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Participatory Action Research and Participatory Evaluation. Analysis of Two Methodological Approaches to Promote Youth Agency and Participation

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Abstract

Participatory action research and participatory evaluation are two approaches used to involve people in public affairs, fostering the shared construction of knowledge. Recent decades have seen an increase in the involvement of agents in public activity, a trend that is also evident among young people. Experiences based on youth participatory action research and participatory youth evaluation are discussed in the literature. The main aim of this article is to define these two methodological approaches, and discuss: the role played by agents, the functions implemented, and the main stages. To this end, we have used a systematic documentary analysis of databases and specialist journals between 2010-2021. The results produce a map of internationally published articles regarding participatory action research and participatory youth evaluation. Secondly, a check-list is provided of the two methodological approaches to youth participation; this compiles the functions of the agents involved and the stages involved in both approaches. The article aims to be of use to public administrations and social entities with decision-making powers over actions that favour the involvement of young people in public affairs.

Keywords: participatory evaluation, participatory research-action, empowerment, youth, community action, research.

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Introduction

Since no single individual can answer a society's social needs, any complex democratic society requires the contribution of all institutional actors, both public and private. Civic participation strengthens the State's institutions, contributing to effective government (Putman, 1993). While, as Hardy & Phillips (1998) note, these relations may not always be easy, strategies must be found to facilitate them. Recent decades have seen an increased interest in making people the pivot and centre of social action. This can be seen in: a) the design and implementation of policies promoting proximity in the management of public resources, favouring horizontal, relational models (Gore & Wells, 2009; Herrera & Caston, 2003); b) increased partnership between Public Administrations and civil organizations in the design, implementation, and evaluation of social and educational initiatives (Laperrière, Potvin, & Zuñiga, 2012); c) the orientation of evaluation towards integrating, comprehensive, and participatory models (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Such a context calls for a reconsideration of methodological strategies. Qualitative methodology has begun to be used in social actions and evaluation processes, framing them within specific institutional and political contexts: people's concerns, experience, and knowledge are covered in the design, implementation, and evaluation of social programmes. There is also a re-examination of the relations of power established between subjects with technical knowledge, and those who possess the popular knowledge to use a programme or service. In the current context, and bearing in mind the debate regarding the political participation of young people, searching for strategies that facilitate their participation is logical. It is, thus, about analysing strategies that enable their participation in public affairs. This article will cover two in depth.

Qualitative methodology approaches or work strategies that foster youth participation are participatory action-research (hereafter, PAR), and participatory evaluation (hereafter, PE) processes. Some authors argue that one of the benefits of PAR is that it is a methodological approach that promotes the abilities of young people to strengthen their own agency (Ritterbusch, Boothby, Mugumya, Wanican, Bangirana, *et al.*, 2020); while Aldana, Richards-Schuster & Checkoway, (2016) note that the strategy that has served to give a voice to socially under-represented or marginalized groups, such as Afro-American youth. In the United States, PAR has been used when working with young people to examine and assess health inequalities; the impact of violence on the development of their lives; multi-culturalism and socio-economic inequalities (Cammarota & Fine, 2010); factors that influence academic success at secondary school (Kornbluh, Ozer, Allen, & Kirshner, 2015); as well as influencing the design of local administration educational policies (Warren & Marciano, 2018), among other subjects.

PE increases the use of evaluation processes, foments the representativeness of the values of those groups involved in decision-making, and promotes the empowerment of people and their rights in the evaluation itself (Papineau &

Kiely, 1996). PE with young people is a strategy used to enable them to express their experiences and opinions, identify problems and search for solutions (Exner-Cortens, Sitter, Van Bavel, & Wright 2021; Richards-Schuster, Wernick, Henderson, Bakko, Rodríguez *et al.*, 2021). Over recent decades a number of evaluative approaches have been generated, oriented towards a participation that favours some aspects over others. All of these increase the participation of people who lack technical experience in evaluation, not just as mere informers, but rather as agents who are actively taking decisions. Cousins and Chouinard (2012) note the need to provide participatory evaluation processes with a methodologic order and clarification given the heterogeneous nature of those approaches identified in the praxis.

This article has its roots in a research project[5], funded by the Spanish government, that identifies and analyses the characteristics of youth empowerment, and then proposes socio-educational strategies of intervention with the young people; the project has noted a lack of rigorous research into the implementation of PAR (Ozer, 2017) and PE processes were (DeLuca, Poth, & Searle, 2009). This was also the case with other participatory strategies. There is thus a clear lack of precision to the conceptual, technical and methodological questions of these participatory approaches. Furthermore, there are discrepancies between the *discursive framework* –that which is verbalized as positive in the political agenda and there is a desire for it to be put into practice-, and the *normative framework* -the indications, guidelines, and technical elements necessary to develop participatory approaches in the intervention-. This discrepancy can be summarized in the following two questions: *"Is the aim really to foment the involvement of young people in social action in their communities?*" and, were this the case, *"What steps and phases need to be developed?*"

This article starts from the premise that there is real political will to promote the involvement of young people in social action and community life. To support this, we aim to shine light on the second question, focusing on the analysis of PAR and PE with young people, through three research questions:

– What agents can be involved in a PAR and PE? What are their main roles?

– What are the functions of these agents in a PAR and PE process?

– What phases can a PAR and PE process be organized into?

[5] For the past few years a team of researchers from the Universities of Girona, Barcelona, Barcelona Autónoma, Pompeu Fabra, and Madrid Autónoma have been developing the HEBE project, focused on youth empowerment. It is a research project funded by the Ministerio de Economía, Industria y Competitividad de España (Ref.: EDU2017-83249-R). Some of the results of this research: Soler, P., Trilla, J., Jiménez, M. y Úcar, X. (2017); Úcar, X., Planas, A., Novella, A., & Rodrigo-Moriche, P. (2017), are included in the bibliography to this article.

Conceptual Approach

Participatory-Action Research (PAR)

Fals-Borda and Anisur-Rahman (1991) understand PAR as an experimental methodology that combines three logics: a) a research approach, b) an action in the educational context, and c) a socio-political action, where people take positions and make demands. Two main aims are pursued: to allow oppressed or marginalized people and social groups to become empowered – often through creative methodologies-, expressing the learning acquired through specific actions; and at the same time developing socio-political actions.

PAR is co-constructed in a cyclical logic of action-reflection-action, breaking other linear logics in the research, that are characteristic of a positivist paradigm. In our opinion, PAR has a socio-pedagogical purpose with three main components:

1) Capacity building, by which we mean learning acquired during the participatory process.
2) Transformative political action in the development of the social or professional praxis, given that participation means the use of experience to voluntarily break the asymmetrical relations of submission and dependency implicitly present in the subject/object dichotomy (Fals-Borda & Anisur-Rahman, 1991:5).
3) The individual or social group becoming aware, and the start of conscious and deliberate decision making. We directly relate this aspect to the concept of empowerment that takes place in the education, for the purpose of this article, of young people.

Authors such as Stocking and Cutforth (2006) highlight three characteristics that distinguish approaches to research based on people from those based on positivist models of social research: a) the need for a collaborative work perspective, b) the validation of multiple sources of knowledge, and c) a research orientation guided by the principles of social justice. Tapella, Rodríguez-Bilella, Sanz, Chavez-Tafur, & Espinosa-Fajardo (2021) argue that PAR is focused on producing knowledge that is explicitly oriented towards the transformation of the reality researched.

Kornbluh *et al.* (2015) note that youth-led PAR falls within the lines of the general approach, but that it is based and focussed on work done with and by the young people. Ozer (2017) sees youth participatory-action research (hereafter, YPAR) as a form of community-based participatory research in which the young people train in order to be able to identify and analyse relevant problems in their lives. This process leads to the development of abilities linked to research, communication, team-work and promotion. Aldana, Richards-Schuster & Checkoway (2016) note that YPAR is a process that involves young people in documenting and critically assessing the social conditions that affect their lives. Two of the epistemological sources of YPARs have been popular education, and critical pedagogies. Authors

such as Akom, Shah, Nakai, & Cruz (2016), Aldana, Richards-Schuster & Checkoway (2016), Cammarota and Romero (2011), Livingstone, Celemencki, & Calixte (2014) and Wright (2020) refer explicitly to the influence of the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire and his concept of "awareness-raising". Ozer, Abraczinskas, Duarte, Mathur, Ballard, *et al.* (2020) also examine the idea that the central axis of YPARs is to question who usually owns and creates knowledge in organisations and society in general. We see the YPAR as a methodological socio-educational work strategy with young people, which has a socio-political focus towards social action; it benefits from experiences and practices to develop research processes that are focused on the local, fomenting trusting interpersonal relations which provide information that is useful in improving and transforming this very local context.

Participatory Evaluation (PE)

Four roots can be identified in the approaches of evaluation oriented at Participatory Approaches to Evaluation PAE: a) the civil rights movement in the United States in the 1960s and 70s; b) the popular education movement in Latin American and the Caribbean; c) the scientific and professional evolution in evaluation, and d) the theoretical-conceptual construct of empowerment.

Evaluations in the United States of the 1960s and 70s questioned the privileges that the evaluators and programme managers had over other groups, such as the participants (Cousins & Chouinard, 2012). Tapella *et al.* (2021) connect popular education and the works of Freire (1970) as a root of PE in Latin America and the Caribbean. According to these authors, popular education is a privileged tool for excluded groups to become more aware of their situation, and thus organize themselves with the aim of bringing change. In such a framework, PE is seen to be an educational proposal that foments dialogue. Thirdly, Koch (2000) reviewed the history of evaluation models, categorising them in generations, and placing PE within the focuses of the fourth generation, i.e. evaluations resulting from negotiation processes. The fourth and final root of PE is the theoretical-conceptual construct of empowerment. Following the work of Soler, Trilla, Jiménez, & Úcar (2017) we view youth empowerment as *"a process that increases the possibilities that a person can decide and act consequently in all those areas that effect their life, participate in decision-taking processes, and contribute responsibly to whatever effects the group they form part of"* (p. 22). The same authors highlight two conditions that are necessary for empowerment to take place: (i) the development of individual abilities, and (ii) a means that permits the acquired abilities to be used.

Since the 1990s a number of evaluation approaches have arisen that are oriented towards participation and prioritize certain differential elements; however, all share some traits: they are based on the principles of inclusion, dialogue and deliberation between actors (House, 2005); they base their actions on negotiation (Sharkey & Sharples, 2008); they facilitate individual, collective, and organisational learning (DeLuca *et al.*, 2009, Morabito, 2002); and they support the significant

role of non-evaluating participants during the evaluation process (Daigneault & Jacob, 2009). Some of the most cited approaches are[6]: Practical-Participatory Evaluation (Jacob, Ouvrard, & Belanger, 2011), Transformative-Participatory Evaluation (Suárez-Balcazar, Orellana-Damacela, Portillo, Sharma, & Lanum, 2003), Empowerment Evaluation (Fetterman, 1994), Collaborative Evaluation (Rodríguez-Campos, 2012), Utilization-Focused Evaluation (Bryson, Patton, & Bowman, 2011), Responsive Evaluation (Baur, Amba, & Widdershoven, 2010).

According to Cousins and Withmore (1998), and the Daigneault and Jacob's review (2009), a PE has three main characteristics:

1) The control of the evaluation must be shared by the greatest number of people involved. Decisions regarding the evaluative process – choice of evaluation objects, data collection techniques and tools-, and those arising from the evaluation results go beyond the technical work of professionals acting as evaluators. Opening control of evaluation would imply sharing responsibilities and decentralising the decision-making of those agents involved: professionals of the organisations and project users; agents responsible for supervision and funding, those in Public Administrations who wield political power, among others etc.

3) The need to ensure diversity of agents. Evaluation teams should be representative of all those groups of people who are in any way connected to the matter being evaluated.

4) The need to ensure increased involvement of agents. Participation should not just be limited to specific moments, involvement should cover all stages of evaluation, from design to dissemination of results. The scope of participation is associated with decision-making on the evaluation by individuals in all of its phases.-

Flores (2008), cited in Ozer *et al.* (2020) notes that when YPAR evaluates a programme or service aimed at young people or a youth organisation, it is often referred to as youth participatory evaluation (hereafter, YPE). We see common features and a relation between YPARs and evaluation practices of participatory programmes. YPAR, as we have discussed, is a methodological approach (Ritterbusch *et al.*, 2020) and is work-oriented (Ozer *et al.*, 2020), PE is seen to be an approach in which people trained in evaluation methods implement evaluation activities alongside others who are not experts in evaluation, thus generating a shared evaluative knowledge (Cousins, 2003). In this context, the YPE is a strategy to foment youth empowerment (Zeldin, Bestul, & Powers, 2012), as well as facilitate their positive development (London, Zimmerman, & Erbstein, 2003). As described by Checkoway and Richards-Schuster (2003), *"youth participation in community evaluation research is an approach in which young people are*

[6] Space limitations mean that just one reference is provided for each ot the approaches.

active participants in the stages of knowledge development, including defining the problem, gathering the information, and using the results" (p. 22).

This article will use the term Participatory Evaluation (PE), developed in an earlier work by one of the authors (Núñez, 2015). The authors understand PE from a socio-pedagogic perspective of the evaluative processes, connected with the main theories of social pedagogy. These intersections between PE and social pedagogy have previously been examined by Chouinard, Milley & Cousins (2014).

Methodology

Search criteria and the design of analysis indicators are described below.

Search criteria

The search for and analysis of information was based on the following criteria:

1) Scientific articles published in English or Spanish between 2010 and 2021.
2) Three databases were used: 1) Scopus, 2) Web of Science, 3) Dialnet. The first two were used for an international search, while the scope of the third is national.
3) The search covered social science knowledge areas (education, psychology, social work, among others) and the humanities.
4) English search terms were "Youth Participatory Action Research", "Participatory Evaluation", "Youth Participatory Evaluation" combined with the Boolean operator "AND". Spanish terms were "Evaluación Participativa" and "Investigación-Acción Participativa con Jóvenes", these being the equivalent of the English terms. No combination was possible due to the format of Dialnet.

The first stage of analysis was title, summary, and keywords in each article; this ensured their initial suitability. In order to filter the article and move onto the second analytical stage, the summary of each article had to include the following information:

1) That it would discuss the results of an empirical research project, and/or elaborate an experience or good practice; both had to involve work with young people.
2) That the empirical research /experience / good practice fell within the parameters of PAR or YPARs.
3) That the empirical research /experience / good practice fell within the parameters of PE or YPEs.

The initial search on Scopus and Web of Science produced 174 articles. Once filtered, there were 28 references, these have thus been used in this research. The

initial search on Dialnet produced 47 articles on "Participatory Evaluation" and 85 on "Youth Participatory Action Research", this was reduced to 2 articles after filtering, giving a total of 30 articles examined for the purposes of this research.

Analytical indicators

A battery of analysis indicators was designed to operationalize and systemize the search and bibliographical analysis process. This was applied to the final 30 articles: article title; author/s and year of publication; publishing journal; approach, intervention context, intervention purpose, intervention strategies, agents and place. The information thus compiled and analysed is presented in *Table 1*, the first result of this research.

Results

The first result presents the analysis of those experiences that facilitate and promote the participation of the young people in their community. The results are shown in table 1, which summarizes the information analysed in the final 30 articles.

Information in table 1 includes the following elements: (1) Article title; (2) Author/s and year of publication; (3) Publishing journal; (4) The approach: the methodological approach or strategy analysed is presented; examples are Participatory Action Research (PAR); Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR); and Youth Participatory Evaluation (YPE); (5) Intervention context: specifying the kind of organisation in which the participatory experience with young people took place; examples are extracurricular activities; community-based organisations; youth organisations; children's hospitals; (6) Purpose of intervention: specifying the aims of the participatory experience; (7) Intervention strategies: specifying techniques, tools, or artistic media used by young people in collecting and analysing information; (8) Agents: informing of number, age and other relevant characteristics of the young people participating in analysed cases; (9) Place: informing of place, city, or region, whether urban or rural. To protect anonymity, some articles do not state location, or use pseudonyms.

Table 1. *Case studies on Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) and Youth Participatory Evaluation (YPE).*

Title	Authors / Year of Publication	Journal	Approach	Context of Intervention	Purpose of Intervention	Strategies of Intervention	Stakeholders	Location
Exploring peer support services for youth experiencing multiple health and social challenges in Canada: A Hybrid Realist-Participatory Evaluation model	Halsall *et al.*, (2021)	International Journal of Qualitative Methods	Hybrid Realist-Participatory Evaluation	Non-Government Organization that provides mental health support	-Analyze peer support services for youth with mental health, physical health and substance use challenges.	-Initial training on the study background research. -Conducted semi-structured focus groups and interviews. -Online presentation and workshops. -Designed and administered an online survey.	7 youth peers, 14-26 years old	Toronto, Canada Urban area
Engaging youth voices to address racial disproportionality in schools: Exploring the practice ard potential of youth participatory research ir an urban district	Richards-Schuster *et al.*, (2021)	Children and Youth Services Review	Youth Participatory Evaluation (YPE)	The Minneapolis Public School District	-Examine school climate, racial disproportionality, discipline issues, and student and teacher relationships.	-Initial training on the topic and program evaluation. -A program Website. -Evaluation meetings with staff members and youth.	Over 800 young people in 31 schools, 2015 - 2019	Minneapolis, Minnesota, United States Urban area
Photo-Based Evaluation: A method 'or participatory evaluation with adolescents	Exner-Cortens *et al.*, (2021)	American Journal of Evaluation	Youth Participatory Evaluation (YPE)	School-community partnership model	-Improve mental and sexual health and reduce male-perpetrated violence.	-Photovoice.	6 young people, no age informed.	Rural area in Western Canadian province (no population informed)

"It's everybody's job": Youth and adult constructions of responsibility to take action for school change through PAR	Bertrand *et al.*, (2020)	The Urban Review	Participatory Action Research (PAR)	After-school activities in High School	-Research and make recommendations related to racism and bullying in school settings. -Analyze youth and school adults' constructions of responsibility focused on subsequent action.	-Conducted surveys of students in grades 6th , 7th and 8th. -Interviewed students, school adults and community members. -Public presentation of PAR's findings. -Produced and presented a video and poster about topic of bullying.	Between 9 and 15 students in either 7th or 8th grades	Urban area in Southwestern United States (no city informed)
Opportunities for youth participatory action research to inform school district decisions	Cohen *et al.*, (2020)	Evidence & Policy	Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)	Formal education	-Promote youth voice in school and district policy conversations. -Improve school climate. -Used youth-generated findings for data-base decision making.	-Conducted surveys with classmates. -Conducted focus groups with classmates. -Held student forum once a month.	1,000 students from 49 district schools in Stockton	Stockton, California, United States Urban area
Managing the disconnect: A critical case study of neoliberalism in youth development practice	Coleman, B. R. (2020)	Journal of Community Psychology	Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)	Non-Government Organization that provides family support and community services	-Research causes of youth gang violence and police violence. -Promote social activism to eradicate situations of violence in the community.	-Meetings with staff members and youth. -Interviewed staff members and youth.	16 young men, 15-20 years old, identified as Black (n=9), Latin (n=6), Asian (n=1)	Urban area in Midwestern United States (no city informed)
Beyond participation: A case study of youth as researchers and community development in North Philadelphia	Malcolm *et al.*, (2020)	Community Development	Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)	Non-Government Organization that provides community services	-Analyze community's perception about police and analyze police's perception about community members: negative stereotypes, racism, police violence, etc.	-Initial training for participants. -Group dynamics. -Interviewed police officers and community members in the neighborhoods. -Creation of a documentary video.	12 youth, 12-16 years old, identified as Black (n=12)	North Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States Urban area

Pushing the limits of child participation in research: reflections from a youth-driven participatory action research (YPAR) initiative in Uganda	Ritterbusch *et al.*, (2020)	International Journal of Qualitative Methods	Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)	Non-Governmental Organization that advocates for children rights	-Include children in research as co-creators of knowledge in research processes. -Reflect on causes of violence against children and young people in Uganda	-Participant observation. -Conducted semi-structured life history interviews. -Self-photograph exercises. -Focus groups.	4 youth, 16-25 years old	Kampala, Uganda Urban area
A resilient research approach: Using community-based participatory action research in a rural area of India	Shadowen *et al.*, (2020)	Journal of Community Psychology	Community-based participatory action research (CBPAR)	Non-Governmental Organization focused on education	-Evaluate an after school program attending to children in disadvantaged environments	-Initial training for participants. -Conducted survey with 430 children enrolled in the after school program.	4 young adult men and 3 young adult women	Tamil Nadu, India Rural area
Imagining a more just world: critical arts pedagogy and youth participatory action research	Wright, D. E. (2020)	International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education	Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)	Community Organization	-Support young people's knowledge production -Engage young people in systemic analysis and transformative agency to address structural injustices	-Group meetings: twice a week over 7 months. -Permanent art activities.	4 young men	Urban area in West Coast, United States (no city informed)
Using Youth Participatory Action Research as a Health Intervention in Community Settings[2]	Lindquist-Grantz, R., & Abraczinskas, M. (2020)	Health Promotion Practice	Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)	Youth-serving Organization	-Increase youth voice in decisions surrounding physical activity options. -Aligned activities with youth interest in school-based aftercare programs.	-Photovoice.	64 high school students	Working-class neighborhood in United States (no city informed) Urban area
				Hospital for children and young people	-Reflect on causes of youth suicide and thinking about actions for its prevention	-Focus groups. -Use of artistic media: painting / narratives.	25 high school students	Cincinnati, Ohio, United States Urban area

[2] In this article, the authors present two examples or case studies on Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR). They are presented separately in the table

Art as a transformative practice: A Participatory action research project with trans youth	Asakura *et al.* (2020)	Qualitative Social Work	Participatory Action Research (PAR)	Youth-serving Organization	-Reflect on trans representations in mainstream media. -Create representations that more accurately reflect their diverse and complex everyday lives.	-Mentorship (training) in artistic skills. -Use of artistic media: photography, illustrated zine, performance arts, specialized digital editing, writing. -Organize and host a week-long art exhibit.	5 trans-youth, 19-25 years old	Mid-size Canadian city (no city informed) Urban area
The use of ripple effect mapping to understand successes of the SC pregnancy assistance fund: A participatory evaluation approach	Workman, L. M., & Browder, J. S. (2020)	Maternal and Child Health Journal	Participatory Evaluation (PE)	Non-Governmental Organization focused on support for young parents	-Participatory evaluation of an educational and assistance program for young mothers and fathers	-Interviews. -Collective development of visual maps.	52 participants	South Carolina, United States (no population informed)
Participatory youth-led community development: A child-centered visual SWOT analysis in India	Mathiyazhagan, S. (2020)	Children and Youth Services Review	Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)	Youth-led Organization	-Analyze the impact of youth-led visual technology and media-based community development processes transformed a tribal community with focus on promoting child rights	-Life story interviews. -SWOT analysis based on focus group discussion. -Conducted a visual SWOT process.	17 youth, 15- 25 years old	Villupuram, Tamil Nadu India Rural area
Between power and perception: Understanding youth perspectives in participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E) in Ghana	Boadu, E. S., & Ile, I. (2019)	Evaluation and Program Planning	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E)	Public-private partnership between Government of Ghana and civil organizations	-Analyze youth experience of the PM&E and their level of participation in the design and implementation of LESDEP programme.	-Face-to face interview with 120 youth target beneficiaries. -In-depth interviews with programme field & monitoring evaluation officials.	120 youth, 18-35 years old. 43 (35.8% females) 77 (64.2% males)	3 districts in the Greater Accra Region, Ghana Urban area

Revealing the resistant capital of Cambodian youth: Using photovoice as a tool for advocacy and policy change	Papa, E. L. (2019)	Journal of Southeast Asian American Education and Advancement	Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)	Youth-led community Organization	-Investigate causes of youth gang violence and police violence -Promote social activism to eradicate situations of violence in the community	-Photovoice.	5 second-generation Cambodian American youth, 14-21 years old	Medium-sized city in Northeastern, United States (no city informed) Urban area
The Syrian Canadian Sports Club: A community-based participatory action research project with/for Syrian youth refugees	Robinson *et al.*, (2019)	Social Sciences	Community Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR)	Non-Governmental Organization focused on sports with youth refugees	-Identify obstacles and opportunities (at individual, interpersonal and community level) about their situation in foster care.	-Photovoice. -Personal notes. -Focus groups.	16 children / youth 8-19 years old	Rural area in Canada (no population informed)
Reshaping our world: Collaborating with children for community-based climate change action	Trott, C. D. (2019)	Action Research	Participatory Action Research (PAR)	Youth Organization	-Strengthen children's awareness about climate change. -Promote the agency of children through youth-led action projects.	-Photovoice. -Focus groups.	55 children, 10-12 years old	3 municipalities in Colorado State, United States Urban and Rural area (no population informed)
Amplifying youth voice and cultivating leadership through participatory action research	Gardner, R., Snyder, W., & Zuguy, A. (2019)	Education policy analysis archives	Participatory Action Research (PAR)	Community Organization	-Strengthen agency of youth in the community. -Promote youth leadership and social change in the community.	- Conducted interviews with key agents in the community. -Designed and administered a survey with youth of the community.	10 youth, 15- 17 years old	Boston, Massachusetts United States Urban area

A case study using photovoice to explore racial and social identity among young black men: Implications for social work research and practice	Fisher-Borne, M., & Brown, A. (2018)	Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work	Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR)	Higher Education (University)	-Reflect how intersections of race, gender and sexual orientation affect youth's daily lives and health.	-Photovoice.	4 youth, 20-24 years old	Chapel Hill, North Carolina United States Urban area
Action research at the intersection of structural and family violence in an immigrant latino community: a youth-led study	Rodriguez, R., Macias, R.L., Perez-Garcia, R., Landeros, G., & Martinez, A. (2018)	Journal of Family Violence	Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)	Non-Governmental organization focused on preventing domestic violence	-Analyze how anti-migration policies affect individuals and families suffering from domestic violence.	-Initial training. -Meetings. -In-depth interviews. -Data analysis.	7 youth, 14-21 years old	Atlanta, Georgia Unites States Urban area
Activating student voice through Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR): policy-making that strengthens urban education reform	Warren, C. A., & Marciano, J. E. (2018)	International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education	Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)	Partnership between local administration and University	-Influence the design of educational policies at local level.	-Initial training. -In-depth interviews. -Focus group. -Participant observation. -Data analysis.	20 youth, 14-19 years old	Urban area in United States (No population informed)
Participatory evaluation of the evaluation processes involved in providing socio-educational support for young people in an open environment	Úcar, X., Llena, A., Pescador, R., & Jiménez, J. (2018)	Revista de Educación Social	Youth Participatory Evaluation (YPE)	Partnership between youth technicians and University	-Evaluate the meaning, characteristics and results of socio-educational intervention evaluation with youth.	- Guided discussions. - Data analysis. - Validate outcomes of YPE.	9 youth from secondary school (no informed ages)	Metropolitan area of Barcelona, Catalonia Spain Urban area (No population informed)
Participatory evaluation of youth empowerrrent in youth groups. Cases analysis	Úcar, X., Planas, A., Novella, A., & Rodrigo-Moriche, P. (2017)	Pedagogía Social. Revista Interuniversitaria	Youth Participatory Evaluation (YPE)	Partnership between youth managers and University	-Evaluate a pre-concept of youth empowerment. -Evaluate a battery of youth empowerment indicators.	-Initial training. -Data analysis. -Meetings and groups' dynamic. -Create and represent a performance.	42 youth, 14- 25 years old	Some cities in Spain: Badia del Vallés, Girona, Barcelona, Madrid Urban area

Youth participatory action research (YPAR) 2.0: how technological innovation and digital organizing sparked a food revolution in East Oakland	Akom, A., Shah, A., Nakai, A., & Cruz, T. (2016)	International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education	Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)	Non-Governmental Organization	-Analyze information on eating habits and protection of the environment -Foster youth involvement in community building (local neighborhoods)	-Initial training. -Fieldwork: visit centers and organizations on the subject of the research. -Field notes. -Photographs and video.	90 youth, secondary education (engagement during 3 years of project)	East Oakland, California United States Urban area
Dialogic pedagogy for youth participatory action research: Facilitation of an intergroup empowerment program	Aldana, A., Richards-Schuster, K., & Checkoway, B. (2016)	Social work with groups	Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)	Local partnership in Metropolitan Area of Detroit	-Analyze racial and residential segregation of young participants. -Promote policies that avoid racial segregation of ethnic minority youth.	-Photovoice. -Intergroup dialogue.	9 youth with social and racial diversity (5 women // 4 men) 18 years old	Detroit, Michigan United States Urban Area
Youth participatory action research and school improvement: The missing voices of black youth in Montreal	Livingstone, A. M., Celemencki, J., & Callxte, M. (2014)	Canadian Journal of Education	Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)	Secondary school	-Involve black youth in the study of factors that improve / hinder their school success. -Identify solutions to reduce drop-out rate.	-Monthly meetings during 4 months. -Initial training. -Focus groups. -Design a map of school services.	16 youth, 15-18 years old	Montreal, Quebec, Canada Urban area
"Call for Partnerships:" an innovative strategy to establish grassroots partnerships to transform the food and fitness environments	Sands, C. H., Bankert, S. C., Pataj, S., Maitin, M. & Sostre, J. (2014)	Community Development	Community Based Participatory Research & Evaluation (CBPR&E)	Local partnership	-Increase partnership in local community to improve program's goals. -Training participants in evaluation skills as facilitators. -Aligned local initiatives with a healthy life and nutrition strategy.	-Conducted in-depth interviews with key agents. -Surveys. -Analyzed interview data in team work on evaluation.	6 youth from Holyoke (no informed ages)	Holyoke, Massachusetts United States Urban area

Participatory action research for high school students: transforming policy, practice, and the personal with social justice education	Cammarota, J., & Romero, A. (2011)	Educational Policy	Participatory Action Research (PAR)	School settings	-Investigate social issues that affect directly youth and their families (immigration, discrimination, etc.).	-Conducted interviews. -Participant observations. -Public presentation of PAR results.	6 youth, secondary schools (no informed ages)	Tucson, Arizona United States Urban area
Participatory evaluation with youth leads to community action project	Ashton *et al.*, (2010)	Journal of Extension	Participatory Evaluation (PE)	Out-of-school youth programme	-Engage youth in civic projects in the community through PE process.	-Initial training. -Meetings.	7 youth-adult teams of PE (no informed aged or number)	Eugene, Oregon United States Urban area

The second result is the design of the check-list on YPAR and YPE strategies. The experiences of the final 30 articles are analysed, this was done through a deductive information analysis information procedure, using the battery of analysis indicators presented above. Similarities were observed in: a) the intervening agents and their main roles, b) the functions the identified agents fulfilled, and c) the stages in which YPAR and YPEs are sequenced. These three characteristics form the check-list, which is presented below.

YPAR process roles, functions agents and stages

Table 2 shows information regarding the YPAR process.

Table 2. *YPAR process roles, functions, agents and phases*

Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)			
Roles of agents involved	Researchers Process assessors	Adults collaborators Process facilitators.	Young people Process creators/ participants.
Functions of agents involved	Know organization/ community context. Propose process in organisation/ community. Train participants. Technically assess YPAR.	Introduce, present researchers in organisation/community. Facilitate logistical support. Aid in identifying young people in organisation/ community and suggest they participate. Promote reflection and expression of young people. Mediate, find balance and representativeness of all young people during research. Aid in identifying suitable forms of gathering information. Aid in identifying suitable results' presentation formats.	Provide own opinions and views on subject in question. Discuss and agree group opinions. Design own means/ strategies for data collection. Analyse documentation. Administer questionnaires and interviews. Develop pre-standardized creative techniques (e.g. Photovoice). Group discussion and analysis of information collected. Design own means/ strategies for results' presentation. Influence improvement/ change in organisation/ community based on results obtained.

Process phases	Invite participation Recruit work team Train first participants Identify (a) problem, (b) situation, (c) research needs Define roles and responsibilities Compile information Analyse information Present results Develop actions and take decisions that promote change

YPE process roles, functions, agents and phases

Table 3 shows the information regarding the YPE process.

Table 3. *YPE process roles, functions, agents and phases*

Youth Participatory Evaluation (YPE)			
Roles of agents involved	External researchers-evaluators Process assessors. Process facilitators.	Technical personnel Process facilitators. Process attendants. Creators / participants in processes.	Young people Creators / participants in processes.
Functions of agents involved	Know organization/ community context. Explain PE process in organisation/ community. Train participants. Produce initial methodological proposal for development of PE. Technical assessment in PE process.	Review evaluators' methodological proposal. Define methodological proposal in context of organisation/ community. Facilitate logistic support. Support development of PE. Identify people in organisation/ community to invite participation. Form part of the PE work team. Monitor participation of young people. Negotiate and set evaluation aims. Gather information through range of sources/strategies. Analyse information gathered. Aid young people in design of results' presentation. Help young people disseminate results through whole organisation/community.	Form part of the PE work team. Negotiate and set evaluation aims. Gather information through range of sources/strategies. Design information gathering strategies. Discuss and analyse information in groups. Design results' presentation strategies. Present evaluation results. Disseminate evaluation results through whole organisation/ community.

Process phases	Invite participation Recruit work team Train first participants Negotiate (a) evaluation aims, (b) conditions of evaluations, (c) timescale Compile information Analyse information Present results Disseminate of results through whole organisation/community, etc.

Discussion

Three main agent roles, with similar characteristics, were identified in both approaches: 1) personnel external to the community and organisations; 2) adults linked to the organisations, and 3) young people linked to the organisations and community.

The first are generally university researchers or external evaluators – in the case of the YPE-, their main role is to assess processes. They have a technical interest in participatory research and evaluation approaches and work to three ends: a) to increase scientific knowledge, b) to improve the processes of NGOs and community organisations, and c) to further the agency and relevance of young people.

The second group refers to adult collaborators. These can be professionals – technicians in community organisations or schools- and adult volunteers –such as community leaders and other volunteers-. Their main role is that of facilitators of the YPAR, and facilitators and participants of the YPE. They monitor the young people during the development of participatory processes, introduce external personnel into the community/organisation, and offer logistical support at the start. They also act as mediators between the young people, and participate directly in the processes, this is particularly so in participatory evaluation.

The third group is formed of the young people involved, who are normally linked to a formal education centre, youth association, or social organisation that offers services to the community. Their main role is of central players in YPAR and YPEs: to negotiate, gather and analyse information, implement improvements and change, and have an influence on organisations and in their communities.

Regarding the functions of external personnel, described in tables 2 and 3, three functions should be highlighted that are present in both approaches a) knowledge of the context of the community or organisation; b) technical assessment of processes, and c) the training of participants. When discussing initial training, of the 30 experiences analysed, 11 included prior training as an intervention strategy as part of the participatory process; of these, 4 were linked to YPE, and 7 to YPAR. The analysis permits a division of training into cross-disciplinary, and specific. Cross-disciplinary training is based on offering participants contents

such as mixed research methods; data collection techniques; ethical research protocols; typology of youth participation; and empowerment; leadership; social abilities; and promotion of personal autonomy, among others. Specific training covers the syllabus of the YPAR or YPE. Examples include documentary analysis; violence against young people and child-protection protocols (Ritterbusch *et al.* 2020); the promotion of physical and mental health (Lindquist-Grantz and Abraczinskas, 2020); and fine arts (Asakura, Lundy, Black, & Tierney, 2020). The external personnel – researchers / evaluators- are responsible for overall training development.

Regarding the functions of those adults who collaborate in YPAR and YPEs, we have observed the necessary combination of hard and soft competences (Cousins & Chouinard, 2012) as facilitators, monitors and creators of these processes. Actions linked to logistic support, the technical process of collection and analysis of information and presentation of results are strongly tied to hard research and evaluation competences; while the construction of spaces of trust and security between the young people, the negotiation of initiatives, promotion of reflection, mediation, among others, are related to the competences, social skills, and ability to relate of the adults who collaborate with the young people. Suarez-Balcazar (2020) states that the adults are facilitators who should foment the conditions and spaces – whether physical or virtual – where the young people can develop their agency and a positive social identity.

The functions of the young people were to become involved in the research and evaluation process through decision-taking with the aid of the adult technicians or volunteers. The aim is for the young people to improve their own skills, while bringing improvements to the organisation / community, and influence the public agenda through the PAR and PEs of the programmes in which they participate.

Lastly, and regarding the phases of YPAR and YPE processes, the analysis highlights the young people's use of creative work methods: 7 experiences have been based on Photovoice, 4 developed audio-visual activities (videos, photography, public showing of videos, among others), and 4 carried out other artistic activities (for example, plays, and performance). The creative methods were used at the information gathering stage, during the analysis of information, and the presentation of results in the community / organisation. We believe that they serve to stimulate the young people's interest and attention and may be combined with the use of more classical social science techniques and tools, such as interviews, surveys, or discussion groups.

Conclusion

This article has analyzed the literature on YPAR and YPE approaches to provide information regarding (1) the role of agents involved, (2) the functions they perform, and (3) the sequences to the phases that both approaches follow. We

note similarities between both approaches in that there is a continuum between those PAR and PA processes that concern young people. Indeed, recent publications such as Richards-Shuster *et al.* (2021) have suggested the YPARE strategy: Youth Participatory Action Research and Evaluation.

We believe that further research into this is necessary in order to provide detailed information regarding the methodological design of these approaches similarities, particularities, aims-, as well as to analyse the learning acquired by the young people. We also feel that their usefulness should be explored from the perspective of social pedagogy and how they foment individual abilities through training.

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