

**Staff experience and perception of Intergenerational projects
between care home residents and children.**

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Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	5
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	8
Theories	9
Search strategy	10
Presentation of the studies	11
Benefits for IGP participants	12
Challenges	15
Benefits for IGP staff	18
Challenges for IGP Staff	20
Recommendations for Improvement	20
CHAPTER 3: METHODS	24
Sample Population	24
Sample Size	26
Format	27
Data Collection Tool: Interview Guide	28
Analysis	30
Ethics	31
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS	32
Participant Demographics	32
Intergenerational program impact	33
Program effectiveness and implementation	42
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION	51
Impact on IGP participants	51
Impact on staff members	51
Program Implementation and effectiveness	52
CHAPTER 6: LIMITATIONS	55
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	56
CHAPTER 8: REFERENCES	58
CHAPTER 9: APPENDICES	68
Appendix A: Literature Review Search Strategy	68
Appendix A1: ECLIPSE	68
Appendix A2: Inclusion/Exclusion criteria	69
Appendix A3: Search terms used	69
Appendix A4 : PRISMA Flow Diagram	70
Appendix A5 : Description of selected studies	71

Appendix A6 : Critical analysis.....	73
Appendix A7: Synthesis matrix.....	77
Appendix B : Ethics documents	81
Appendix B1: ERAMS approval letter	81
Appendix B2: Invitation Email	82
Appendix B3: Participant Information Sheet.....	83
Appendix B4: Consent Form	87
Appendix B5 : Demographic questionnaire.....	89
Appendix B6: Interview Topic Guide	91
Appendix C: Codebook.....	93
Appendix D : Themes	97
Appendix E : Participants Demographics	98

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2022), people worldwide are now living longer. Figures suggest 1 in 6 people will be aged 60 or older by 2030, and by 2050, the number of people worldwide over 60 years of age is expected to have doubled to 2.1 billion (WHO, 2022). This steady demographic shift is expected to cause a rise in the demand for care services, due to the increased dependency often associated with aging (Nordberg *et al*, 2007). Consequently, families will likely experience more pressure in caring for their elders and they may seek support from care homes, thereby leading to a greater demand for these facilities.

Faced with the increased demand, care homes will have to adapt and intensify their efforts in developing strategies to engage residents, such as implementing Intergenerational Programs (IGP). IGPs are initiatives designed to facilitate structured and continuous interactions between older and younger individuals. These programs aim to benefit all participants by creating meaningful relationships, fostering emotional and social growth, increasing contact and understanding, and achieving various educational and community goals (Newman *et al.*, 1997; Newman and Hatton-Yeo, 2008).

The rise in IGPs worldwide highlights their importance, yet many aspects of their functioning and impacts remain unclear (Jarrott, 2011). Definitions of IGPs tend to be vague, and additional evidence supporting their effectiveness is required. To advance the development of IGPs, a robust conceptual framework is necessary (Vandervan, 2011).

There is also conflicting evidence regarding the effects of IGPs. Numerous studies demonstrate the benefits of these programs for young and old participants (Cohen Mansfield and Jensen, 2017; Skropeta, Colvin and Sladen, 2014): promoting individual and relationship development (Biggs and Knox, 2014), combating ageism (Carson, Kobayashi and Kuehne,

2011), and improving health and wellbeing for all participants (Hong and Morrow-Howell, 2010). However, other studies show null or negative impacts on participants (Middlecamp and Gross, 2002): older adults demonstrating no behavioral changes (Xaverius and Matthews, 2004) and children's attitudes towards older adults remained unchanged following the IGP (Barbock, Malone-Beach and Woodworth-Hou, 2016).

Focusing on the implementation of IGPs may clarify these seemingly conflicting research results and improve the likelihood of successful outcomes in the future. However, this remains challenging because researchers rarely share program implementation practices (Jarrott, 2011) or the perspectives of staff who implement the programs (Weeks, MacQuarrie, Begley, Nilsson, & MacDougall, 2016). A comprehensive perspective should include not only the experiences of children, elders, and families involved in IGPs but also the perspective of practitioners responsible for implementing the programs and administrators who oversee operations.

Furthermore, the involvement of an intergenerational coordinator (Epstein and Boisvert, 2006; Hirn, 2007) and a supportive administrator (Generation United, 2006; Kuehne and Kaplan, 2001) is crucial to establish a successful IGP (Epstein and Boisvert, 2006; Generation United, 2006). Engaging staff in the planning process of IGPs and providing them with a platform to voice their opinions will increase their investment in the programs and their overall buy in (Goyer, 1998; Jarrott and al., 2006).

This study aims to explore the experiences and perceptions of involved intergenerational staff members on the impact of IGPs between care home residents and children. Through a

qualitative approach using semi structured interviews, our objective is to identify key factors of sustainability for the programs and their impacts on the staff.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

IGPs have attracted considerable interest as new approaches to bridge the generational gap and enhance the well-being of both younger participants and older adults. These programs, often implemented in care homes promote social interaction and mutual support between generations (Kaplan & Sánchez, 2014). As the population grows older, the demand for effective and sustainable elder care strategies becomes urgent, and IGPs offer promising benefits in this context.

Staff members play a huge part in the success of IGPs. They are involved in planning, executing, and evaluating intergenerational activities, and their experiences and attitudes can significantly influence the outcomes of such programs (Williams & Cooper, 2002).

Understanding staff perceptions is essential to ensure the sustainability of IGPs.

To support the understanding of staff perceptions within intergenerational activities, a review of the existing literature was conducted. Theoretical frameworks such as Social Exchange theory (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1964), Activity theory (Havighurst, 1961) and Person-centered care model (Kitwood, 1997) have been examined to provide a structured understanding of intergenerational interactions.

Furthermore, after reviewing the literature, common themes have emerged: benefits to participants, challenges and barriers, perceptions of IGPs, program design and implementation, and impact on staff and volunteers. The goal of this review is to provide a foundation for our knowledge of IGPs and highlight gaps in knowledge regarding staff experiences.

Theories

To contextualize this research within existing studies and better understand the impacts and complex dynamics of IGPs, frameworks like Social Exchange theory (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1964), Activity theory (Havighurst, 1961) and Person-Centered Care model (Kitwood, 1997) should be discussed. These frameworks provide a foundation to interpret and understand previous research and phenomena.

Social Exchange Theory states that social behaviors result from an exchange process aimed at maximizing benefits and minimizing costs (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1964). With IGPs, this theory can be used to explore the motivations of both staff and participants, examining how these motivations are influenced by perceived contributions and benefits. Although this theory helps in understanding the motivations of both staff and participants, therefore aiding in the design of more engaging and effective programs, its transactional perspective may oversimplify the complexity of intergenerational relationships. Specifically, it overlooks the emotional depth and intrinsic rewards that frequently drive staff members involved in caregiving; aspects better captured by the Person-Centered Care Model.

The Person-Centered Care Model advocates for personalized care approaches that respect the dignity and autonomy of individuals (Kitwood, 1997). This framework supports the design of IGPs that meet specific needs and preferences of participants, improving their quality of life through personalized experiences rather than treating interactions purely as transactions. However, a potential limitation to this model is that its focus on individual care may overlook broader systemic or community level motivations and challenges, which are more effectively addressed through Social Exchange Theory.

Activity theory (Havighurst, 1961) complements the other two frameworks by emphasizing the importance, particularly in older adults, of ongoing engagement in meaningful activities to maintain well-being. This theory is useful in analyzing the role of IGPs in promoting health

through active involvement in purposeful activities (Rowe & Kahn, 1997; Jarrott, 2011).

Unlike Social Exchange Theory, which may view engagement in terms of balancing benefits, Activity Theory states that engagement itself is inherently beneficial, supporting participant's mental, physical, and social health. However, a critical perspective might argue that Activity Theory can assume that activity is always beneficial, without sufficiently considering participant's preferences or comfort levels, as advocated by the Person-Centered Care Model.

These theories applied together provide a cohesive framework for understanding the multidimensional impact of IGPs. Social Exchange Theory sheds light on motivations and reciprocity, Person-Centered Care ensures individual needs are prioritized, and Activity Theory underscores the value of continuous engagement. Situating our research within these theories provides a holistic understanding of IGPs, building on existing knowledge and providing a structured approach to interpreting findings.

Search strategy

To investigate the perceptions and experiences of staff members involved in IGPs between care home residents and children, a literature review was conducted utilizing the ECLIPSE framework (Appendix A1). The review aimed to explore staff expectations regarding how participation in IGPs impacts their experiences.

In developing the search strategy (Appendix 1), specific inclusion and exclusion criteria were established (Appendix A2). Only studies that focused on staff perceptions related to IGPs and were published in English were included, while studies older than 2000 were excluded due to the relatively recent emergence of intergenerational programming. The search terms utilized were comprehensive and targeted, incorporating keywords related to staff perspectives, children and elderly interactions, various care settings, and the specific context of intergenerational programs (Appendix A3).

5 studies were selected (Appendix A4-A5) and the Critical Appraisal Skills Program (CASP) (Critical Appraisal Skills Program, 2023) and the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT) (Hong et al, 2018) were employed to assess the methodological quality of the studies (Appendix A6). A synthesis matrix was then created to systematically categorize and summarize the key findings from each study (Appendix A7). This matrix facilitated the identification of recurring patterns and insights, leading to the emergence of several key themes.

The analysis revealed significant themes related to benefits for participants and for IGP staff, as well as the challenges they encountered and recommendations for program improvement. These themes provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the multifaceted experiences of staff members involved in IGPs and can inform future research and practice in this field.

Presentation of the studies

5 studies were selected for this literature review. Lux, Tarabochia and Barben (2019), conducted a qualitative case study to explore the perceptions of different stakeholders involved in an IGP, providing rich, context-specific details. However, the study's lack of quantitative analysis limited its scope and replicability, affecting its generalizability. In contrast, Weeks et al (2016) combined qualitative and quantitative data through surveys. This approach enhanced the reliability and generalizability of their findings, allowing for both in-depth understanding and broader statistical validation. Their goal was to assess the perceived benefits and burdens for nursing home staff in a facility planning to implement a shared site IGP.

Gigliotti et al (2007), used a theory and evidence-based approach to plan, implement and evaluate a temporary summer IGP, aiming to synthesize the perceptions of key stakeholders

through interviews. Stanley et al (2022) explored the sustainability of IGPs by conducting qualitative interviews with participants and practitioners, while Holmes (2009) outlined the first year of planning and implementation for an IGP. By following different stakeholders and interviewing participants and families, Holmes (2009) presented insights into the various steps required to ensure IGP's smooth operation.

While Stanley et al (2022) provided a snapshot in time, and Gigliotti et al (2007) focused on a temporary summer IGP, limiting its applicability to year-round settings, Holme's (2009) longitudinal study followed participants over a full year. This longer duration offered more detailed insights into the sustained impacts of IGPs and how perceptions evolve, which is crucial for understanding their sustainability.

However, Holmes (2009)'s reliance on self-reported data may introduce bias and fail to fully capture all challenges. The use of quantitative data by Weeks et al (2016) could mitigate this issue somewhat by providing a broader spectrum of responses, enhancing reliability.

Benefits for IGP participants

IGPs offer a wide range of benefits to all stakeholders. These programs contribute to professional satisfaction, enhanced social interactions, improved mental health and increased physical activity, by fostering meaningful connections between different generations (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Holmes, 2019; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016).

Psychological

Participating in IGPs improves significantly the psychological well-being of elderly individuals. According to Weeks et al. (2016), intergenerational activities can reduce feelings of depression and loneliness among nursing home residents. Nursing home staff also reported that intergenerational activities brought vitality and joy to residents, improving their moods

and enhancing their overall quality of life by reducing feelings of isolation (Holmes, 2009; Weeks et al, 2016). The presence of children created a stimulating and lively environment, which staff believed had a significant impact on residents' emotional and mental well-being. Regular interaction with younger participants provides a sense of purpose and fulfillment that is often missing in institutional care settings (Warchol, Park & O'Connell, 2003). However, questions remain in the literature regarding the long-term sustainability of these psychological benefits, as it is unclear how enduring the positive effects of intergenerational activities are for elderly participants.

Cognitive

IGPs can provide cognitive benefits for both groups by stimulating cognitive functioning in elderly participants through activities that require critical thinking, memory and problem-solving skills (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Lux et al, 2020). Regular mental engagement is crucial in maintaining mental sharpness and delaying cognitive decline (Wilson et al, 2007) but there is a gap in knowledge regarding the different impacts of structured activities compared to more informal interactions.

Older participants provide their younger counterparts with their rich learning experiences, creating mutual respect and understanding between generations (Stanley et al, 2022). In IGPs, children are often exposed to new stories, knowledge and skills that broaden their understanding of the world and enhance their cognitive development (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020).

Social/Emotional

IGPs also impact participants socially. Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben (2020) highlight that these programs promote mutual respect and understanding between participants, facilitate meaningful social interactions and break down age-related stereotypes. Elderly participants often experience increased social engagement in IGPs, alleviating the social isolation commonly associated with aging (Femia et al, 2008).

For children, IGPs offer opportunities to develop emotional intelligence and empathy. Holmes (2009) reports that children participating in intergenerational activities show increased understanding and patience towards the elderly. Similarly, staff members in educational settings observed that children involved in intergenerational activities exhibited improved social skills, were more empathetic, and had a greater appreciation for older adults (Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020). The children showed improved behavior in group settings and developed better social skills (Stanley et al, 2022). The interactions happening in the playgroups help them learn to communicate effectively with people of different backgrounds and ages (Stanley et al, 2022). These behaviors also translated to more compassionate behavior in other areas of the children's lives (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020).

Physical

Engagement in physical activities is another significant benefit of IGPs (Gigliotti et al, 2005). Elderly participants often increase their physical activity levels during intergenerational sessions (Gigliotti et al, 2005). Activities like dancing, gardening, and light exercise enhance

mobility, improve physical health and decrease the risk of falls among older adults (Choi, Moon & Song, 2005).

Participating in these activities can promote healthier lifestyles for children as well. Active engagement alongside older adults teaches children the importance of staying active throughout life and encourages physical fitness (Holmes, 2009).

IGPs offer a holistic range of benefits for participants: psychological, social, physical, and cognitive (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Holmes, 2019; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016). These programs not only provide valuable developmental opportunities for younger individuals (Holmes, 2019; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016), but they also improve the quality of life for elderly participants (Holmes, 2019; Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020; Weeks et al, 2016). By fostering mutual understanding and engagement, IGPs enhance community well-being through creating enriching experiences that bridge generational gaps (Gigliotti et al, 2005).

Challenges

Despite the numerous benefits associated with IGPs, many challenges and barriers can limit their successful implementation. These obstacles can stem from interpersonal, structural and logistical issues, that affect both the operation and design of the programs (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Holmes, 2019; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016).

Cognitive and Physical Limitations

Many nursing home residents suffer from cognitive impairments or physical limitations and working with these vulnerable populations can be challenging for staff members (Gaugler, Kane & Langlois, 2000). Weeks et al, (2016) and Holmes, (2009) highlight the need for tailored activities that provide meaningful interaction opportunities while accommodating these limitations. Staff must be able to modify activities to suit individual needs, which can require additional creativity and resources (Weeks et al, 2016). Activities should be designed to encourage cooperation and interaction, such as storytelling sessions, shared arts and crafts projects, or physical exercises accessible for both elderly and young participants and adapted to various ability levels (Gigliotti et al, 2005).

Logistics

One of the biggest logistical challenges in implementing IGPs is coordinating schedules between the different age groups involved (Holmes, 2019; Weeks et al. 2016; Gigliotti et al, 2005). Aligning the availability of elderly residents with that of younger participants is a real difficulty, often resulting in inconsistent engagement and attendance (Holmes, 2019; Gigliotti et al, 2005). Additionally, nursing homes are not always designed to accommodate large, diverse groups due to limited physical spaces available to host IGPs (Stanley et al, 2002; Weeks et al., 2016). Ensuring that facilities have adequate resources, that schedules align, and that transportation is available can be difficult, and require careful collaboration and planning (Holmes, 2019; Weeks et al. 2016).

Furthermore, Stanley et al. (2022) highlights the importance of securing adequate resources and funding. IGPs often require financial investment for staff training, material and transportation (Stanley et al, 2022). Identifying funding sources and developing a sustainable budget are critical steps in the planning process (Stanley et al, 2022).

Training

Another significant barrier is the need for specialized staff training. Managing intergenerational interactions can be complex due to the differing behaviors and needs of the participants, and staff members must be adequately trained to manage these interactions (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Holmes, 2009; Lux et al., 2020; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al 2016). Without proper training, staff may struggle to address any conflicts or issues that arise during sessions; or to facilitate meaningful activities which can have an impact on program effectiveness (Holmes, 2019; Weeks et al, 2016). Training helps equip staff with strategies to foster positive interactions and allows them to understand the dynamics of intergenerational relationships (Holmes, 2019).

Interpersonal Issues

Interpersonal challenges (difficulties or conflicts that arise in interactions between individuals, often due to differing perspectives, communication styles, or personal conflicts” (Hargie, O., 2016)) also play a crucial role in the success of IGPs. Misunderstandings and communication barriers can often lead to frustration among staff and participants (Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020). Creating an understanding and supportive environment is essential to effectively address and resolve these issues to ensure the successful implementation of an IGP (Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020).

Sustaining Engagement

Maintaining long-term engagement in IGPs poses another challenge. Staff reported that sustaining participation and interest over time requires continuous innovation and effort in the activities offered (Stanley et al, 2022). A decline in participation that undermines programs' effectiveness and impact can be a sign of their failure to evolve (Stanley et al, 2022).

While IGPs offer many important benefits, addressing their interpersonal, structural and logistical challenges is crucial for their success (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Holmes, 2009; Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016). To ensure that IGPs are both sustainable and impactful, program facilitators and designers must understand these barriers and develop more effective strategies to overcome them (Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020).

Benefits for IGP staff

There are also several benefits for staff members involved in IGPs.

Psychological/Emotional

The psychological and emotional benefits for staff involved in IGPs are substantial (Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020). By witnessing the positive impacts of IGPs on participants, staff members experience increased emotional well-being (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016). The satisfaction and joy derived from facilitating meaningful interactions between different generations contributed to improved mental health and lower stress levels among staff (Stanley et al, 2022 Weeks et al, 2016).

Job satisfaction

Participation in these programs can provide a sense of fulfillment and enhance job satisfaction (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016). According to Weeks et al. (2016), nursing home staff involved in intergenerational activities reported a greater sense of accomplishment. This sense of fulfillment likely stems from witnessing the positive outcomes of the program on elderly residents and children, contributing to a sense of purpose in their daily work. Such experiences can enhance job satisfaction, making the work more rewarding by providing evidence of the program's positive impacts. (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Holmes, 2009; Weeks et al, 2016).

Holmes (2009) emphasized that by introducing a variety of meaningful interactions with both younger and older participants, into their daily routines, IGPs contributed to a more positive and dynamic work environment, increasing staff engagement and reducing burnouts among staff. The variety in daily activities breaks the monotony of routine tasks, fostering a more engaging and supportive work atmosphere (Holmes 2009; Weeks et al, 2016). The difference in focus between these two studies suggests that IGPs have a multifaceted impact on staff, enhancing both the emotional reward of their roles (greater sense of accomplishment) and their psychological resilience (reduced burnout).

Participating in IGPs helped staff develop greater patience, better communication skills and improved adaptability (Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020). These skills are transferable to other areas of their personal and professional lives, enhancing their overall confidence and competency (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020).

Additionally, these programs allow staff to acquire new skills in caregiving and intergenerational facilitation by offering professional development opportunities (Weeks et al, 2016).

Challenges for IGP Staff

Gigliotti et al. (2005) pointed out that coordinating intergenerational activities can require additional time and effort to plan and execute sessions effectively, therefore increasing the workload for staff. Balancing their regular duties with these responsibilities can be demanding, and potentially lead to burnout if not managed properly (Gigliotti et al, 2005).

Recommendations for Improvement

IGPs are increasingly recognized for the mutual benefits they provide to participants from different age groups and their potential to bridge generational gaps (Stanley et al, 2022).

Understanding the recommendations of those involved in these programs, like the staff who facilitate and witness these interactions, is crucial for evaluating their effectiveness and identifying areas for improvement (Weeks et al, 2016). Based on their experiences, staff members have offered several recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of IGPs.

Feedback and evaluation

Continuous feedback from participants and staff to adapt and improve the programs is crucial (Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020). Regular evaluations help identify areas for improvement and ensure that the program remains enjoyable and effective for all participants (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Jarrott & Bruno, 2008). Feedback from both staff and participants can provide valuable insights into what works well and what needs adjustment (Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020). Open communication channels and regular evaluations can help identify what needs adjustment and what works well, ensuring that IGPs remain effective and relevant (Gigliotti et al, 2005).

Program Design and Implementation

Effective design and implementation of IGPs are critical to achieving their intended benefits (Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020; Weeks et al, 2016). Successful IGPs are characterized by adaptability to meet the needs of diverse participants, careful planning and collaboration between stakeholders (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Holmes, 2009; Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016) and a clear understanding of its objectives and goals (Gigliotti et al, 2005). According to Weeks et al. (2016), establishing specific aims, such as improving mental health, enhancing social interactions, or fostering mutual respect, provides a framework for developing activities that align with these goals. Evaluating program effectiveness is also facilitated by clear objectives (Weeks and al, 2016).

Tailoring activities that consider the cognitive and physical abilities of elderly participants can help maximize enjoyment and engagement (Gigliotti et al, 2005).

Staff recommend regular training sessions to equip facilitators and caregivers with the skills needed to manage intergenerational interactions effectively (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Holmes, 2009; Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016). Staff and volunteers acquire new skills in managing intergenerational interactions, which can be both complex and rewarding (Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020).

Collaboration

Effective IGPs require collaboration between various stakeholders, including program facilitators, educational institutions, nursing home staff, and families (Holmes, 2009; Weeks et al, 2016). Programs benefitting from strong partnerships are more likely to succeed (Lux,

Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020). Engaging stakeholders in the planning process ensures that the program meets the needs and expectations of all involved parties (Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020; Weeks et al, 2016).

Adaptability

IGPs must be adaptable to address the evolving needs of participants (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Holmes, 2009; Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016). Program design must be flexible to allow modifications based on changing circumstances or participant feedback (Holmes, 2009; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016). For example, activities may need to be adjusted to maintain the engagement of younger participants or accommodate the physical or cognitive limitations of elderly participants (Gigliotti et al, 2005). However, existing literature often falls short in providing specific, evidence-based strategies for how programs can be adaptively managed. Most studies lack detailed guidelines on how to systematically incorporate feedback loops or modify activities dynamically to suit the preferences and capabilities of both age groups. As a result, there remains a need for more practical frameworks that guide facilitators in iteratively refining IGPs to maintain interest across different phases of the program.

This review highlights the different benefits and challenges from the IGP staff member's point of view (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Holmes, 2019; Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016). Elderly participants can experience reduced social isolation (Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020, Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016), enhanced social engagement (Holmes, 2009; Weeks et al, 2016) and improved cognitive and physical health (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Holmes, 2019; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016)

while children experienced improved emotional intelligence (Holmes, 2019), and social skills (Stanley et al, 2022).

For staff members, IGPs offer opportunities for professional development (Stanley et al., 2022; Weeks et al, 2016), increased job satisfaction (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Holmes, 2019; Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016), and emotional well-being derived from witnessing positive participant outcomes (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Holmes, 2019; Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016), and being able to acquire new skills (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020).

However, several challenges are also present when implementing IGPs (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Holmes, 2019; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016), and the recommendations made by staff members should be followed to improve IGPs and provide the best experience possible for the participants.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

Qualitative research design was used to explore the views of intergenerational staff about the implementation of intergenerational programs (IGPs) within care homes, using semi structured interviews.

Sample Population

The sample chosen for investigation consisted of staff members involved in IGPs and included healthcare assistants, engagement and lifestyle lead in care homes as well as a primary advisory teacher and a programme manager in different charities.

The prevalence of cognitive aging, dementia, and medical/neurological comorbidities increases with age, and is deeply related to declines in everyday functioning, including loss of decision-making skills (Karlavish, & Schmitt, 2000). This can impact the mental capacity of care home residents, rendering them vulnerable (Kim, Karlavish, & Caine, 2002). These impairments have ethical and legal repercussions for patients, families, health providers and researchers (Triebel et al., 2018), making it difficult to directly research the impact of IGPs on care home residents. Given the scope and resources of our study (master's degree dissertation), studying the perspectives of intergenerational staff provides valuable insights on IGPs, their structures and implications, without having to go through the complicated ethics linked with direct examination of the residents, therefore giving us a more feasible approach.

Care home staff involved in IGPs play a significant role in facilitating interactions among all participants and they are directly involved in all the daily operations and implementation of IGPs (Lux et al, 2020; Dury et al, 2015). They can grasp the unique needs and preferences of residents through their continual interactions (Dury et al., 2015). They can notice changes in elderly attitudes and discern the benefits or challenges of IGPs. They provide invaluable

insights into resident engagement, social interactions, and well-being in relation to IGPs, making them the perfect participants to feedback for our research (Lux et al, 2020, Epstein and Boivert, 2006; Generation United, 2006).

In addition, staff who facilitate IGPs also provide critical insights into the impacts and structures of these programs. With their regular interactions with participants and their broader, strategic view of program delivery, they can offer diverse perspectives that enrich our understanding at all levels of the program.

Involving staff in research on IGPs provides them with an opportunity to reflect, but also fosters increased buy-in and engagement with the programs. Seeking their input, demonstrates a commitment to partnership and collaboration from the researchers, enhancing the validity and relevance of the findings through their firsthand experiences and insights (Hemsley and Balandin, 2014; Holmes, C, 2009 ; Weeks et al, 2016).

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the IGP, this research involved staff members that took part in the activities, with at least 6 months of experience with IGPs to ensure they were familiar with the programs and their insights were based on experience and not guesses. Staff offered a different perspective into the planning of the activities, the residents' participation, and the outcomes of the program. They not only observed the dynamics of the program, but also provided a more comprehensive understanding, contributing to the long-term effectiveness of the program. The researcher was also interested in their perceptions of their own work and how being involved in such programs affects them directly.

Sample Size

10 intergenerational staff members were interviewed. This sample size allowed us to balance practical considerations (time and resources) and depth of understanding needed.

In order to collect qualitative data, the choice was made to gather rich, detailed insights from each participant, ensuring a thorough understanding of staff perspectives regarding IGPs (Patton, 2002). Using a smaller sample size allowed for in-depth exploration of participants' views and experiences. This approach empowered the researcher, to engage meaningfully with each participant, and capture the nuanced intricacies of their individual experiences with IGPs (Charmaz, 2006).

Participants were recruited using a mix of purposive and snowball sampling, through introductions made by “United for all ages” (Appendix B2), “a 'think-do' tank founded in 2010 to create a 'Britain for all ages', tackling big social and economic issues such as loneliness, ageism, care, health, housing and learning” that the researcher met for a previous assignment (United for all ages, 2019).

Conducting qualitative research, our aim was to reach data saturation, a point where new data cease to provide new insights relevant to our research question, providing sufficient information to understand the research topic (Guest, Bunce, and Johnson 2006). Considering the complexity of the interactions between individuals from different age groups and backgrounds, it was also necessary to capture the different dynamics and their impacts on the participants (Gibson, Boals, & Young, 2009). Additionally, it's important to acknowledge the involvement of various stakeholders in the IGPs such as: elderly, children, activity leaders, administrators, and families, each bringing a unique perspective that contribute to a specific experience for each participant and staff member, allowing an exhaustive understanding of the topic (Coleman & Houston, 2017). Finally, the variability in implementation of IGPs was considered when aiming for data saturation. IGPs vary widely in goals, designs, and

implementation strategies, all of which influence the stakeholder's experiences and perceptions (Baskin, Parris Stephens, & Dean 2015). However, it was essential to continuously assess data saturation and remain flexible during the data collection process.

The chosen population and sample size for this study provided enough data to achieve data saturation, ensuring a comprehensive understanding and effective analysis of staff perspectives on IGPs.

Format

The researcher engaged with staff members actively involved in IGPs within care homes located all over England. Intergenerational activities were conducted at least monthly in all the facilities and organisations where our participants were employed.

Qualitative research design was used to explore the views of intergenerational staff about the implementation of intergenerational programs within care homes.

Qualitative research allowed the researcher to understand the context in which intergenerational staff operates, within their workplace, but also in a broader organization or within society and culture, explaining deeper factors that can influence their perspectives (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

1 to 1 semi structured interview format was particularly well suited for our research question. Given the exploratory nature of this research, it provided a balance between structure and flexibility, enabling the researchers to build upon a predetermined set of questions while also having the freedom to ask for clarifications and explore emergent themes that might erupt during the interview (Berg, 2009). 1 to 1 semi structured interview facilitated deeper exploration of the topic. Using open ended and follow up questions led to more detailed insights, explanations, and examples, creating a richer understanding of the topic (Creswell &

Creswell, 2017; Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method was particularly suited to capturing the nuanced experiences of staff members, which may have been overlooked through standardized surveys. Additionally, it eliminated the influence of group dynamics and granted the participants more freedom to express their views (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009).

However, the success of one-on-one semi-structured interviews directly depends on the skills of the interviewer. Establishing a relationship built on trust was essential. They engaged in active listening and showed interest and empathy towards participants' experiences (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). This fostered a respectful and supportive environment that made participants feel comfortable and encouraged them to share more insightful responses (Berg, 2009).

The researcher also needed to adapt their approach based on the individual characteristics and needs of each participant. They had to adjust the pace of the interview, the tone of voice to accommodate different communication styles, comfort levels or preferences amongst the participants, which was not always an easy task (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Data Collection Tool: Interview Guide

Semi structured interviews following an interview guide (Appendix 6), conducted both in person and online using Microsoft Teams, were chosen as the data collection tool.

All the interviews were recorded using Microsoft Teams and the interviewer took notes throughout the process. The data collected (recordings and notes) were transferred to the Box website to be stored safely before being transcribed and analysed. Recording the interviews allowed the researcher to pay more attention to the participant, their needs and to nonverbal signs (Quesada, 2001; Swan, 1991).

In person settings helped establish rapport more naturally, fostering a comfortable environment where participants could feel more inclined to provide detailed responses (King

& Horrocks, 2010). Face to face setting facilitated direct observation of the participant's behaviors, which could lead to deeper insights and a richer understanding of the participant's emotions and attitudes (Opdenakker, 2006). This personal interaction supported a stronger connection between the interviewer and interviewee, ultimately enhancing the quality of the collected data.

Microsoft Teams, even though less impactful than in person interviews, was a practical alternative to provide a face-to-face virtual experience. Rich and dynamic conversation was maintained while accommodating the interviewer and interviewee, allowing them to schedule meetings conveniently, avoiding the stress associated with travel (Janghorban, Latifnejad Roudsari, & Taghipour, 2014).

The interview started with an introduction from the interviewer, and an overview of the goals of the research form to create a relaxed atmosphere for the interviewee. After that, the questions started based on the interview guide.

The interview guide was created to particularly suit IGP practices and obtain deep and relevant information from staff while avoiding bias. Interviews lasted about 30 minutes.

The questions followed suggested characteristics (Sánchez et al, 2007) :

- Be open: propose objective, non-leading questions so the interviewees responding using their preferred terms and go in whichever direction they wish.
- Be singular: questions should include only one topic/idea to avoid confusion, remain clear and keep control of the interview.
- Be clear: questions should be easy to understand and not use labels or over complicated terms (Garcia Ramos, 2000).
- Be neutral: remain impartial when facing the answers, don't show surprise, don't critic or evaluate the answers (Cardinet, 1988).

Following advice from the literature (Guba and Lincoln, 1992: 177-178; Patton, 1990: 221; González, 1998: 28-29), hypothetical questions, questions suggesting an ideal, and interpretative questions were included, to understand what happens in IGPs and the interviewee's personal thoughts about it to get deep and goop data (Sánchez et al, 2007). The follow up questions considered for what reason questions, argument type questions, source type questions to elicit explanation and understand the origin of the interviewee's answer (Sánchez et al, 2007).

Analysis

After transcribing each interview, thematic analysis was used to analyse the data from the semi structured interviews. Its flexibility is well-suited to analyzing qualitative data, particularly when exploring participants' personal experiences and perspectives (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It allows the researcher to identify, analyze, and report themes within the data without being restricted to pre-existing theoretical frameworks, making it ideal for capturing the complexity and diversity of experiences in IGPs. This flexibility is especially valuable given the varied roles and backgrounds of the participants, as it helps to highlight both shared experiences and differences (Nowell et al., 2017). Additionally, its transparent and systematic process ensures the findings are both rigorous and reliable (Nowell et al., 2017).

After repeated reading of the transcripts and taking notes of recurrent topic emerging, in order to gain familiarity with the data (Braun & Clark, 2006), inducting coding was used to let codes emerge from the data and generate initial codes. A codebook (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014) (Appendix C) was used to track and organize the different codes to insure consistency in the qualitative analysis. Codes were then grouped together to form themes (Braun & Clark, 2006). Identified themes were reviewed and refined by considering the coherence and internal consistency of each of them, to make sure they accurately represented

the data (Guest, Bunce, Johnson, 2006). Each theme was clearly named and defined with a description of its meaning (Appendix D) (Braun and Clark, 2006). Finally, during the write up of the analysis, each theme was described narratively and supported by direct quotes or examples from the data to provide a coherent interpretation of the findings (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017).

Ethics

This study was approved by the ethics committee of the University of Essex, they reviewed the validity of our study based on possible harm and determined that our study can be carried out ethically. (Appendix B – B1)

Informed consent (Appendix B4) was obtained from all participants ensuring that participation was voluntary and that they understood the procedures, benefits, risks, and purpose of the study without any coercion (Kitchener, 1983). Their confidentiality and anonymity were be protected by using anonymized data, each participant was identified using a number. Interviews recordings and transcripts were exclusively saved on the university's cloud storage Box. Only the researcher and their supervisor had access to the data to ensure secured storage (National Institutes of Health, 2019).

Precautions were taken to ensure the anonymity of any elderly or children participating in the IGP mentioned during the interviews. The researcher remained aware that working with vulnerable population can have a strong impact on the staff's mental state and it was ensured that all participants in this study felt safe and healthy and could decide to stop their participation at any time.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This section presents the findings from interviews conducted with staff members involved in IGPs. The results reflect the perceptions, opinions, and experiences of the staff who participated in this study. Their insights provide an in-depth understanding of the impact of IGPs on different participants, including children, older adults, and the staff themselves, as well as the perceived effectiveness, challenges, and areas for improvement in the programs.

Participant Demographics

A total of 10 participants were interviewed for this study. Demographic data describing the sample is presented in Appendix (E), highlighting a distinct gender imbalance, as all participants were women. Despite this, the sample encompasses a diverse range of ages, ethnicities, religions, and marital statuses, providing a well-rounded representation of various backgrounds.

Out of the 10 participants, 6 were staff members from Nightingale Hammerson care home, which partnered with Apples and Honey Nightingale and became UK's first co-located nursery and care home (Apples and Honey Nightingale, 2021). These 6 participants included 4 carers and 2 engagement leaders, all of whom were interviewed in person.

The remaining 4 participants were interviewed remotely via Microsoft Teams. These included 2 lifestyle leads from Hallmark Care Homes (Anya Court and Maycroft Manor), a program manager from InCommon, “a charity that fosters intergenerational relationships by connecting young people with older neighbors” (InCommon, 2024), and a primary advisory teacher from The Linking Network, whose goal is to “equip schools to help children and young people build meaningful connections across all forms of differences” (The Linking Network, 2024).

To be included in the research, staff members needed to have at least 6 months of experience in their roles and have participated in IGPs in person.

This diverse sample allowed for a thorough exploration of how IGPs impact participants across different age groups, cultural backgrounds, and personal circumstances. The range of religious beliefs and marital statuses further enriched the study's insights into participant perspectives and experiences. The sample size allowed to reach data saturation, ensuring comprehensive coverage of the themes explored.

Intergenerational program impact *Younger participants*

The impact of intergenerational programs (IGPs) varied across different stakeholders. Staff members provided extensive insights into the effects of IGPs on both the children and the older adults participating in the sessions. Given that most of the interviewees were care home staff members, they had more direct contact with older adults and they initially focused on the benefits experienced by this group. However, their enthusiasm for IGPs also led them to highlight the positive effects on the younger participants.

A prominent theme identified by staff was the unique value IGPs provided to children who may not have frequent interactions with their grandparents, due to geographical distance or the loss of grandparents. Staff members noted that participating in IGPs allowed children to develop meaningful intergenerational relationships with older adults, fostering friendships that positively influenced their perception of the older adults. These interactions were described as helping children build confidence, empathy and challenge stereotypes about aging:

“At the beginning of the year we’ll ask them, ‘Are you nervous? What are your conceptions of older people?’ and they’ll say ‘Oh they are just old, or grey’ (...) And you also see their perceptions on age change because we’ll do a survey with them at the end of the program (...) and it’s just so nice to see how the words change. They describe them as gentle and kind and interesting...” (Interviewee 10)

IGPs were also noted for their significant role in fostering the personal development of younger participants. Staff members observed that IGPs provided opportunities for children and young adults to grow and thrive, particularly in terms of social interaction and self-confidence.

“They gain a familiarity with each other and so they actually do become friends. (...) So you slowly see these friendships build and I think that’s where people gain more confidence” (Interviewee 7)

One example provided was that of an introverted child who typically avoided social situations and preferred to remain in isolation. During an IGP session, this child actively engaged with an older adult, demonstrating a level of social interaction that had not been previously observed. Similarly, a young girl with Tourette’s syndrome, who was initially anxious about how her condition might be perceived by the older participants, found comfort in their acceptance. Staff noted that the older participants did not react negatively to her involuntary vocalizations, which helped her to relax. As a result, both her anxiety and her Tourette’s symptoms were significantly reduced.

IGPs have been shown to help younger participants develop self-assurance and embrace their individuality. Staff members emphasized that by the conclusion of the program, children who were initially reserved often displayed increased confidence and comfort in expressing themselves.

“By the end of a program, you’ll have younger people who might have been a little more shy, coming out of their shell and being just so themselves, being able to really showcase their personality.” (Interviewee 10)

Additionally, participation in IGPs inspired some young adults to consider careers in elder care, driven by the positive relationships they formed with older participants:

“They are doing this to build up their skills and confidence to go out into the workforce. (...) She wanted to volunteer for a little while. So she's been doing that, and now she's just successfully applied and got a job as a carer because she loved it so much. So she's about to start as a carer.” (Interviewee 9)

While the positive effects of intergenerational programs on children are significant, the impact on older participants is equally profound, fostering emotional well-being and a renewed sense of purpose.

Older participants

Staff perceived IGPs as highly beneficial for older participants. All staff members agreed that participating in an IGP provided older adults with opportunities for reminiscence, allowing them to recall and reflect on their past experiences. Through interactions with children, many older participants were reminded of their own children when they were young, evoking a sense of nostalgia. These moments of reminiscence were described as positive, as they helped bring cherished memories back to life.

“When the kids come to the floor, it's full of life, they start laughing and playing around. So those lovely memories, where they have kids or they have grandkids around, come back to them. You can see the impact that the intergenerational activities bring to the floor. It is really amazing.” (Interviewee 1)

Building relationships with children also had a significant positive emotional impact on the older adults. Staff members used descriptors such as "entertained," "soothed," "smiling," "transformed," and "invigorated" to portray the demeanor of older participants during IGP activities.

“And they start getting involved and engaged, whatever is going on. It's just smooth. That just brings them right down. (...) it's easier.” (Interviewee 3)

After the sessions, they often used terms like "happy," "therapeutic," "relaxed," and "improved sense of being" to describe the older participants. These descriptions indicate an enhancement in both mood and emotional well-being, underscoring the positive influence of IGPs.

In addition to emotional benefits, IGPs also positively affected the overall well-being of older participants, including their physical abilities. One staff member recounted how an older resident, who typically struggled with motor coordination, managed to catch a ball during an IGP session, demonstrating an improvement in motor skills.

Another staff member shared a story about an older woman with mobility challenges who, motivated by her desire to attend the intergenerational sessions, went out to purchase a walker. This action not only allowed her to participate in the IGP but also promoted her independence and facilitated greater social interaction.

“She went out and bought herself a walker so that she can come to the sessions and also now because she's got that walker, she's more confident going outside. She's more confident connecting with her other neighbors. It just goes to show that something that seems small, like something that's just a session on a monthly basis, can actually really transform someone's well-being, and transform how they interact with other people.” (Interviewee 10)

IGPs foster a profound sense of community and belonging among older participants, as expressed by staff members:

“They start to feel like they belong. And when somebody starts to feel like they belong, then they can start inputting in different ways”. (Interviewee 8)

Additionally, these programs instill feelings of ownership, purpose, and achievement in older participants. In several IGPs, older adults are encouraged to take on active roles, which

enhances their engagement. For instance, in one program, an older woman teaches children a foreign language:

“So the reason why she's so much into teaching the children is because she loves the children and because she's doing something to help, and she looks forward to it, to give something out, she has a responsibility.” (Interviewee 5)

In another instance, an older resident manages the care home shop:

“Actually, the biggest thing you can do is give them something to do (...) one of our residents, it's her job to do the shop (...) and that's really life changing for her to be able to do that, to have this responsibility (...). That's super important to her.” (Interviewee 8)

By assigning responsibilities linked to intergenerational activities, older participants feel more motivated and recognize their capacity to impact the lives of the children involved. This sense of contribution enhances their self-esteem and self-worth.

“It's giving them the opportunity to take care of others, to lead something. And I think that improves mental well-being. It improves physical well-being, emotional well-being, you know, being needed and wanted. (...) And if you don't do things for other people, you never get thanked. And if you never get thanked, how do you feel a sense of self worth, you know? Where does your sense of being come from ?” (Interviewee 8)

However, while IGPs significantly benefit older participants, staff members also highlighted the emotional complexities associated with these programs. While reminiscing about their past often brings joy and positive emotions, it can also evoke sadness by reminding participants of lost loved ones or their younger selves. Similarly, seeing the children leave after an activity can sometimes foster a sense of loneliness among the older adults. As expressed by a staff member, it can have an emotional toll on them:

“I'm thinking when these children leave sometimes, what does it do to their minds? It can be in a positive way and it can be the negative. It might make them sad because they're remembering their own children.” (Interviewee 3)

Similarly, staff members also noted that not all older participants enjoyed taking part in these activities. Some older adults expressed a preference for not attending IGP sessions at all or maintaining distance from the children, choosing instead to observe from a distance.

“But we have a resident that doesn't really like the intergenerational activities (...) she says that they make such a fuss with too much energy. And some people would prefer to be in a calm environment. For her, it is more like a walk in the garden. She can see the kids from afar, she will enjoy it. But being with them makes her a little bit agitated” (Interviewee 1)

Although the positive impacts of IGPs generally outweigh these challenges for most participants, staff members acknowledged that there are exceptions where the emotional toll can be significant.

Beyond the participants, the benefits of intergenerational programs extend to the staff members, influencing their job satisfaction, motivation, and the overall work environment.

Staff members

For staff members, the motivation to work in care often stems from personal history or cultural influences. One staff member shared,

“As we were talking about it, I realized that this was my dream job, because I've always loved hanging out with older people,” (Interviewee 8)

while another reflected,

“I've always had intergenerational connections growing up.” (Interviewee 10)

This passion for intergenerational interactions was a common theme among staff, serving as a driving force for their engagement in care work.

Staff members expressed strong enthusiasm for IGPs when discussing their experience. They frequently described the joy they felt from participating in IGPs, emphasizing how witnessing the happiness of participants was deeply fulfilling. As one noted,

"And it's just nice to see. You smile when they smile because you can see that they're happy." (Interviewee 4)

Another highlighted the satisfaction of seeing the impact directly and getting to know the diverse personalities involved:

"The bit of my job that is often the most enjoyable is seeing this happen directly, seeing the different range of things that can happen, that are chosen to do, but can be really powerful, and also the chance for me personally, to get to know some of these older people." (Interviewee 7)

IGPs also facilitated the formation of strong relationships between staff, children, and older residents, fostering a sense of trust and common interest. One staff member explained,

"They create that relationship between the carers, the kids, and the residents. It's very therapeutic for all of us to have intergenerational interactions and activities." (Interviewee 1)

These relationships not only enriched staff members' experiences but also made caregiving tasks easier, as the bonds formed allowed them to understand residents better and address their needs more effectively.

In addition, the positive effects of IGPs on older participants often translated to a more manageable workload for caregivers. After participating in sessions, older residents were typically more relaxed and in good spirits which positively influences the overall atmosphere within the care setting. One caregiver shared,

"Oh, it makes my life easier when she joins the activities. When she's on her own, it's just constantly talking about 'I'm sick, I'm this... ', so the more engaged she becomes, the better for me. I always push her to be engaged. It helps her and it helps me as well." (Interviewee 5)

However, while many engagement leaders and caregivers recognized the benefits of caregivers attending IGP sessions with residents, challenges remained in ensuring consistent participation from all staff. Some facilities faced resistance from caregivers who viewed attending IGPs as an additional burden rather than an integral part of their role. As one participant expressed,

"We're just trying to change that culture of 'Well, we don't need to be there because the engagement team are there.' When their residents come to join an activity, they should be coming with them. It doesn't always work. It is sometimes a bit of a battle because they just see it as more work." (Interviewee 9)

Despite these challenges, caregivers who participated in the sessions felt that their presence enriched the experience of their residents:

"They just know you are there, just to give them emotional support. When you're there, in the moment with them, I think it's better for them." (Interviewee 3)

Staff members demonstrated a deep love for their work but acknowledged the stigma surrounding care roles. One remarked,

"I keep on telling people: 'I do it on purpose, I didn't just stumble upon it. I really did want to be here.' Because care homes have this stigma that people don't want to be here and only come here as a last resort. While there are so many dedicated team members here that really do care for the community." (Interviewee 2)

The demanding nature of care work, especially in vulnerable populations, also became apparent through staff reflections for both caregivers and engagement leaders. They recognized the emotional toll of building relationships with residents or children, only to experience their departure:

"People come and go because they think 'This is an easy job. This is just something I can do.' But it's a lot. It goes for both care homes and nurseries, working with vulnerable populations, working with people who come and go. To make a relationship with a child, and then they move on. Make a relationship with an older

person and they pass away, it's hard. These are very difficult jobs, and mentally, it's hard." (Interviewee 2)

When asked about additional support that could help staff participating in IGPs, many emphasized the need for mental health resources. One staff member shared,

"I do think that mental health support for us as facilitators would be beneficial because we build relationships with older people, and sometimes those older people are undergoing real health challenges, chronic conditions, or end-of-life treatment. When you've built a relationship with someone, and they pass away, it can be really hard." (Interviewee 10)

While mental health support was viewed as valuable, there were financial constraints that made it challenging to implement such services across all organizations:

"It would be great, but I just think right now we wouldn't have the money to have that as a sustainable thing. It would be a nice addition, but not essential." (Interviewee 10)

Despite the challenges, staff members expressed a profound sense of pride and fulfillment in their roles, particularly in contributing to IGPs which enhances their job satisfaction. One staff member explained,

"I feel good to know that I was able to provide something for people who cannot do it for themselves. It gives you that fulfilled feeling... it is the most rewarding feeling." (Interviewee 3)

The satisfaction derived from seeing participants grow, especially witnessing changes in confidence and engagement, was frequently mentioned:

"Even though it is more stressful, it's just more enjoyable. Seeing people have fun, enjoy themselves, and seeing someone's confidence grow from when they first start to when they finish, it's so satisfying. It makes all the work that we do worthwhile." (Interviewee 10)

Program effectiveness and implementation

IGPs are still relatively new and not widely known, making it essential to understand how they are implemented and perceived by those directly involved. This section explores the effectiveness of these programs and the processes that contribute to their success, as described by staff members. Overall, participants expressed strong confidence in the effectiveness of their respective programs, highlighting their smooth operation and the meaningful outcomes they produce.

Activity frequency and variety

A key factor contributing to the success of IGPs is the frequency of activities. Programs holding intergenerational activities once a month or every six weeks showed a strong desire for more frequent interactions, yet staff members acknowledged that logistical challenges often impede the feasibility of increased frequency:

"The difficulty is actually making it happen on a fairly regular basis because of staffing capacity and all those challenges." (Interviewee 7)

Staff members expressed that having additional personnel or volunteers to assist during activities or outings could significantly strengthen the program's impact on participants.

On the other hand, programs that implemented IGPs multiple times a week received high praise for their ability to foster consistent, meaningful connections. Offering frequent activities make regular intergenerational engagement more accessible and impactful:

"The familiarity of the consistency of the program is what everyone should strive for." (Interviewee 2)

For example, the program at Apples and Honey Nightingale stood out with the presence of a nursery onsite greatly facilitating the development of relationships:

"To have a nursery on site is so special... it's so much easier and to get to know everyone too; it's very special." (Interviewee 1)

Additionally, the diversity of activities was cited as a significant factor in the successful implementation of IGPs. Programs offered a wide variety of engaging activities, such as singing sessions ("Songs and Smiles"), ballet, Nintendo gaming, social action projects, pottery, and writing letters to older people from other countries. This diversity ensured that participants could choose activities that appealed to their individual interests, which, in turn, facilitated better engagement:

"All the different activities that are done... this is the dream, this is what you want them to do... we already have such a full program for all these interactions." (Interviewee 2)

Ensuring success through planning and flexibility

The effectiveness of IGPs was also attributed to the preparatory work that went into planning each session. Staff members emphasized that planning involved reviewing residents' life histories and collaborating closely with partnering schools, nurseries, and other organizations. This thorough preparation aimed to create meaningful and structured experiences for everyone involved:

"If you don't have that joint planning in place, it's just some kind of like, free-for-all. And nobody gets anything from that." (Interviewee 8)

Additionally, a safe and welcoming environment was prioritized, with staff striving to avoid placing participants in uncomfortable situations:

"Try and plan things as much as you can... because you don't want to feel like you have wasted anybody's time." (Interviewee 7)

While careful preparation was highlighted as crucial, the ability to adapt to evolving circumstances during activities was also considered essential. Staff members noted that activities did not always proceed as planned; however, successful intergenerational interactions could still emerge in unexpected ways. They valued flexibility and the willingness to adjust approaches based on participants' responses:

"Let it happen... be able to go with what is happening in the room." (Interviewee 7)

This adaptability allowed for a more personalized experience, ensuring that interactions remained meaningful despite deviations from the initial plan.

Staff members also acknowledged the challenges of fully engaging all participants, recognizing the diverse needs and abilities of older adults, particularly those living with dementia. They emphasized that even passive participation, such as simply being present, could still be valuable. As one staff member noted,

"Sometimes, though, I'm a firm believer that an activity can be meaningful to one person, and that's OK. We don't have to be homogenous where everybody has to like the same thing." (Interviewee 8)

This acceptance of selective impact reflects an understanding of the nuanced benefits of IGPs, where even subtle or unexpected outcomes can have a significant effect:

"Sometimes people can get out more than you actually realize." (Interviewee 7)

Ongoing dialogue between staff members, residents, and children allowed them to adjust activities as needed, ensuring that each session was responsive to the participants' needs. In each program, regular feedback, both formal and informal, also played a key role in evaluating the success of the IGPs and informing changes. This approach to feedback, which included both app-based tracking of resident engagement in some programs and regular

meetings with participants in others, ensured that activities remained meaningful and well-suited to their audience. Furthermore, internal organizational meetings were held in some facilities to ensure best practices and uphold safeguarding standards.

Trust in organizational leadership

Staff members reported feeling supported due to the processes in place to address any challenges that might arise during intergenerational sessions. The availability of participant feedback and regular evaluations reassured them that the programs were continually improving and remained on course towards creating meaningful intergenerational interactions. This structured yet flexible approach to planning and implementation was fundamental to fostering the sense of community and belonging that is central to the success of IGPs.

The success of IGPs was further supported by the leadership and organizational trust present within these programs. Staff members expressed strong trust in the organization's commitment to delivering impactful initiatives for residents and staff alike:

"What I know is that they look after these people very, very well... anything to uplift and upgrade for us to benefit from, I trust they will do it." (Interviewee 3)

Effective leadership was also recognized as a significant driving force, with a dedicated leader described as being crucial to the program's positive outcomes:

"She's a huge drive (...) the days that she's here everything kind of shines a bit brighter because she's got so much energy, so much love to give." (Interviewee 2)

Through consistent planning, adaptability, strong organizational support, and frequent feedback, the implementation of IGPs was viewed by staff members as a successful and

enriching endeavor for participants. These efforts contributed to creating an environment that fostered meaningful intergenerational relationships, which, in turn, significantly enhanced the well-being of all those involved.

Training

Staff members frequently highlighted the importance of training in enhancing the effectiveness of IGPs and ensuring meaningful experiences for both the older adults and young participants. While acknowledging that existing training was generally beneficial, they emphasized that more targeted learning opportunities could improve program quality and deepen intergenerational connections.

The theme of continuous learning was a central focus in staff members' reflections. Given the diverse range of participants and their varying abilities and needs, staff members emphasized the importance of being prepared to deliver activities that cater to everyone effectively. This commitment to readiness and adaptability led to a consensus on the importance of ongoing training:

"We're always learning... I'm constantly looking for new things as well, just to improve our knowledge and our skills, something else we can offer." (Interviewee 8)

Many staff members expressed dedication to enhancing their skills and learning new techniques relevant to their roles to broaden their expertise, emphasizing that professional growth did not always mean pursuing higher positions:

"You don't necessarily have to move up; you can learn sideways... And now they've been actively sourcing roles to help with their knowledge." (Interviewee 9)

This proactive approach to professional development helps ensure that they remain adaptable and capable of meeting the needs of all participants within intergenerational programs.

A challenge that emerged regarding participant engagement was the need for more intellectually stimulating activities, particularly for older participants with strong cognitive abilities. Staff members expressed concern about the lack of resources for those who are mentally capable, including individuals living with dementia:

*"I think there's a real gap in the market for resources, especially for older people and people living with dementia that are intellectually engaging, but also simplified."
(Interviewee 8)*

They highlighted examples, such as older participants with dementia who were able to recite Shakespeare during poetry activities, demonstrating their capacity for more advanced engagement. However, the current books and resources, especially those designed for older adults with dementia, were often seen as too simplistic and not meeting their needs. The goal of intergenerational activities is not only to entertain but also to engage participants in meaningful ways. Staff emphasized that having more appropriate resources tailored to different cognitive levels would significantly enhance the effectiveness of these programs. While it is important to ensure that materials remain accessible to children, incorporating more intellectually stimulating books and resources, adjusted to the age and abilities of participants, would help foster deeper intergenerational connections and more impactful interactions.

Ideal activity

The final question of the interview explored what staff members would choose as an ideal intergenerational activity if they had unlimited resources. Many staff members envisioned activities centered around shared meals. They proposed ideas such as having the older adults prepare a meal for the children, or both generations cooking together and then enjoying the meal side by side. They reflected on how food plays a significant role in bringing people together and bridging cultural and generational divides. One participant shared,

"Get them to make something together (...) you can share so much love and so much about your identity and culture through food." (Interviewee 10)

Moreover, staff members believed that involving both children and older adults in activities related to food could help boost well-being, especially in terms of enhancing nutrition and hydration:

"I'd really want to do residents making lunch for the kids... it would tap into core memories of looking after your own kids. And I think it would boost people's food and fluid intakes." (Interviewee 8)

Another popular idea was to simply spend time outdoors. Many staff members expressed a desire to give the older adults and children more opportunities to explore outside the care home. However, they acknowledged the logistical challenges, such as ensuring that transport and destinations were suitable for the older adults, especially those in wheelchairs. Despite these challenges, staff saw great value in taking participants outdoors to break their routine and provide a change of scenery.

"I would probably take them out, so they can be outside... somewhere they can sit and look around, see different people" (Interviewee 4)

Staff members believed that outdoor activities could significantly benefit participants' mental health and create new opportunities for bonding:

"Sometimes you have to do something different, so the residents will see different places and things." (Interviewee 6)

One of the more imaginative suggestions involved taking both children and older participants to Disney World. This idea stemmed from the belief that the vibrant environment, filled with singing, dancing, colors, and diverse activities, could provide an unforgettable experience for participants. A staff member envisioned the joy that such an experience would bring:

"How it would just light up their faces. If there are children that can come and play and enjoy it together, they would just love it so much (...) that would make me so happy, just seeing the smile on their faces" (Interviewee 3)

Some staff members also highlighted that their ideal activity would not necessarily require unlimited material resources but rather time and flexibility. They emphasized the importance of letting participants choose activities that were meaningful to them, thereby fostering a sense of autonomy:

"Yeah, I think if I had unlimited budget, I would plan to allow the time to let the older people, and the younger people make that decision or to help them make that decision". (Interviewee 7)

Another participant explained,

"Sometimes, it's not about resources, it's not about the money, it's about the willingness to connect. It's that human factor, that human connection that we can lose to so many things." (Interviewee 1)

They imagined an ideal scenario where staff could spend time getting to know both groups, understand their interests, and facilitate activities that would resonate with everyone.

The results demonstrate that IGPs have a positive impact on older participants, children, and staff members, as seen through staff perspectives. For the older adults, IGPs enhance

engagement and reduce isolation, while children gain empathy and understanding of older generations. Staff members experience fulfillment but noted challenges, including limited resources, the need for more training, and managing diverse participant needs.

Successful implementation relies on preparation, adaptability, and clear communication, with staff emphasizing the importance of flexibility during sessions. Continuous learning and high-quality resources tailored to the diverse needs of participants were also seen as crucial. Staff members expressed faith in the organization's commitment to improvement and appreciated the ongoing support they received.

Staff envisioned ideal activities involving shared meals and outdoor excursions, believing these experiences would strengthen intergenerational bonds. Overall, the importance of resource availability, adaptable planning, and supportive training emerged as key factors for success.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences and perceptions of involved intergenerational staff members on the impact of IGPs between care home residents and children and identify key factors of sustainability for IGPs.

This section aims to interpret the findings within the two key themes that emerged from participants interviews: IGP Impact and Programme Effectiveness and Implementation. By relating these findings to existing literature, the discussion highlights their broader implications and offers recommendations for future practice and research aimed at enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of IGPs.

Impact on IGP participants

The findings demonstrate the significant emotional, cognitive, and social benefits of IGPs for both elderly participants and children, particularly in reducing loneliness and enhancing mood for elderly individuals, consistent with previous studies by Weeks et al. (2016) and Holmes (2009). Additionally, cognitive stimulation, particularly through diverse activities, was found to support mental sharpness, echoing Wilson et al. (2007). This underlines the importance of tailoring activities to match participants' cognitive abilities but also personal preferences, enhancing both short- and long-term outcomes.

Impact on staff members

Staff members consistently reported that their involvement in IGPs provided a significant emotional uplift. The joy, vitality, and sense of fulfillment that emerged from facilitating intergenerational interactions were key sources of job satisfaction. This aligns with previous literature (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Holmes, 2019; Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020; Stanley et

al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016), which found that staff involved in IGPs experienced greater job fulfillment, particularly when observing the positive outcomes for participants.

A notable observation from the interviews was the deep passion and commitment staff displayed, with many emphasizing their dedication to creating enriching experiences for both generations. In fact, when asked about their own personal experiences or reflections on their roles, many of the responses quickly shifted focus back to the participants they serve, emphasizing the importance of making the elderly and children feel engaged, valued, and joyful. Rather than focusing on personal gains, staff were primarily driven by the well-being of participants, highlighting the intrinsic rewards they derived from their roles. This commitment aligns with the Person-Centered Care Model (Kitwood, 1997), which emphasizes individualized care to meet the unique needs of each person. Unlike Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1964), which suggests that social behavior is often transactional, staff members demonstrated intrinsic satisfaction from fostering emotional connections. Their involvement in IGPs provided a deep sense of purpose and fulfillment, reflecting the values of Activity Theory (Havighurst, 1961), where meaningful engagement is seen as inherently rewarding and aligned with the values and personal beliefs that initially guided them to pursue a career in care.

Program Implementation and effectiveness

The second theme emphasized the importance of frequent, well-structured, yet flexible activities. More regular sessions foster stronger connections and deeper engagement between participants, while a variety of activities increases enthusiasm and interest. Staff also highlighted the importance of adaptability, being able to adjust programs in the moment to meet participants' needs is crucial to maintaining engagement and ensuring meaningful

interactions, as stated in the literature (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Holmes, 2019; Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016).

Engaging carers in IGP activities can be challenging due to their existing responsibilities, yet their involvement is highly valuable in ensuring participants are supported and engaged highlighting the need for strategies to encourage carer participation or supplement their role with additional volunteers or staff.

While the positive impact of IGPs on staff well-being and job satisfaction is evident, this study highlights the importance of ongoing training to address the diverse and evolving needs of participants noted similarly by Weeks et al. (2016); Holmes (2009) ; Lux et al. (2020) ; Gigliotti et al. (2005) and Stanley et al. (2022), with staff expressing a strong desire to continually improve their skills.

Mental health support was mentioned by participants as a potential resource to help maintain their well-being, particularly given the emotional demands of IGPs. However, providing such support is often not considered a priority or is limited by funding constraints, as highlighted by Stanley et al. (2022). Institutions must balance the need for specialized, ongoing training and staff mental health support with other priorities, potentially exploring solutions like peer-to-peer learning or support groups to address these challenges effectively.

Strong organizational leadership and trust played a central role in the success of IGPs by reducing staff stress and increasing job satisfaction, as noted by Weeks et al. (2016). Effective leadership empowered staff to facilitate meaningful interactions, enhancing the well-being of both elderly participants and children, echoing Stanley et al. (2022), who emphasized the importance of leadership in fostering positive intergenerational relationships. Ultimately, the success of IGPs depends on institutional commitment, not only in securing resources but also in fostering a collaborative, supportive culture that values intergenerational engagement.

Continuous feedback and evaluations were also crucial to the success of these programs, aligning with findings in the literature (Gigliotti et al, 2005; Holmes, 2019; Lux, Tarabochia, and Barben, 2020; Stanley et al, 2022; Weeks et al, 2016).

CHAPTER 6: LIMITATIONS

One of the primary limitations of this study is its scale. Since the research was not conducted on a national level, the findings may not be fully generalizable to all IGPs across different regions or contexts. To gain a more comprehensive understanding of staff experiences in various settings, future research should aim to replicate this study on a larger scale, encompassing diverse geographic areas and organizational structures.

Additionally, including different roles in this study provided valuable insights into the multifaceted implementation of IGPs. However, to strengthen the evidence and build on these findings, future studies might benefit from a more role-specific approach. Focusing on distinct groups could offer a more nuanced understanding of how each role uniquely experiences and contributes to IGPs. This targeted research would enable a deeper exploration of the challenges, motivations, and impacts specific to each group, ultimately leading to more tailored strategies for improving IGP effectiveness.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, this research makes a novel and significant contribution to understanding the experiences and perceptions of staff members involved in IGPs. It identifies not only the positive impacts of these programs on both participants and staff but also the key factors contributing to their success. Consistent with existing literature, this study highlights the importance of careful planning and flexibility in program design, as well as the crucial role of strong leadership in supporting staff well-being and job satisfaction. The passion and commitment displayed by staff members underscore their intrinsic motivation to enhance participants' quality of life, and their overall job satisfaction was notably high. Additionally, the need for ongoing training and mental health support was noted to ensure that staff can continue to provide high-quality care while managing the emotional demands of IGP facilitation.

Building on these findings, several recommendations can be made for the future development and implementation of IGPs:

- **Increasing Participant Ownership:** IGPs should explore more opportunities to give participants, particularly elderly individuals, greater ownership within the program. For example, involving older adults in teaching or sharing their knowledge, can strengthen intergenerational connections and improve that participant's mental health. This approach not only enhances the experience for elderly participants but also adds diversity to the activities and enriches the children's learning experience.

- **Ideal Activities:** Incorporating more outdoor experiences, which offer a change of environment and new stimuli, as well as activities centered around food and shared meals, to IGPs could be an opportunity to add diversity to the activities and to foster deeper connections in a relaxed, enjoyable setting enhancing the benefits of IGPs.
- **Supporting Staff Well-being and Job Satisfaction:** Organizations should continue providing opportunities for professional development and training. Although not an immediate priority, exploring avenues for mental health support, such as counseling or stress management resources, could greatly benefit staff members. By ensuring staff are supported emotionally and professionally, organizations can promote a positive work environment, which in turn enhances the overall effectiveness of the IGP.
- Future research should investigate the role-specific experiences of staff members, such as caregivers, engagement leaders, and facilitators, to tailor program improvements more effectively.

To ensure IGP benefits are widely realized, it is essential that administrators, policymakers, and community organizations collaborate to make these programs standard components of care practices. By actively prioritizing their implementation and allocating sufficient resources, environments where intergenerational relationships thrive can be fostered, enhancing the well-being of residents while also improving job satisfaction and retention among care staff.

CHAPTER 8: REFERENCES

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CHAPTER 9: APPENDICES

Appendix A: Literature Review Search Strategy

Appendix A1: ECLIPSE

Research question: What are the perceptions and experiences of staff members involved in Intergenerational programs between care home residents and children?

Expectations: how taking part in Intergenerational programs (IGP) impacts staff members and how they view the programs

Client group: Intergenerational staff members attending sessions

Location: Care homes, nurseries, schools...

Impact: Utilize intergenerational activities to improve staff experience and job satisfaction but also participants' well-being

Professionals: IGP facilitators, care homes staff and staff working with children

Service: Activities involving older adults and children and allowing them to connect

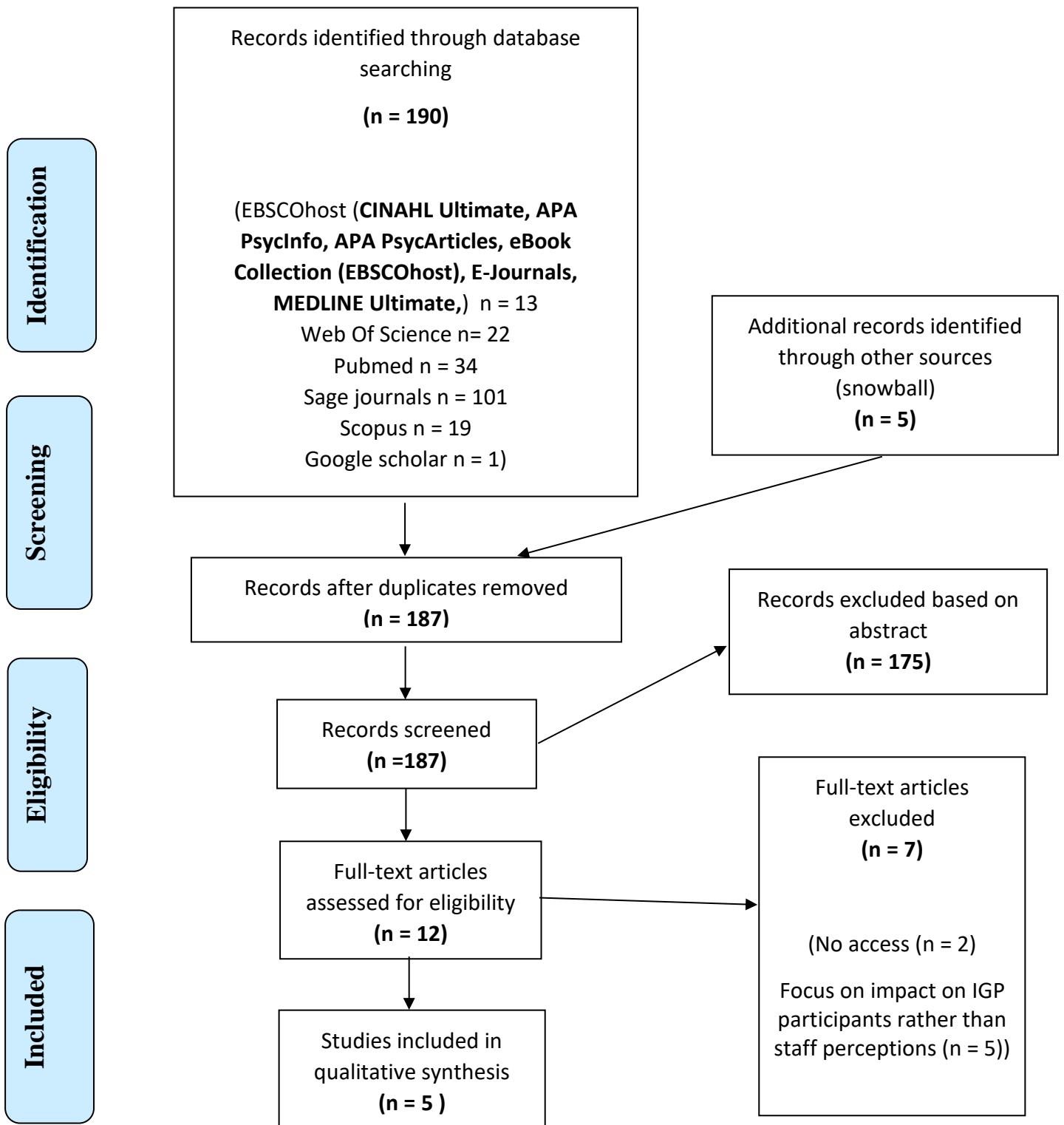
Appendix A2: Inclusion/Exclusion criteria

Inclusion	Exclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on staff perceptions (compared to impact on IGP participants) - Studies published in English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Studies older than 2000 (IGPs are relatively recent)

Appendix A3: Search terms used

- Staff perspectives OR staff attitudes OR staff experiences OR staff thoughts OR staff feelings OR staff views AND intergenerational
- Children OR child and elderly AND elder OR senior
- Nursery OR preschool OR daycare
- Care homes OR nursing homes OR long term care OR residential care OR aged care facility OR geriatrics
- Intergenerational AND care homes OR nursing homes OR long term care OR residential care OR aged care facility OR geriatrics
- Intergenerational program AND Staff perspectives OR staff attitudes OR staff experiences OR staff thoughts OR staff feelings OR staff views AND care homes OR nursing homes OR long term care OR residential care OR aged care facility OR geriatrics AND Nursery OR preschool OR daycare

Appendix A4 : PRISMA Flow Diagram



Appendix A5 : Description of selected studies

Name and date	Date and location	Authors	Settings (participants, methods, goals)	Findings
Planning an Intergenerational Shared Site: Nursing-Home Staff Perspectives	2016, Canada	Weeks, Mac Quarrie, Begley, Nilsson & Mac Dougall	Nursing-home staff were surveyed (online and paper) about the hypothetical embedding of a nursery within their care facility.	<p>Key Supports: Success of the intergenerational program (IGP) depends on strong administrative backing and full engagement of nursing home staff in the planning process.</p> <p>Concerns: Health and safety considerations for participants need addressing. Program hours should align with staff schedules.</p> <p>Benefits: Positive impacts on children include fostering sensitive interaction with older adults and reducing age-related stereotypes</p>
An Intergenerational Program with Benefits	2009, US	Holmes, Christine.	Outlines the first year of a care home IGP, focusing on its development, implementation, and evaluation.	<p>Logistics: Locating the program in the same building as the care home provided practical advantages.</p> <p>Critical Success Factors: Leadership, human and financial resources, and administrative support are essential for sustainability.</p> <p>Benefits: Both children and elderly residents experienced enhanced socialization, sensory stimulation, self-esteem, and intellectual growth. Intergenerational interactions promoted positive attitudes toward older adults.</p>
Intergenerational Program Perceptions and Recommendations: Perspectives from Teachers, Children, Residents, and Staff	2020, US	Lux, Tarabochia & Barben	Used interviews and observations to explore the perceptions of preschool staff, assisted living staff, children, and elderly residents participating in an IGP.	<p>Recruitment: Highlighted the need for better recruitment strategies and ensuring participation is voluntary for both residents and children.</p> <p>Developmental Needs: Emotional, mental, and physical health influenced both residents' and children's participation; confusion arose when children noticed residents' cognitive decline.</p> <p>Program Design: Diverse activities, intentional seating arrangements, and strong facilitation, enhanced engagement.</p> <p>Challenges: Sampling limitations and reliability of interviews with</p>

				participants (e.g., residents with dementia).
An intergenerational summer program involving persons with dementia and preschool children	2005, US	Gigliotti, Morris, Smock, Jarrott & Graham.	Interviews and evaluations from stakeholders, including parents, staff, and administrators, focused on the IGP's organization, outcomes, and sustainability. (Used interviews and evaluation forms)	Relational Goals: Fostered positive interactions, empathy, and tolerance in children while enhancing elderly participants' sense of self and quality of life. Challenges: Logistical difficulties (scheduling, attendance), understanding differing abilities of older adults and children, and staff turnover requiring ongoing training. Future Vision: Addressing planning, funding, and staff turnover, with a focus on specialized training and sustaining program support.
Ageless play: Sustaining intergenerational playgroup programmes.	2022, Australia	Stanley, Allen, Tunks, Davenport, & Cartmel.	Semi-structured interviews with aged care staff, parents, residents, and playgroup facilitators involved in long-term intergenerational playgroups.	Mutual Benefits: The program fostered social connections, friendships, and emotional joy for both children and older adults. It also enhanced parent confidence and peer support. Facilitator Role: Skilled facilitators were crucial for success. Their interpersonal skills, ability to foster spontaneous interaction, and understanding of participant needs were vital

Appendix A6 : Critical analysis

CASP checklist: *Qualitative studies*

	Weeks et al. (2016)			Lux et al. (2020)			Stanley et al. (20222)		
	Yes	No	Can't tell	Yes	No	Can't tell	Yes	No	Can't tell
Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?	X			X			X		
Is a qualitative methodology appropriate?	X			X			X		
as the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?	X			X			X		
Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?	X			X			X		
Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?	X			X			X		
Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?	X				X		X		
Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?	X				X		X		
Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?	X			X			X		

Is there a clear statement of findings?	X			X			X		
How valuable is the research?	Very, it provides insights into the logistical and psychological factors nursing-home staff consider when integrating IGPs emphasizing the importance of staff engagement and administrative support.			Very, offers insights on the emotional and relational benefits of IGPs particularly for individuals with dementia and on the programation of the activities in the eyes of the staff.			Very, it explores the long-term sustainability of IGPs offering practical recommendations for maintaining engagement and overcoming organizational challenges.		

Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT), version 2018

Category of study designs	Methodological quality criteria	Gigliotti et al. (2005)			
		Yes	No	Can't tell	Comments
Screening questions (for all types)	S1. Are there clear research questions?	X			
	S2. Do the collected data allow to address the research questions?	X			
	4.2. Is the sample representative of the target population?	X			
	4.3. Are the measurements appropriate?	X			
	4.4. Is the risk of nonresponse bias low?	X			
	4.5. Is the statistical analysis appropriate to answer the research question?	X			
Mixed methods	5.1. Is there an adequate rationale for using a mixed methods design to address the research question?	X			
	5.2. Are the different components of the study effectively integrated to answer the research question?	X			
	5.3. Are the outputs of the integration of qualitative and quantitative components adequately interpreted?	X			
	5.4. Are divergences and inconsistencies between quantitative and qualitative results adequately addressed?	X			
	5.5. Do the different components of the study adhere to the quality criteria of each tradition of the methods involved?	X			

CASP checklist: Case control

Section A: Are the results of the study valid?			
Holmes (2009)	YES	NO	CAN'T TELL
1. Did the study address a clearly focused issue?	X		
2. Did the authors use an appropriate method to answer their question?	X		
3. Were the cases recruited in an acceptable way?	X		
4. Were the controls selected in an acceptable way?			X
5. Was the exposure accurately measured to minimise bias?	X		
6. a) Aside from the experimental intervention, were the groups treated equally?			X
6 b) Have the authors taken account of the potential confounding factors in the design and/or in their analysis?	X		
Section B: What are the results?			
7. How large was the treatment effect?	X		
8. How precise was the estimate of the treatment effect?	X		
9. Do you believe the results?	X		
Section C: Will the results help locally?			
10. Can the results be applied to your patients/the population of interest?			X
11. Do the results of this study fit with other available evidence?	X		

APPRAISAL SUMMARY: *List key points from your critical appraisal that need to be considered when assessing the validity of the results and their usefulness in decision-making.*

Positive/Methodologically sound	Negative/Relatively poor methodology	Unknowns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear program description - Inclusion of multiple stakeholders - Practical insights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Descriptive case study design - Lack of quantitative measures - Absence of control group - Limited sample and Generalizability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long term impact - No discussion on how subjectivity may influence interpretation of the program's outcome

Appendix A7: Synthesis matrix

Study	Benefits for Participants	Challenges related to program	Benefits for IGP Staff	Challenges for IGP Staff	Recommendations for Improvement
Weeks et al. (2016)	<p>Children foster a sense of acceptance and joy among older adults.</p> <p>Improved socialization reduces loneliness for elderly residents.</p>	<p>Cognitive impairments sometimes hinder interactions.</p> <p>Scheduling conflicts with staff availability.</p> <p>Need for ongoing staff training to manage diverse needs. Communication challenges among staff and participants.</p> <p>Planning needed to maintain engagement over time.</p>	<p>Witnessing positive interactions enhances staff emotional well-being.</p> <p>Increased job satisfaction through meaningful interactions.</p>	<p>Difficulties in understanding varied participant needs.</p>	<p>Emphasized implementing feedback loops for program improvement.</p> <p>Activities should be tailored to participants' needs.</p> <p>Programs should adapt to participants' changing needs.</p>
Holmes (2009)	<p>Enhanced emotional well-being for both children and elderly participants.</p> <p>Increased socialization promotes positive self-image.</p>	<p>Scheduling conflicts impact participation.</p> <p>Ongoing training needed for effective program management.</p> <p>Activities need planning for</p>	<p>Emotional rewards from children's learning and interactions.</p> <p>Job satisfaction increases due to meaningful</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Formal evaluation processes are necessary to assess effectiveness.</p> <p>Activities should be flexible and responsive to participant needs.</p>

		sustained interest.	program roles.		Encouraged collaboration among all stakeholders for support. Ensure activities are flexible and adapt to changing circumstances.
Lux et al. (2020)	Staff report enhanced emotional support from children. Activities benefit both children and residents cognitively. Social connections improve emotional support for residents.	Cognitive impairments of residents confuse children, leading to misunderstandings. Recruitment and participation are challenging; need better advertising. Staff require training on cognitive engagement. Effective communication is crucial but often challenging. Planning activities needs to account for participants' varied interests.	Staff report increased fulfillment from intergenerational interactions. Job satisfaction rises through meaningful relationships formed.	Managing participant expectations poses challenges.	Implement regular feedback and evaluations for program adaptation. Need for more varied activities to sustain interest and participation. Respect for participant choices is vital for collaboration. Ensure activities cater to both generations' interests and abilities.

<p>Gigliotti et al. (2005)</p>	<p>Empathy and acceptance grow in children through interaction.</p> <p>Stimulated cognitive functions among elderly participants.</p> <p>Strong bonds created enhance emotional well-being.</p> <p>Activities provide sensory stimulation for both groups.</p>	<p>Cognitive limitations of elderly participants lead to challenges in interaction.</p> <p>Attendance and scheduling create logistical issues.</p> <p>Ongoing training for staff is necessary to manage diverse needs.</p> <p>Communication and understanding of roles among staff are crucial.</p> <p>Attendance and planning are major concerns for sustained engagement.</p>	<p>Staff find emotional satisfaction in fostering relationships.</p> <p>Increased job satisfaction through successful interactions.</p>	<p>Challenges in understanding cognitive impairments of participants.</p>	<p>Assess processes and outcomes regularly for better sustainability.</p> <p>Incorporate participant feedback in program design.</p> <p>Ensure mutual understanding of goals among all stakeholders.</p> <p>Flexibility needed in planning and scheduling activities.</p>
<p>Stanley et al. (2022)</p>	<p>Emotional connections foster friendships, benefiting all participants.</p> <p>Learning through play enhances cognitive development in children.</p> <p>Deeper emotional</p>	<p>Engagement can be impacted by the cognitive limitations of residents.</p> <p>Staff training is crucial for understanding residents' needs.</p> <p>Interpersonal dynamics influence</p>	<p>Staff experience joy from witnessing successful interactions.</p> <p>Job satisfaction increases through fostering intergenerational</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Regular feedback from participants helps enhance program design.</p> <p>Activities should be flexible and consider participants' needs.</p> <p>Encourage stakeholder collaboration for</p>

	<p>connections promote socialization and reduce isolation.</p> <p>Physical engagement improves mobility for elderly participants.</p>	<p>engagement levels.</p> <p>Planning is essential to maintain ongoing interest and participation.</p>	<p>relationships.</p>		<p>program support.</p> <p>Programs should adapt to changing circumstances and participant needs.</p>
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Appendix B : Ethics documents

Appendix B1: ERAMS approval letter

23/08/2024

Miss Ava Jouvenel

Health and Social Care

University of Essex

Dear Ava,

Ethics Committee Decision

Application: ETH2425-0029

I am pleased to inform you that the research proposal entitled "Staff experience and perception of Intergenerational projects between care home residents and nursery children." has been reviewed on behalf of the Ethics Sub Committee 1, and, based on the information provided, it has been awarded a favourable opinion.

The application was awarded a favourable opinion subject to the following **conditions**:

Extensions and Amendments:

If you propose to introduce an amendment to the research after approval or extend the duration of the study, an amendment should be submitted in ERAMS for further approval in advance of the expiry date listed in the ethics application form. Please note that it is not possible to make any amendments, including extending the duration of the study, once the expiry date has passed.

Covid-19:

Please note that the current Government guidelines in relation to Covid-19 must be adhered to and are subject to change and it is your responsibility to keep yourself informed and bear in mind the possibility of change when planning your research. You will be kept informed if there are any changes in the University guidelines.

Yours sincerely,

Alexandra Kaley

Ethics ETH2425-0029: Miss Ava Jouvenel

Appendix B2: Invitation Email

Dear, (name of recipient)

I hope this email finds you well.

My name is Ava Jouvenel, and I am currently pursuing a Master of Science (MSc) in Leadership in Health and Care at the University of Essex. I was introduced to you through Stephen Burke from 'United for all ages', and I'm reaching out regarding a research opportunity.

As part of my end-of-program dissertation, I am conducting a study on the staff experience and perception of intergenerational projects between care home residents and children. I believe your insights, as an active participant in intergenerational activities, would greatly contribute to our understanding of this topic.

The research will involve a 30 minutes interview either in person or online using Microsoft Teams, which will be recorded for transcription purposes. To maintain confidentiality, recordings will be securely stored and later anonymized using pseudonyms. Following the interview, I will send you a copy of the newly anonymized transcripts to confirm their accuracy.

To provide you with more information about the research, I have attached the Participant Information Sheet to this email. Please feel free to review it at your convenience, and don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or require further clarification.

If you are interested in participating, kindly respond to this email, and I will send you the consent form. We can then coordinate a suitable time for the interview that aligns with your schedule.

Thank you for considering this opportunity, and I look forward to the possibility of collaborating with you on this research.

Best regards,

Ava Jouvenel

Appendix B3: Participant Information Sheet

Study Title

Staff experience and perception of Intergenerational projects between care home residents and children.

Invitation

My name is Ava Jouvenel and I am undertaking a Master of Science degree (MSc) in Leadership in Health and Care at the University of Essex. I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

Purpose of the study

Intergenerational research has been growing over time, but most studies focus on the impacts of Intergenerational projects on elderly participants or children. There is a gap in knowledge when it comes to the impact and experiences of the staff regarding these programs. In relation to my end of program dissertation for my MSc, I would like to help bridge that gap by interviewing Intergenerational programs staff members about their experiences and perceptions.

The aims of this study are to:

1. Depict the current views of intergenerational staff members on the programs.
2. Describe the impacts of participating to the programs on the staff members.
3. Understanding different views and what makes a good environment for an Intergenerational session.
4. Identifying what could be done in the future to create an optimal environment for staff members to support the residents but also lead the sessions efficiently.

Interviews will be conducted via Zoom or Microsoft Teams or in person, and should last about 30 minutes. The final dissertation should be submitted by October 14th.

Why have I been invited to participate?

Participants of this study are Intergenerational staff members that actively participate in intergenerational activities and sessions. They should have at least 6 months of experience working in that field. The aim is to interview 7 to 10 participants in total.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not you wish to take part in this research study. If you do decide to take part you will be asked to provide written consent. You are free to withdraw at any time, or refuse to answer certain questions without giving a reason. If you decide to withdraw you can contact the lead researcher Ava Jouvenel

at aj23675@essex.ac.uk, any information that has already been provided will be erased.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you decide to take part in this study, you will consent to participating in one 30-minute interview session, conducted via Zoom or Microsoft Teams or in person by the lead researcher, with a predetermined topic guide. The recording of this interview will be transcribed and anonymized using pseudonyms. The researcher will ask you to approve the transcript for accuracy. After that, the recording will be deleted and only the anonymized transcript will be saved on the university of Essex's approved safe online storage platform: BOX. This cloud storage is General Data Protection Regulation compliant.

Transcribing of the interview will be done by August 19th at the latest. After approval of the transcripts, your involvement in the research will be complete.

What are the potential benefits of taking part?

While there is no direct benefits or compensations to taking part in this study, potential undirect benefits include:

- Furthering our understanding of staff views within Intergenerational programs
- Sharing your experiences and potentially providing support to future staff
- Potentially creating more exposure for Intergenerational programs and their benefits

What are the possible risks of taking part?

Taking part in this study will take up 5 minutes of your time to fill out a demographic questionnaire, 30 for the interview, and about 30 extra minutes to review the anonymized transcripts. As a healthcare professional, we are aware that you might be working flexible hours and might not have a lot of spare time. Therefore, potential risks include:

- Increased stress related to the study taking up some of your time.
- Emotional distress raised by sharing stories and memories linked to the intergenerational sessions and the relationships they create.

If you ever feel at risk or require psychological assistance, you can reach out to the lead researcher, or directly to the NHS services by calling 111 or visiting their webpage at <https://111.nhs.uk/triage/check-your-mental-health-symptoms> or texting SHOUT at 85258.

What information will be collected?

Demographic information including gender, age, ethnic group, religious beliefs, marital status, and level of education will be collected to help the researcher describe the sample of people that took part in the study. The rest of the data collected will regard their personal experience as a staff member participating in Intergenerational programs. All the data will be anonymized using pseudonyms, and recordings will be deleted, leaving only anonymous transcripts.

Will my information be kept confidential?

All the information collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be able to be identified in any ensuing reports or publication.

The data collected will be analysed and used for the researcher's MSc dissertation. The data will also be used for peer-review publications, presentations, and infographics within the wider intergenerational community. At no point will the participants or organizations names be used or shared within the dissemination of the research.

If during the course of the research, you disclose information that leads the researcher to believe that you or others are at risk of harm, the researcher may have a duty of care to inform an appropriate authority.

Data collected (consent forms, interviews recording and transcripts) will be stored securely in the University of Essex's approved online storage: BOX. This cloud storage is General Data Protection Regulation compliant. Data will be kept for up to ten years from the start date of the research project and as required by the University's Research Data Management Policy, anonymized data will be made available for access and re-use where legally, ethically, and commercially appropriate, taking note of any relevant safeguards through the University of Essex Research Data Repository.

Data will be accessible by the lead researcher (Ava Jouvenel) and research supervisor (Dr M. Kennedy).

What is the legal basis for using the data and who is the Data Controller?

In order to collect and process data, the lead researcher will collect informed consent forms. Consent must be freely-given, specific, informed and unambiguous. The Data Controller will be the University of Essex, more specifically the University Information Assurance Manager (dpo@essex.ac.uk).

What do I do if I want to take part?

To take part, you should fill out the Informed Consent Form and return it to the lead researcher at aj23675@essex.ac.uk.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of the study will be used for the lead researcher's MSc dissertation deposited online on the University's coursework submission, assessment and feedback service.

The results may be published as a journal article, peer-review publications, presentations, and infographics within the wider intergenerational community, and therefore be part of the public domain. As a reminder, any results will be anonymized, and the participants will not be identifiable. To receive a copy of the final project, participants should email the lead researcher at aj23675@essex.ac.uk and ask for a copy.

Who is funding the research?

This research is not funded.

Who has reviewed the study?

The Ethics Sub Committee of the University of Essex has provided ethical approval for this study.

Concerns and Complaints

If you have any concerns about any aspect of the study or have a complaint, in the first instance please contact the principal investigator of the project, Ava Jouvenel, using the contact details below. If you are still concerned, you think your complaint has not been addressed to your satisfaction or you feel that you cannot approach the principal investigator, please contact the research supervisor Dr Mary Kennedy (mrkenn@essex.ac.uk) or the departmental Director of Research in the department responsible for this project, *Camille Cronin* (camille.cronin@essex.ac.uk). If you are still not satisfied, please contact the University of Essex Research Integrity Manager, Mantalena Sotiriadou (email: ms21994@essex.ac.uk). Please include the ERAMS reference which can be found at the foot of this page.

Name of the Researcher Team

Lead researcher: Ava Jouvenel – aj23675@essex.ac.uk

Supervisor: Dr Mary Kennedy – mrkenn@essex.ac.uk

Appendix B4: Consent Form

Title of the Project: Staff experience and perception of Intergenerational projects between care home residents and children.

Research Team: Lead researcher: Ava Jouvenel – ava.jouvenel@gmail.com

_ aj23675@essex.ac.uk

Supervisor: Dr Mary Kennedy – mrkenn@essex.ac.uk

Please initial box

1. **I confirm that I** have read and understand the Information Sheet dated 08/07/2024 for the above study. I have had an opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these questions answered satisfactorily.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without giving any reason and without penalty. I understand that any data collected up to the point of my withdrawal will be erased.
3. I understand that the identifiable data provided will be securely stored and accessible only to the members of the research team directly involved in the project, and that confidentiality will be maintained.
4. I understand that my fully anonymised data will be used for a student Master's dissertation and could be published as a journal article, peer-review publications, presentations, and infographics within the wider intergenerational community, and therefore be part of the public domain.
5. I understand that the data collected about me will be used to support other research in the future and may be shared anonymously with other researchers.
6. I give permission for the de-identified (anonymised) transcripts, that I provide to be deposited in the University of Essex Research Data Repository, so that they will be available for future research and learning activities by other individuals.
7. I agree to take part in the above study.

Participant Name

Date

Participant Signature

Researcher Name

Date

Researcher Signature

Appendix B5 : Demographic questionnaire

1. Gender

- Male
- Female
- Transgender
- Nonbinary
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify):

2. Age

- Under 18
- 18 - 24
- 25 - 34
- 34 - 44
- 45 - 54
- 55 - 64
- 65 and over
- Prefer not to say

3. Ethnic group

- White/Caucasian
- Black, Black British, Caribbean or African
- Asian or Asian British
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- Other (Please specify) :

Prefer not to say

4. Religious Belief

No religion

Christian

Buddhist

Hindu

Jewish

Muslim

Other (please specify):

Prefer not to say

5. Marital Status

Single / Never Married

Married

In a domestic partnership

Widowed

Divorced

Separated

Other (please specify):

Prefer not to say

Appendix B6: Interview Topic Guide

1. Background information

- Can you describe your role and responsibilities within the nursing home?
- How and why did you start working in an IGP?
- Have you had any involvement with intergenerational programs before working in this facility? If yes, provide more details.
- Have you received any specific Intergenerational Program (IGP) related training?

2. Perceptions of IGPs

- If you had to explain IGPs to someone that is not familiar with this concept, what would you say?
- In your opinion, what works well in the IGP led in your facility? Is there anything that could be improved?

3. Program structure and activities

- Can you tell me about the structure and format of the IGP, where it takes place, how it is set up?
- What types of interactions take place between residents and staff before the sessions? What about after the sessions?

(Follow up: Have you noticed any differences in the participants attitudes depending on what activity is offered? Can you elaborate on that?)

4. Resident Engagement

- How do nursing home residents typically respond to the presence of nursery children during these programs?
- Has there been any interactions between staff and residents relating to the IGP that stood out for you, good or bad?

5. Impacts on residents and staff

- Have you witnessed any impacts the IGP might have had on the participants' general wellbeing? Can you give me a specific example?
- Have you witnessed any impacts on staff's morale and job satisfaction for staff participating in the IGP? For yourself personally?

(Follow up: In your experience, how does working within an IGP compares to working in a regular carehome or a different job?)

6. Suggestions for improvement

- What additional resources or support do you believe would be beneficial for the staff involved in facilitating these programs?
- If you had unlimited budget and could change anything to improve the effectiveness of the IGP or the experience of the staff what would you do, if anything?

Conclusion

- Is there anything else you would like to add or any final thoughts you would like to share about IGPs or about this interview?

Thank you for your time.

Appendix C: Codebook

Code	Definition	Rule	Quote	Theme
Personal impact on staff	Staff reflection on how participating in IGP impacts their own wellbeing and job satisfaction	Staff member discusses changes or benefits in their personal life or mindset that result from their involvement in the program	<p>"And it's just nice to see. You smile when they smile because you can see that they're happy."</p> <p>"It's very therapeutic for all of us to have intergenerational interactions and activities."</p>	IGP impact on residents, children and staff members viewed by staff
Job facilitation	How IGP make it easier for staff to fulfill their job responsibilities	Mention that the program simplifies their job, helps them with tasks, or reduces stress related to their role	"Oh, it makes my life easier when she joins the activities."	
Emotional positivity	Positive changes observed by staff in residents' and children's emotional well-being due to participation in the IGP	Staff members describe any improvements in mood, emotional state, or energy levels of residents and children as a result of their engagement in the activities	<p>"By the end of a program, you'll have younger people who might have been a little more shy, coming out of their shell and being just so themselves, being able to really showcase their personality."</p> <p>"And they start getting involved and engaged, whatever is going on. It's just smooth. That just brings them right down. (...) it's easier."</p>	
Sense of purpose ownership	Providing opportunities for elderly participants to take on responsibilities in order to foster a sense of purpose and ownership, enhancing their self-	Staff members describe assigning tasks or responsibilities to elderly participants, which contribute to their sense of purpose, self-worth, and feeling of contributing to others or the activity	"Actually, the biggest thing you can do is give them something to do (...) one of our residents, it's her job to do the shop (...) and that's really life changing for her to be able to do that, to have this responsibility (...). That's super important to her."	

	esteem and engagement			
Resident memory engagement	IGP effect on resident's memory	Staff member notes how residents remember events, people, or past experiences due to interactions within the program	“So those lovely memories, where they have kids or they have grandkids around, come back to them. You can see the impact that the intergenerational activities bring to the floor.”	
Perspective change in children	Changes in children's attitudes or understanding as a result of participation in the program	Staff member mentions changes in children's perspectives about older adults or aging	“At the beginning of the year we'll ask them, 'Are you nervous? What are your conceptions of older people?' and they'll say 'Oh they are just old, or grey' (...) And you also see their perceptions on age change because we'll do a survey with them at the end of the program (...) and it's just so nice to see how the words change. They describe them as gentle and kind and interesting...”	
Intergenerational friendships/connections created	Relationships or connections formed between different generations as a result of the IGP	Staff members mention meaningful relationships or bonds that develop between children and older adults through IGP	“They gain a familiarity with each other and so they actually do become friends. (...) So you slowly see these friendships build and I think that's where people gain more confidence”	
Sense of community	Feeling of being part of a supportive and inclusive community fostered by the program	Staff members mention the sense of belonging, togetherness, or the creation of a community atmosphere due to the program	“They start to feel like they belong. And when somebody starts to feel like they belong, then they can start inputting in different ways”	
Professional satisfaction	Positive feelings staff	Staff members mention satisfaction or feelings	"I feel good to know that I was able to	

	express regarding their jobs	of fulfillment regarding their jobs	provide something for people who cannot do it for themselves. It gives you that fulfilled feeling... it is the most rewarding feeling."	
Intrinsic motivation (personal history, culture)	Staff members' internal reasons for participating in or supporting the program	Staff members talk about their personal, internal motivations, such as feeling that the work is meaningful or aligns with their value	"I've always had intergenerational connections growing up."	
Challenges among participants	Challenges that impact elderly participants.	Staff members describe challenges that may appear among elderly participants.	<p>"I'm thinking when these children leave sometimes, what does it do to their minds? It can be in a positive way and it can be the negative."</p> <p>"But we have a resident that doesn't really like the intergenerational activities"</p>	
Frequency of program implementation	Comments on how often the IGP take place.	Staff member discusses the number of times the program is run, or their thoughts on whether it should happen more or less frequently	"Familiarity of consistency of the program"	
Diversity of activities offered	Variety of activities available in the programs and their importance	Staff members mention the range of activities and whether they feel the diversity of activities is beneficial or could be improved	"All the different activities that are done... this is the dream, this is what you want them to do... we already have such a full program for all these interactions."	Program effectiveness and implementation
Preparation	Emphasis on the importance of thorough preparation to ensure the success and smooth running of	Staff member highlights the role of preparation in preventing challenges, ensuring activities run smoothly, or mentions specific preparatory tasks that enhance the program's quality	"If you don't have that joint planning in place, it's just some kind of like, free-for-all. And nobody gets anything from that."	

	activities within the IGP			
Adaptation	Ability of the program activities to be adjusted or adapted based on participant needs or conditions	Staff discuss modifying activities to accommodate different abilities, needs, or interests of participants	"Let it happen... be able to go with what is happening in the room."	
Communication	Methods and effectiveness of communication between staff, children, and residents within the program.	Staff members mention the importance, challenges, or methods of communication during the activities.	"So it's always communication that is very important."	
Trust in organization /leadership	Confidence staff have in the organization or its leaders to effectively run the program	Staff members discuss their trust or confidence in the organization or leadership, or when they highlight effective leadership as a key element of program success.	"What I know is that they look after these people very, very well... anything to uplift and upgrade for us to benefit from, I trust they will do it."	
Additional resources (Training, psychological support)	Staff's propositions of additional resources that could make their jobs easier or better the program	Staff member speaks about needing additional materials, funding, staff, or support to better execute the program	"I do think that mental health support for us as facilitators would be beneficial" "You don't necessarily have to move up; you can learn sideways"	

Appendix D : Themes

Themes	Definition
<p>IGP impact on residents, children and staff members viewed by staff</p>	<p>Explores the perceived effects of IGPs on different participants, as seen from the perspective of staff members. It involves examining how residents in care settings, participating children, and staff themselves benefit from or are affected by IGP activities. Impacts may include emotional well-being, cognitive stimulation, social interaction, and fulfillment derived from engagement across generations. Also explores staff job satisfaction and motivations.</p>
<p>Program effectiveness and implementation</p>	<p>Evaluates how successfully an intergenerational program achieves its intended outcomes, looking at aspects like its ability to foster meaningful relationships between participants, improve quality of life, or meet pre-defined goals. It also involves examining how well the program is implemented, including logistical factors, staff training, and adherence to planned protocols, to understand how these influence overall effectiveness. Identifies challenges and opportunities for improvement.</p>

Appendix E : Participants Demographics

Participant	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Religion	Marital Status
1	Female	55-64	Latino	Christian	Married
2	Female	34-44	White	Jewish	Married
3	Female	45-54	Black, Black British, Caribbean or African Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	Christian	Married
4	Female	45-54	Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	Christian	Single/Never married
5	Female	55-64	Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	Christian	Single/Never married
6	Female	55-64	Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	Christian	Divorced
7	Female	34-44	White	No religion	Married
8	Female	45-54	White	No religion	Married
9	Female	55-64	White	No religion	Married
10	Female	18-24	Asian/Asian British	Christian	Single/Never married

The mean age is 48.55 years