices draw upon what psychology teaches us about human development across the lifespan.

• **STANDARD 7. Intergenerational work meets principles of good program management.**

Good intergenerational work needs thoughtful and purposeful program planning, development, and implementation. It must be able to address real needs which are identified by participants and/or residents in the community. Despite the diversity of participants involved, intergenerational work has to be made meaningful to all participants and should likewise recognize the importance of all of them.

• **STANDARD 8. Intergenerational work has to be evaluated.**

Evaluation both of program processes and outcomes must be carried out, i.e. practitioners must employ appropriate evaluation techniques to inform program development for diverse generational groups and settings.

• **STANDARD 9. Intergenerational practitioners involved in intergenerational work demonstrate certain values, attitudes, and beliefs that influence their behaviors.**

For instance, intergenerational practitioners are reflective, ethical, and caring professionals, with vision and passion to facilitate intergenerational encounters. They understand and demonstrate a commitment to collaboration and partnership through effective networks.