The evaluator´s professional development in institutions specializing in functional diversity

Análisis del desempeño profesional del agente evaluador en instituciones de diversidad funcional

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyze the development of the evaluations process by those professionals who carry out evaluations with regard to functional diversity. This evaluative research is conducted with a mixed approach that combines qualitative and quantitative data collection and data analysis techniques. The sample consists of 108 professionals from 31 institutions dedicated to adults with intellectual disabilities, and from five special educational centers. The sample selection, the design, and the interpretation of results are based on the assumption that the academic profiles of professionals in these institutions are heterogeneous, and that they perform complementary functions of intervention and evaluation. Results show a wide variety of professional functions of both diagnosis and process and product evaluation, and of planning, intervention and communications of results, highlighting evaluations by multiple professionals. Some generic difficulties (lack of time, information, resources, etc.) and specific difficulties from the studied context (difficulty of providing individual attention, poor administration support, etc.) are noted. For these professionals, evaluation is mainly used to reflect on their work, to self-evaluate for progress, and possibly to further commit to the people involved. Results are discussed, and possible actions to counter the expressed difficulties are proposed

Keywords: Career development, evaluation, functional diversity.

Resumen

Este trabajo tiene como finalidad realizar un análisis sobre el desarrollo de la evaluación por parte de los y las profesionales que trabajan en instituciones de atención a la diversidad funcional en lo referente a sus actividades como evaluadores y evaluadoras de programas y proyectos con personas con discapacidad intelectual. Formaron parte de la muestra 108 sujetos procedentes de un total de treinta y una instituciones que trabajan con adultos/as con discapacidad intelectual y cinco centros de educación especial. Para la selección de la muestra y el posterior diseño e interpretación de los resultados, partimos de la existencia de una amplia heterogeneidad de perfiles profesionales en el ámbito de las Ciencias Sociales y Educativas, y de la posibilidad de que desarrollen funciones complementarias de intervención y evaluación en los diversos contextos que desarrollan su actividad. Se emplean metodologías cualitativas y cuantitativas. Los resultados muestran el predominio de las funciones de análisis de la realidad, comunicación de resultados e implicación con otros profesionales en la evaluación. Se detectan algunas dificultades que condicionan la evaluación (tiempo disponible, número de profesionales, posibilidades formativas e interés por la formación continua), encontrando correlaciones positivas y significativas entre las dos primeras y las dos segundas (p<.005). Actuar como compromiso con las personas implicadas en la evaluación es el aspecto que obtiene una utilidad significativamente superior para los profesionales. Se concluye aludiendo a las peculiaridades, los condicionantes y las limitaciones específicas del ámbito de la diversidad funcional, así como las posibles soluciones a tales problemáticas.

Palabras clave: Desempeño profesional, evaluación, diversidad funcional

Nowadays, topic of geat interest to educational and social fields, due to its relevance and repercussions for administrations, institutions, professionals, and for society as a whole (Castillo & Cabrerizo, 2011). The current definition of evaluation is

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the result of large variations throughout history, especially during the twentieth century (Alkin, 2011; Escudero, 2003; Ferreres & González Soto, 2006; García Ramos, 2012). In accordance with its evolution, various roles have been identified that are associated with the person who has to carry out the evaluating process. Hence, when speaking about evaluation, it is very important to analyze the perspective and attitude of the evaluator towards this task (García Ramos, 2012; Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007).

Originally, evaluative activity was developed by those who were in a position of power, authority or superiority over those assessed. Later, when the function of improvement or refinement was recognized in the evaluating process, the kinds of people able to make value judgments are expanded, although such judgments depend on the context and situation (Pérez Juste, 2006).

In the field of functional diversity, there is a growing concern to evaluate the services provided to this group, its efficacy and the effectiveness of the results, as well as to act for continuous improvement of the organization. It requires a system of internal management and organization that provides continuous training and information to the evaluators (Font, Alomar & Mas, 2004; Bolivar, 2006; Marcano, Pirela & Reyes, 2006; Schalock & Verdugo, 2007). The profile of these professionals shows a heterogeneous reality. A wide variety of agents from different areas of knowledge (psychology, social education, psychopedagogy, social work, etc.) work in a coordinated development of this labor, mainly as a complementary activity to other functions of social and educational intervention (Castillo & Cabrerizo, 2011; Suárez Riveiro, 2011).

Nowadays, there are a lot of definitions about evaluation and its implications in the field of intellectual disability (Alkin, 2011; Ballesteros, Calero, Fontcuberta, García Martínez, & Wispelaere, 2013; García Ramos, 2012; House, 1994/1997; Scriven, 2007, 2008; Mertens & Wilson, 2012; Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007; Zufiaurre & Albertín, 2006). This shows the variety of perspective around evaluative activity, as well as: (a) systematic processes of data collection and analysis of an intervention; (b) development due to a specific institutional or personal request and related to a particular reason or purpose; (c) execution by an agent internal or external to the institution, involved or not in the development of the intervention resulting in the evaluation; and (d) allowing the emission of value judgements by the evaluator for decision-making to improve the intervention and his own professional practice, according to the field of work and to the stakeholders.

Evaluation, as an essential process of human activity, allows rational development of personal acts in all areas of human life and, at the same time, if we focus on evaluation as a professional activity, it will become necessary for professionals enabling them to understand, value, make decisions and improve the evaluated issue (see figure 1).

Figure 1. Conceptual map around the definition of evaluation. Self-made on CMapsTools 6.1.1.

As seen in figure 1, the growing importance of evaluation in society and in education, is encouraging the rise of new challenges for traditional evaluative practices. It has an effect on the demand for new ways to understand and implement evaluation and innovates responses from professionals and institutions (Castillo & Cabrerizo, 2011; McDonald, Bouns, Francis, & Gonczi, 2009). These changes especially affect the intellectual disability field as a result of the introduction of a new concept in professional practices: the *quality of life* (Schalock, 2003; Schalock & Verdugo, 2007; Verdugo, 2009).

Improving the quality of life of people with disabilities demands a commitment from institutions and their personnel to adjust their responses to the demands and needs of disabled persons. Hence, insitutions and their personnel must plan their actions in an individual manner, keeping in mind the disabled person´s objectives, goals, possibilities, and barriers to achieving them. Therefore, it requires a professional who understands evaluation as a result of

interaction among many variables that provides a more comprehensive overview of the potential of people with disabilities (Font, Alomar, & Mas, 2004). In addition, in their daily work, the professional should dedicate a space for reflection on their practice, analysis of their task, their professional development, and orientation of their actions toward personal and professional improvement (Castillo & Cabrerizo, 2011; Suárez Riveiro, 2011).

The responsibility of the evaluator is to focus on acting in accordance with the principles of society and the criteria of professionalism, judgment-making about the quality and educative value of the evaluated object, as well as the support and collaboration with those involved in the interpretation and use of information and judgements (Stufflebeam, as cited in Escudero, 2003; Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007; Zufiaurre & Albertín, 2006). These issues are essential to achieve excellence and improvement in programs' fullfilment and implementation

(Aparicio, Martín, Rivera, Tovar, & Vera, 2012; Schalock & Verdugo, 2007).

However, improvement of the quality of evaluative actions requires the implication and motivation of the evaluator. This agent should orient their professional exercise toward constant growth, without losing sight of the specific conditions that provide relevance to the task (Malpica, as cited in Blanco, 2009). That is, to complete the task efficiently, acting with commitment and submitting oneself to constant self- and hetero-evaluations (González Maura, 2009).

Diverse studies (Aparicio et al., 2012; García Ramos, 2012; Mateo y Martínez, 2008; Zufiaurre y Albertín, 2006) anlyze social and educational istitutions´ current way of understanding the evaluative process, as one whose objective is improving the evaluated feature, and as an element limited to justifying past actions, which satisfies particular interests and generates stress (Aparicio et al, 2012; García Ramos, 2012; Mateo & Martínez, 2008; Zufiaurre & Albertín, 2006; etc.). The fear that an evaluation can question the institutional activity or professional practices can motivate some skepticism and frustration towards evaluative practices (Aparicio et al., 2012; Escudero, 2003). In the same way, there is some doubt about the usefulness of of the process institutional evaluations: evaluation for the development of the subject or evaluation for the certification of situations (Mateo & Martínez, 2008), to declare accountability or to improvement and generation of knew knowledge (Zufiaurre & Albertín, 2006; García Ramos, 2012).

These aspects have made us wonder: which functions have been assigned to the professional as an evaluator in the institutions and are they seen as useful? What kind of difficulties or challenges do they face in their career development? What is the view of the evaluator about the value of the evaluations in the institutions in which he or she works? To respond to these questions, we pose this research with the objective of analyzing the professional performance of persons who carry out internal evaluative functions, with regard to functional diversity, their other complementary tasks of interventions, and the difficulties or challenges they face in progressing their professional activity.

Method

Evaluative research has been conducted with an eclectic or mixed approach that enables us to get closer to the reality of the professionals who develop evaluation processes by exploiting the full potential of both quantitative and qualitative methodological perspectives. Through this mixed approach, we attempt to add to the available research on causal links between processes and contexts, at the same time as interacting and cooperating with participants on the final objective of interpreting and proposing recommendations for improvement (Bryman, 2012; Cook & Reichardt, 1982/2005; García Ramos, 2012; Mertens & Wilson, 2012).

A comprehensive and adapted model of evaluation has been selected. It was conducted using the theory developed by Rossy and, subsequently, by Rossy & Freeman in 1985 (as cited in Martínez Mediano, 2007). Taking this model as a reference we could on the one hand, study the career development of the evaluator, their acts, and their reflective practice based on the self-evaluation and the assessment of this own professional activity. On the other hand, we could rely on social and educational theory to obtain the precise criteria for improving the act of evaluation.

This theory, founded on diverse previous studies which address evaluation, socio-educational evaluation, and the role of the internal evaluator (profiles, competencies, functions, attitude, etc.), occupies a central position in this study and is used to guide our analysis these individuals´ performance. Our study permits the construction of a model for reference through which we can gather and analyze the data. We are additionally served by the theory founded Glaser y Strauss (as cited in Flick, 2007).

The theory in this type of evaluative research has had a central place for conducting the evaluation, through the construction of a theoretical model of the program, and the collection and analysis of all data. Also, the grounded theory of Glaser and Strauss (as cited in Flick, 2002/2007) has been used to work with data selected by theoretical sampling and analized by theoretical coding.

Research design

The design employed responds to an emerging type of investigation that is cyclical and circular, characterized by the possibility of presenting diverse modifiable stages that systematically, yet flexibly, guide the investigative process. The development of our research can be separated into four phases (a preliminary phase, a data gathering phase, information analysis, and transmission of results), under our own production process, which follows the recommendations of authors such as Cohen, Manion, and Morrison 2011; Rossi & Freeman (as cited in Martínez Mediano, 2007) for emerging or responsive designs.

Sources of information

We selected those techniques whose aim was collecting data about the agent that undertakes the evaluation in institutions assisting functional diversity. These were: the documentary analysis and the survey. The basic instruments for collecting and analyzing the data were documents (articles and book chapters) and a questionnaire, composed of 43 items measured on a Likert scale (with opened and closed ítems).

Selecting the analytical document was based on a theoretical sampling "for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes and analyzes his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges" (Glasser y Strauss, as cited in Flick, 2002/2007, p. 78). Such documents were collected through an intensive method, focusing on in-depth study of texts chosen for their relevance to the research (López Noguero, 2002).

At the end of the documentary analysis, we designed the questionnaire, taking into account for its construction the data analyzed from the documents, in order to extract information about the figure of the individual who develops his evaluating practices in institutions that care for people with disabilities.

In addition, prior to applying it, we submitted it for an expert´s consideration. The judges received a questionnaire that comprised of 35 ítems, closed, polytomous, numerical and opened questions. These questions should be evaluated on a quantitative (on a 1-4 scale) and a qualitative way, with regard to the presentation, appropriateness of the items, relevance to the study and reliability of their application. All judges considered most appropriate unifying the type of the numerical questions (Likert scale with five response categories) and the open-ended questions, with optional response. They also considered it necessary to amend the wording of some items and responses and to remove the unnecessary or unsuitable items for the aim of the research. Finally, they proposed the restructuring of the items in each of the considered dimensions: "acquired training in evaluation and its relevance", "career development as an evaluation agent" and "evaluative culture in the institution".

The final questionnaire consists of 43 ítems grouped in three dimensions: "acquired training in evaluation", which addresses the level of mastery, application, and training needs of the professionals, drawn from the contributions of Leyva (2012), McDonald et al. (2009) and Samperio (2006); "career development as an evaluation agent", which includes items related to the level of fullfiment of functions in evaluation, drawn from the proposals of Agudo (2007), Leyva (2012) and McDonald et al. (2009), as well as the value they give to some influential factors in performing these functions; and "usefulness of the evaluation", in reference to the level of

usefulness they give to the evaluation for institutional developing and for their career developing in these centres.

Sample

The questionnaire was applied to institutions in service of functional diversity. We selected them from the register provided by the delegation in the Autonomous Community of Galicia of the Committee Representing People with Disabilities (in Spanish, *Comité de Representación de Personas con Discapacidad, CERMI Galicia*). It integrates entities of our interest, such as the Galician Federation of Associations for Persons with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities (in Spanich, *Federación Gallega de Asociaciones a favor de las Personas con Discapacidad Intelectual o del Desarrollo, FADEMGA-FEAPS),* the Federation of Association of Relatives and Mentaly Ill of Galicia (in Spanish, *Federación de Asociaciones de Familiares y Enfermos Mentales de Galicia, FEAFES*) and the Galician Federation of Institutions for Down Syndrome (in Spanish, *Federación Gallega de Instituciones para el Síndrome de Down, Down Galicia).* Likewise, we expanded the sample by representing the Galician Confederation of People with Disabilities (in Spanish, *Confederación Gallega de Personas con Discapacidad, COGAMI*), an entity that is not attached to CERMI, but is also relevant in our region. Also, we included the Special Educational Centres in the province of A Coruña, which were selected through the website of the Galician regional government (*Xunta de Galicia*), focusing our list on the province of A Coruña.

The result of this selection was a total of 31 associations working with adults with intellectual disabilities and five Special Educational Centres. Such associations usually offer more than one service and, generally, they have more than one professional dedicated to evaluate. Thus, we obtained a sample of N=108 participants, whose representation is distributed as follows: (a) labour centres, that integrate labour centres

and special employment centres, where we obtained a 13% response; (b) daily attention centres, including daily and occupational centres, with 45.5% participation; (c) special educational centres, as an institucional reference for children and teenagers with intellectual disabilities providing 27.8% of the sample; (d) psychosocial and laboral rehabilitation centres, that includes a 13% of the total of the sample; and (e) centers for leisure and free-time, providing only 0.9% of the sample.

Data analysis

The analysis of the documents and the open-ended questions take as analytical framework the proposal of Andreu-Andrés & Labrador-Piquer (2011) and the fundamental theory of Glasser & Strauss (as cited in Flick, 2002/2007). These instruments are employed to solve questions that arise throughout development of the study due to our lack of knowledge of the situation of persons being evaluated.

In both cases, we conducted a process of coding and categorizing. The document analysis was started by separating each document into thematic units which, later, will help us to write the open-ended questions of the questionnaire. Once the documents and the professional´s responses were separated in thematic units, we started to identify and classify the units. The open coding process ended with the formulation of three thematic units: (a) evaluation, (b) the evaluator, and (c) evaluation related with intellectual disability. We categorized and coded these units by using notes to identify the thematic components of each one.

Below, we used axial coding to, firstly, interpret the codes extracted from the documents; secondly, to clarify and differentiate the codes resulting from open coding, extracting in this way the subcategories; and thirdly, bring the codes to categories in order to draw several general categories and to obtain, subsequently, the subcategories.

These subcategories are introduced into the three central categories of the study: (a) the "evaluation" category is formed by the subcategories "assessment of the evaluation process" and "the evaluator´s respect for the evaluation"; (b) the "evaluator" category is represented by the subcategories "profiles," "roles," "functions of the evaluator," and "professional development"; and (c) the "evaluation related with intellectual disability" category, which integrates the subcategories "type of evaluation in the area of diversity" and "quality of life improvement for the disabled." These subcategories are used to support the construction of the questionnaire, which includes various open-ended questions, such as:

1. Comment, if applicable, on any other competencies you acquired during your schooling related to evaluation

2. In your opinion, is some kind of specific instruction necessary for those evaluation professionals who work in institutions with attention to functional diversity?

3. Comment, if applicable, on other specific functions you carry out in the area of functional diversity

4. Explain any difficulties you find in performing your evaluative tasks

In the same manner as with the documental analysis, professional agents´ responses were analyzed through a theoretical encoding process which began with reducing and simplifying the information on the basis of the formulated question. Given that we focus this article on the professional development of the evaluator, we also present an analysis of the open question referring to their functions as evaluator (see Table 1).

Table 1. *Thematic group: Specific functions in the field of functional diversity*

Subject	Quote	Code	Notes
Sf2	Follow-up work completed outside the area of the center (evaluation)	Follow-up	Professionals refer to activities related to diagnostic evaluation, design and development of group or individual projects/programs, and development of final evaluations with the objective of creating proposals for improvement.
Sf6	Completion of occupational tasks	Execution of programs	
Sf38	Works completed at the center are Individualized Plans for each client	Diagnostics; design and execution; individualized work	
Sf76	Improve all aspects that arise through evaluation and assist in the development of evaluation as a process, as well as establish proposals for improvement.	Continual improvement	

As can be observed in Table 1, only four of the 108 participants surveyed detailed other evaluative functions developed in their work centers. We analyze participants´ contributions to the question regarding the perception of difficulties in performing their tasks. In this case, we obtained a much greater number of contributions, equally identified and classified, from which we extract their corresponding codes (given the magnitude of the corresponding table, it is shown in the Appendix). Each professional´s quoted responses were identified as fragments with independent meanings, which we segmented and encoded in order to assign the codes to initial or subcategories. The next step of the process was interpreting these extracted codes (axially-encoded), clarifying and regrouping the originally-extracted codes into new codes and subcodes, which we integrate into the previously-completed documental analysis. The majority of cases exhibit coincidences between codes and subcodes extracted from the documental analysis and the analysis of the questionnaire. In Table 2 we present the results.

Table 2. *Separation and diferentiation of codes into subcategories and organization of the central categories*

Codes (Cod) y Subcodes (Subc)	Subcategories	Categories (Cat)
Cod1. Evaluation as an essential element of human activity		

Cod2. Utility of the evaluative task
  S_Cod2.1. Response related to actions
  S_Cod2.2. Support to other professionals or profeesions
  S_Cod2.3. Decision making
	S_Cat1. Assessment of the evaluation process	Cat_1. Value of the concept of evaluation

Cod3. Value of the evaluative practice
  S_Cod3.1. Continuous improvement
  S_Cod3.2. Professional activity
  S_Cod3.3. Ethical training
  S_Codf3.4. Values of the professional
	S_Cat2. Evaluator´s respect for the evaluation	

Cod4. Actions/activities
  S_Cod4.1. Complimentarity of functions
  S_Cod4.2. Analysis of reality
  S_Cod4.3. Appropriate design of the evalutaion
  S_Cod4.4. Communication of the results
  S_Cod4.5. Resolution of ethical conflicts
  S_Cod4.6. Monitoring
  S_Cod4.7. Proposals for improvement
	S_Cat3. Functions of the evaluator
	
	S_Cat4. Improvement of the quality of life of persons with intellectual disabilities
		Cat_2. Characteristics of the evaluator

Cod5. Difficulties of evaluation
  S_Cod5.1. Scarcity of resources
  S_Cod5.2. Lack of coordination between professionals, families
  S_Cod5.3. Difficulties with own education
  S_Cod5.4. Professionals´ lack of initiative
  S_Cod5.5. Lack of time
	S_Cat5. Professional development of the evaluator	

Cod6. Specific difficulties in evaluating within the field of functional diversity.
  S_Cod6.1. Insufficient administrative support
  S_Cod6.2. Deficiencies in the legistlative framework
  S_Cod6.4. Difficulty of individualizing attention
  S_Cod6.4. Excessively general information
  S_Cod6.5. Lack of time
  S_Cod6.6. Inadquacy of the job
  S_Cod6.7. Excess of work to do
	S_Cat6. Difficulties in evaluating within the field of functional diversity.	Cat_3. Evaluation in institutions in service of functional diversity

Note: a. We only include the codes of scientific texts and the open questions of the questionnaire referring to the analysis and value of the concept of evaluation, the functions of the evaluator, and the general and specific difficulties confronted by evaluation professionals.

These subcategories were introduced into the three central categories of the study: (a) the "evaluation" category is formed by the subcategories "assessment of the evaluation process" and "the evaluator´s respect for the evaluation"; (b) the "evaluator" category is represented by the subcategories "profiles," "roles," "functions of the evaluator," and "professional development"; and (c) the "evaluation related with intellectual disability" category, which integrates the subcategories "type of evaluation in the area of diversity" and "quality of life improvement for the disabled."

Finally, and using the results of both analyses, we used

Finally, the selective coding was used to achieve a higher level of abstraction by establishing a central category: the figure of the evaluator. All the other categories were grouped around this one; as an example in this study, the career development of this professional. This contributes to the general interpretation of the research, where induction and deduction has been combined for interpreting the data, as seen in figure 2.
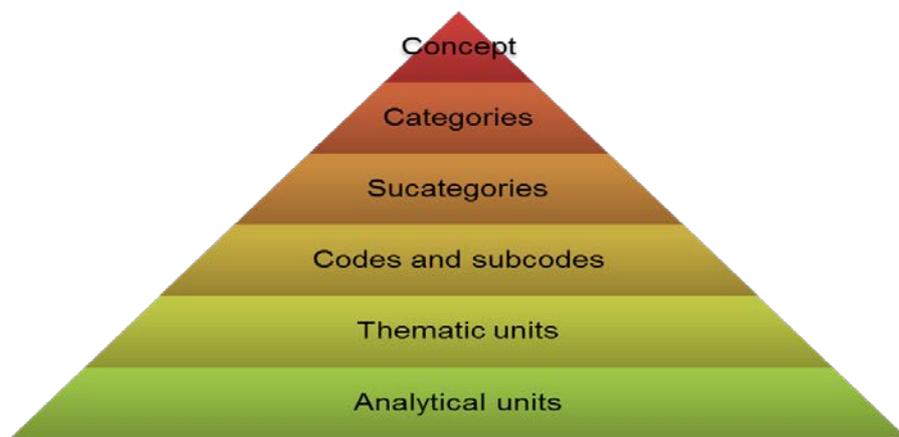
Figure 2. Graphical representation of the qualitative analytical procedure. Source: Self-made

The triangle in figure 2 shows, on its base, the analytical units; that is, the textual documents and the professionals' stories. Below, the thematic units selected are presented (evaluation, evaluation agent, and evaluation related with disability). In the middle of the picture are located the subcodes and codes extracted from the axial coding, as well as the subcategories that contain them. In the third level, the categories achieved by the saturation process are presented and, finally, the top shows the central category: the figure of the evaluator.

In the end, we developed a quantitative analysis of the data from the questionnaire by using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Firstly, we conducted a psychometrical analysis of the questionnaire and, subsequently, a descriptive and inferential analysis of the results. The process of analysis was based on the proposal of Mateo & Martinez (2008): data coding, creating the data matrix, selecting the statistical tests depending on the type of variables, the number and the size of the sample, the number of variables and the object of analysis, and interpreting the results.

This article focuses on presenting the results of the analysis of the dimension "career development of the evaluation agent", in reference to the level of commitment of the functions he/she has been entrusted to do. We will also emphasize the professionals'

valoration about the dimension "utility of the evaluation as a support for professionals' tasks". In order to give a better explanation to the assessed object, we will integrate both the results of the analysis of the questionnaire and the qualitative analysis.

Psychometrical analysis of the questionnaire

The reliability of the questionnaire was analyzed by using the Alpha of Cronbach statistic, showing a high reliability (α=.929). We have also conducted an analysis of internal consistency and construct validity of each dimension. We present the results of the three dimensions once judged by experts, but due to the aim of this article research, the subsequent descriptive and inferential analysis will focus on the second dimension "career development as an evaluation agent" and the third "usefulness of the evaluation".

The statistic Alpha of Cronbach indicated a high reliability (α = .929) in the dimension "acquired training in evaluation". Likewise, we carried out an exploratory factorial analysis of the three indicators of this dimension: "mastery", "application" and "training needs" in order to "simplify the information that gives us a matrix correlation" (Morales, 2013, p.3). Initially, we used the Kaiser-Meller-Olsen (KMO) test and the Bartlett sphericity test, as it's recommended in Muñoz-Cantero, Casar, & Abalde (2007), to verify the sampling adequacy of each indicator of the questionnaire.

The sampling adequacy KMO=.887 and the Bartlett sphericity test χ^2_{105} = 693.372 (p<.001) in the indicator "mastery" allowed us to develop the factorial analysis. First, we focused on the number of factors in order to achieve a clear and simple factorial structure (Castañeda, Cabrera, & Navarro, 2010). We extracted three components that explained more than 60% of the total variance of the variables of the study. Taking into account the research of Bayot, Hernández & de Julian (2005) and Muñoz-Cantero et al. (2007), we used the orthogonal rotation with Varimax, extracting a total of three factors that explained more than 60% of the total variance of the considered variables: "mastery of theoretical and methodological knowledge", "mastery of the practice-oriented knowledge" and "mastery of training in evaluative research". We conducted the same process to analyze the indicators "application" and "training needs". In the first one, a sampling adequacy KMO=.855 and Bartlett sphericity χ^2_{105} = 695.640 (p<.001) were obtained. The factorial analysis, with Varimax orthogonal rotation, resulted in three components that accumulated 60.17% of the total explained variance: "application of theoretical and methodological knowledge", "adjustment to the social context and dissemination of results," and "continuous training in evaluative research and its practical application". In the case of the indicator "training needs", the sampling adequacy was KMO=.935 and the Bartlett sphericity test was χ^2_{105} = 695.640 (p<.001). The total variance was explained by two factors that accumulate 66.684% of the phenomenon. These are: "theoretical (at the basis) and methodological training needs" and "training needs related to the continuous training in evaluative research".

With regard to the dimension "career development as an evaluation agent", we obtained a high reliability (α=.827). Also, a factorial analysis of this dimension was conducted to verify the construct validity. Considering the proposals of Castañeda et al. (2012) and Morales (2013), we focused on analyzing the squared matrix correlations (r^2)

and the common variance of each item with the others in the two indicators from this dimension: assigned functions and influent factors in the performance of these functions.

The KMO test and the Bartlett sphericity test were used to verify the sampling adequacy of each indicator, obtaining in both cases adequate correlations between pairs of items to be explained by other items. The result of the Bartlett sphericity test in the indicator "assigned functions" was χ^2_{21} = 695.640 (p<.001) and the sampling adequacy KMO=.764. The total variance explained in this indicator was 55.592%, accumulated in only one factor that integrates the set of items, so it wasn't possible to rotate their solution. The second indicator "influent factors in the performance of evaluation tasks" presented a sampling adequacy KMO= .919 and Bartlett sphericity test χ^2_{15} = 695.640 (p<.001), that indicated the viability of the factor analysis as the contrast of null hypothesis showed that the correlation matrix isn't one identity. The total explained variance of this indicator is divided in three components or factors that represent that those eigenvalues are greater than one unit. The first component explains 40.689% of the study phenomenon, the second explains 20.8% and the third 17.715%, accumulating 79.204% of the total explained variance. The Varimax orthogonal rotation was used to differentiate, contrast and display the underlying structure on full scale. We extracted three factors; "institutional and professional interest on continuous formation in evaluation", "conditionings in developing the evaluation tasks," and "continuous training inside and outside the institution".

The internal consistency analysis of the dimension "usefulness of the evaluation" through the Alpha of Cronbach statistic (α=.856) shows a high reliability, where more than 85% of the variance of the punctuations are due to the real measurement, while 14.4% represents the random errors. Once again, we verified the sampling adequacy and the possibility of doing a factorial analysis of this dimension by using the KMO test (.790) and

Bartlett sphericity test (χ^2_{45} = 695.640; p<.001). The total explained variance percentage was 72.359%, represented by three components whose eigenvalues were greater than one unit. With Varimax orthogonal rotation, we simplified the items in these three components: "usefulness of the initial and processual evaluating processes", "usefulness of the sumative evaluating processes" and "usefulness of the evaluation related with career development".

In addition to analyzing the reliability and the validity of the instrument and its dimensions, we also conducted the proper analysis of a qualitative research, based on the triangulation, and analytic induction approach. The triangulation allows us to increase the scope, depth and consistency of our methodological actions. It's based on integrating and contrasting all of the information in order to build a comprehensive overview of the studied experience (Denzin & Lincoln, 2012). We used three types of triangulation: triangulation of the data, by collecting information from articles and books, as well as from professionals; theoretical triangulation, by using data from several perspectives in order to extend the possibilities of knowledge production; and methodological triangulation, by combining and integrating the research strategies.

In table 1, we present the results of the exploratory factorial analysis for the three dimensions of the questionnaire and the regrouping of the items from each dimension into factors.

Table 1 - *Results of the factorial analysis, by using Varimax rotation*

DIMENSION 1. ACQUIRED TRAINING IN EVALUATION.		
Indicators	Items	Factors
Mastery	1. Knowing the theoretical foundations of evaluation.	1. Mastery of theoretical and methodological knowledge (Items 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11)
	2. Being able to understand and criticize research and evaluative reports.	2. Mastery of practice-based evaluation (Items 3, 5, 8, 9, 12, 15)
	3. Being flexible to propose alternatives to various situations. .	3. Mastery of training in evaluative research (Items 13, 14)
	4. Knowing the general evaluation methodology.	
	5. Knowing the data-collecting instruments.	1. Application of theoretical and methodological knowledge (items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
	6. Being able to analyze the information systematically.	2. Adjustment to the social context and dissemination of results (Items 6, 7, 8, 9, 10)
Application	7. Knowing how to apply the different evaluative approaches, taking into account the needs of the people/group.	
	8. Knowing how to communicate the results of the evaluation.	3. Continuous training in evaluative research and its practical application (Items 11, 12, 13, 14, 15)
	9. Acting with transparency in the dissemination of the methodology used in the evaluation.	
	10. Being able to advise other agents in terms of evaluation.	1. Theoretical (at the basis) and methodological training needs (Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)
	11. Being able to combine theory with technical skills in evaluative practice.	
Training needs	12. Assuming the importance of continuous updating in the field of evaluation.	2. Training needs related to the continuous training in evaluative research (Items 12, 13, 14, 15)
	13. Being interested in research.	
	14. Being interested in meta-evaluating processes.	
	15. Behaving according to the proper ethical standards of the evaluator.	
	16. (Open question).	
	17. (Open question).	

Table 1(cont.) - *Results of the factorial analysis, by using Varimax rotation*

DIMENSION 2. CAREER DEVELOPMENT AS AN EVALUATION AGENT		
Assigned functions	18. Analyzing the reality. 19. Designing the evaluative projects in the center. 20. Developing the evaluative projects in the center. 21. Communicating the results of the evaluation. 22. Involving other agents in the evaluating processes. 23. Exercising teaching in evaluation. 24. Solving ethical conflicts between implied audiences in the evaluating process. 25. (Open question)	1. Assigned functions (all the items)
Influent factors in the performa-nce of evaluative tasks	26. The weekly time for evaluating processes 27. The number of professionals dedicated to the evaluation. 28. The institution provides me continuous training about evaluation. 29. I receive continuous training in evaluation outside the center. 30. I'm interested in receiving continuous training about evaluation. 31. I have the opportunity to receive continuous training about evaluation.	1. Institutional and professional interest in continuous training in evaluation (Items 29, 31) 2. Influent factors in the development of theoretical and methodological knowledge (Items 26, 27) 2. Continuous training in evaluation inside/outside the center (items 28, 30)
DIMENSION 3. USEFULNESS OF THE EVALUATION.		
Usefulness of the evaluation	32. Making an initial diagnosis of the project/program. 33. Reflecting on the progress and errors during the career development. 34. Identifying areas for improvement. 35. Guiding other professionals in making decisions. 36. Making decisions about the results. 37. Identifying the impact (significance of the project/program). 38 Giving explanations for the developed process. 39. Assessing the exercise of the acquired professional competencies during the training. 40. Acting with commitment with the people involved in the evaluating process. 41. Encouraging professional recognition. 42. (Open question).	1. Usefulness of initial and procedural evaluating processes (Items 32, 33, 34) 2. Usefulness of summative evaluating processes (Items 35, 36, 37, 38) 3. Usefulness in relation to individual career development (Items 39, 40, 41)

Results

The current discourse about evaluation in the field of functional diversity focuses especially on monitoring all of the professionals´ actions, such as the procedures that allow them to analyze and manage the course of the intervention practice with people with intellectual disabilities, and paying special attention to their improvement and quality (Ballesteros et al., 2013). The evaluation is understood as a reflective process that concerns all individuals implied in the institutional functioning; so, it ought to "provide enough information in order to ensure a service quality, and also improve it" (Zufiaurre & Albertín, 2006, p. 52).

However, the professionals who work in these institutions consider themselves to have a lack of training in basic techniques of evaluation in the field of functional diversity, and lack of knowledge about the types of disability, behavior models, treatment and guidelines for conducting individualized and person-centered evaluation. Consequently, some professionals claim that the evaluation dynamics become merely data collection and are useless and unclear analyses. These professionals' contributions lead us to look deeper into the functions of these evaluation agents (as well as intervention agents) in these institutions, and into the difficulties that they face in the completion.

According to the proposals of Agudo (2007), Leyva (2012) and McDonald et al. (2009), we presented a set of functions that could be typical of evaluation professionals and therefore, we collected on our instrument in order to analyze their level of application by the professionals. Such functions were: analyzing reality, designing and developing evaluative projects/programs, communicating and disseminating the information, involving other agents and implied people in the evaluative process, exercising teaching, and solving ethical conflicts with implied audiences. In the same way, the data collected from respondents allowed us to introduce new features, such as conducting follow-up evaluations, introducing improvements in made evaluations, and proposing improvements in the institutional programs, projects and/or activities.

Table 2 and figure 3 show the evaluators' ratings about the seven items of the questionnaire that refer to the level of fulfillment of a set of evaluative functions in their work places.

Table 2 - *Statistics of "functions of the evaluators"*

	Function 1: Analyzing reality	Function 2: Designing evaluative projects	Function 3: Developing evaluative projects	Function 4: Communicating the evaluation results	Function 5: Involving other professionals in the evaluation	Function 6: Exercising teaching in evaluation	Function 7: Solving ethical conflicts with implied audiences.
Valid N	108	108	108	108	108	106	106
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Mean	4.009	3.204	3.315	3.556	3.676	2.736	3.094
Std. Dev.	.837	1.100	1.020	1.035	1.040	1.237	1.175

With regard to the measures of central tendency and dispersion, table 2 shows that the first function "analyzing reality" has an average of $\overline{x} = 4.009$ and a standard deviation of σ=0.837, that indicate a considerable variation of the scores of the respondents. The standard score of σ=1.10 in the second function shows the high dispersion of the subject's answers regarding the average ($\overline{x}$= 3.204). The same happens to the third function "developing evaluative projects", whose response dispersion is σ=1.02 for an average of $\overline{x}$= 3.315. The averages of the fourth function "communicating the evaluation results" and the fifth "involving other professionals in the evaluation" differ in 0.12 points. The first one is $\overline{x}$= 3.446 and the second one $\overline{x}$=3.676, with a standard deviation above the point in both cases, that indicates a high variation in the response of the subjects. The sixth function "exercising teaching in evaluation" has a rather negative and low average in comparison to the punctuations of the rest of the functions ($\overline{x}$=2.736), as well as a high variation of responses (σ=1.23657). Finally, the seventh function "solving ethical conflicts with implied audiences" has an average of $\overline{x}$=3.094 and a standard deviation of σ=1.175, that shows a high variation in the subjects' scores.
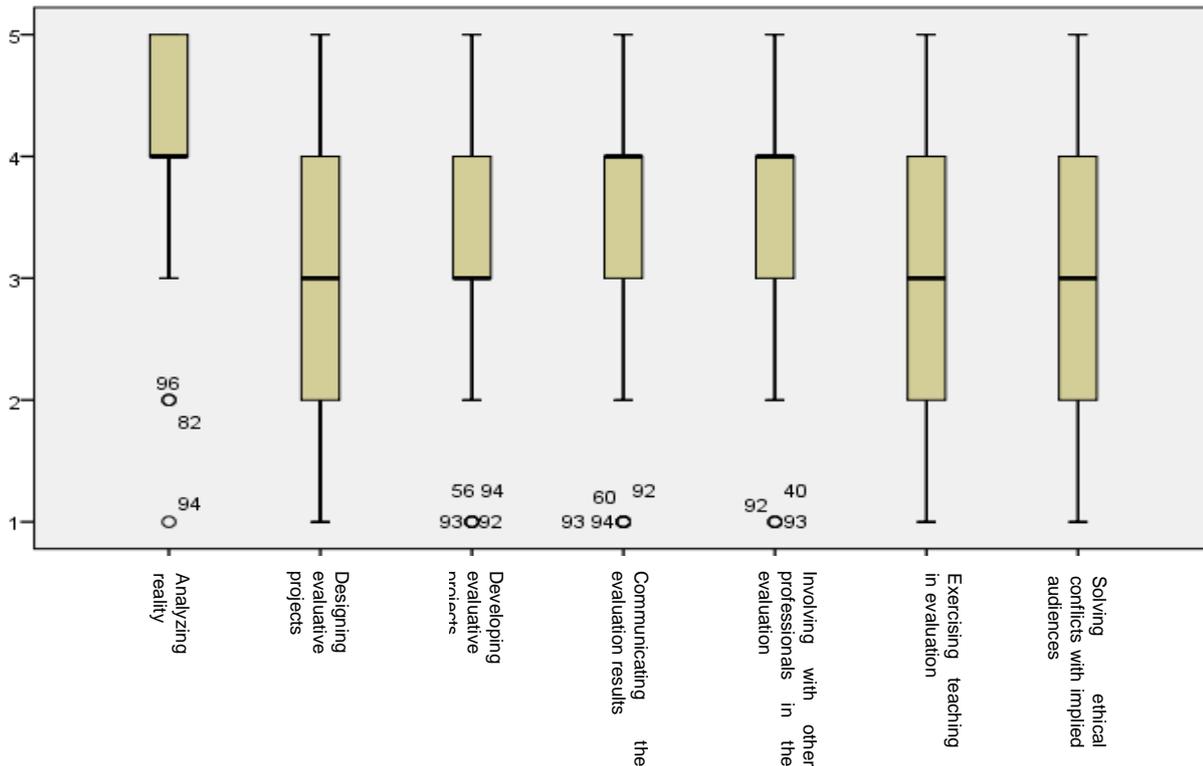
Figure 3. Boxplot representing the professionals' ratings about their evaluative functions. Source: Extracted from SPSS

Figure 3 shows that the median scores in the first, fourth and fifth functions are placed in $M_e= 4$, which indicate that the category "medium level of fullfilment" accumulates 50% of the responses, while it's placed in $M_e=3$ for the rest of the functions. In addition, 25% of the accumulation of the responses in the first function "analyzing reality" focuses on the highest value ($P_{25}= 4$), versus a point below ($P_{25}= 3$) in "developing evaluative project", "communicating evaluation results" and "involving with other professionals in the evaluation" and two points below in the remaining. Referring to the 75th percentile, again the first function concentrates 75% of the subjects' responses in the highest value ($P_{75}=5$), while the remaining are rated a point below this.

The analysis in Friedman's test shows statistically significant differences for a confidence level of 95% (p=.000) and six degrees of freedom. This statistic doesn't reflect the direction of the contrast, so the Wilcoxon rank test has been used to verify where such differences came from (Castañeda et al., 2010; Maciá. Moreno, Reales, Rodríguez-Miñón, & Vilariño, 2010). This type of contrast enables us to confirm, with a confidence level of 95%, the existence of a strong predominance of the function for analyzing reality versus the other functions (p=.000) and, lesser extent, of the functions of communicating evaluation results (p= .006) and involving other professionals in the evaluating processes (p=.000). The latter two are located significantly above the functions of exercising teaching in evaluation and solving ethical conflicts with involved audiences (see figure 3).

The evaluators must have some knowledge, abilities and dexterity to act appropriately in the development of these functions. In the field of functional diversity, the professionals affirm that a more specific training would have enabled them to obtain "essential information to carry out programs adapted to the individual

needs of people we work with, as in the result of its implementation to formulate plans of improvement" and "establishing measurable goals that visualize the results". However, when the evaluator has to deal with evaluative tasks, he has to face several determining factors and challenges, such as the weekly time assigned to develop the evaluating processes, the number of professionals dedicated to the evaluation, the possibilities of training inside and/or outside the work place, and the interest in receiving continuous training about evaluation (see table 3).

Table 3 -Descriptives about influence factors in the performance of evaluation tasks

		Statistic	Std. Error.
The weekly time for evaluative processes	Mean	3.084	.098
	Median	3.000	
	Std. deviation	1.011	
The number of professionals dedicated to the evaluation.	Mean	3.327	.102
	Median	3.000	
	Std. deviation	1.053	
The institution provides me continuous training about evaluation.	Mean	2.523	.094
	Median	3.000	
	Std. deviation	.975	
I receive continuous training in evaluation outside the center.	Mean	2.084	.100
	Median	2.000	
	Std. deviation	1.038	
I have the opportunity to receive continuous training about evaluation.	Mean	2.766	.107
	Median	3.000	
	Std. deviation	1.104	

Table 3 shows that the measure of central tendency ($\overline{x}$ and M_e) of the items for the assigned timing of evaluation and the number of professionals, are around the value of 3. The scores are somewhat lower in the items related with the offer and the possibility of receiving training inside and outside the institution. All of them have a higher variety of responses above a point. The average scores are higher than the median in all cases, so the sample doesn't follow a normal distribution but it is instead sloped. The descriptive data lead us to wonder about the existence of association between weekly time assigned to the evaluator and the number of professionals dedicated to the evaluation task, as well as between the interest and the possibility of receiving continuous training, and the level of dependence between the continuous training outside of the institution received by the evaluators, and their interest in it.

We conducted an analysis of the Pearson correlation coefficient, to analyze the association between the weekly time and number of professionals dedicated to evaluation, anticipating that the contrast variables are ordinal or continuous, and their distribution approaches normality (Castañeda et al., 2010). The obtained coefficient of determination $R^2=.303$ indicates a low adjustment in reference to the ratio of the dependent variable which can be explained by the independent variable. The correlation coefficient between these variables is $R_s = .550$, so it's a significant association over the 50% for a confidence level of 95% (p=.01). The Tau-b of Kendal, Tau-c of Kendall and Gamma tests were used to verify the level and type of association. These tests enable us to say with a standard error higher than .06 in the two first measures and .081 in the third, the existence of a statistically significant positive and median association (p=.000).

Also, we check the possible relationship of dependency between participation in outside of the workplace training in evaluation and the

professionals' interest in it. We used the H of Kruskal-Wallis test to contrast K>2 random and independent samples which comes from the same population with equal median (Gómez Villegas, 2007; Martin & del Rosario, 2007). The groups are formed by people who have little/no interest in continuous training in evaluation, people who have a medium interest, and people who are very/rather interested. With a confidence level of 95% (p=.001), the results show the presence of dependency between the level of training received outside the center by the professionals and the interest they have in it. The U of Mann-Whitney test was used to verify the location and direction of such

differences. In this sense, we can say with a risk of error of 5%, that people who claim to have less interest in continuous training are those who somehow receive less training outside the workplace (p=.001), while people who affirm having great/quite an interest in continuous training in evaluation are those who receive it to a greater extent (p=.001).

Thus, figure 4 represents the previous data, the contributions of authors such as de la Orden (2012), Santos Guerra (as cited in Zufiaurre & Albertín, 2006) and Zufiaurre & Albertín (2006), along with the view of the professionals who work in functional diversity institutions.
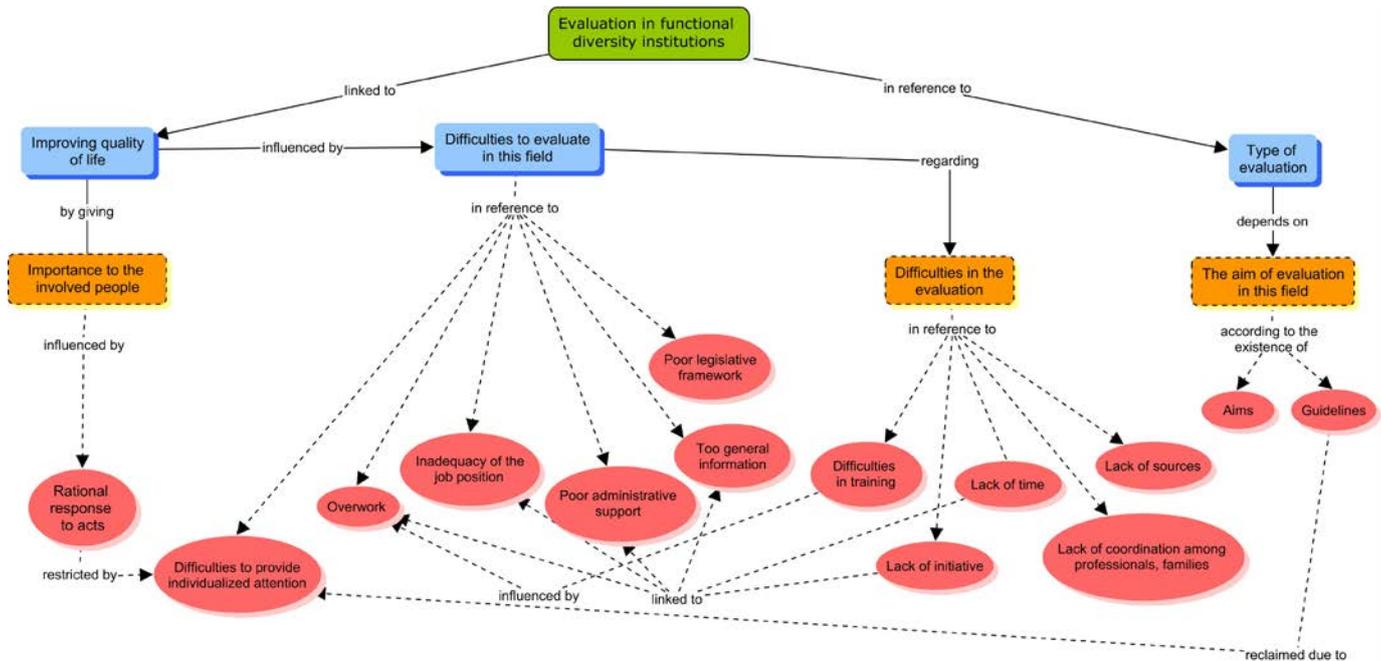

Figure 4. Conceptual map about the difficulties of the professionals in developing the evaluation. Source: Self-made on CMapsTools 6.1.1

The first complication concerns individualism: separation from common interests, requirements of coordination, and collective success options, and it is expressed in terms of lack of "external support; information", of "administrative support", etc. and also, a series of institutionalized routines in the Special Educational Centers (SEC), such as the lack of a "specific legislation for the SECs", that dispels the reflection on the practice, and where "the children's reality and

the achieved aims are not taken into account [by administrative entities]".

Another difficulty is the lack of time versus the urgency of practices that is expressed as a "lack of hours for designing and implementing the evaluation", of "(…) multiple functions to play in my job", or "the large amount of time required for the evaluating process, the complexity of analyzing results; obtaining representative samples", and consequently, limiting the communication and interaction

between professional "(…) beyond the final team meetings".

Morover the lack of motivation among professionals and a negative vision of the results of their evaluation results in an "almost unintegrated dynamic, based only on data collection without analyzing", making it difficult to negotiate data collection, triangulating, document reporting, etc. and, as a consequence, it causes detachment and loss of the transforming potential of the evaluation. The lack of material and human resources is also expressed as a need of "having more tools to carry out evaluations" or as a complaint about the "lack of specific materials to evaluate", or the "staff shortages" which, as we mentioned above, is evaluated quite negatively by the professionals.

The fear to make judgements and the lack of initiative are other aspects that stand out both on the documentary analysis and among the professionals' opinions, due to the "ambiguity of some evaluations", to the "collective that I work with", or to the "lack of common guidelines to evaluate people with disability individually", and is related to the so-called "syndrome of dirty rags" (Zufiaurre & Albertín, 2006, p. 67) and the concern for meritocracy, that involves protecting ourselves from any report that could damage the institutional and/or professional image. As a result, the professionals demand "ethical training so as to avoid 'handling'".

Lastly, we can describe a huge diversity of views about evaluation (external control,

technical advice, classificatory scales, checking successes, etc.); the professionals evidence "difficulty in quantifying some aspects in the field of mental health" or in "evaluating/measuring the subjectivity and the emotions", elements that, to some extent, complicate the shared work between the various stratums; that is, among professionals that demand that "coordination and communication must improve" and, with the families, where it is shown that "(…) there are some aspects we can't evaluate *in situ* and, sometimes, the information from the families is conditioned by their own abilities or by what they consider enough (sometimes, their answers match what they expect from the relative".

All these elements have great influence and weight on the evaluative agent´s attitude. These factors can limit or restrict the development of appropriate evaluation processes. The professional attitude towards the evaluation, his work and the improvement will be influencing factors on his career development. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the value that the professionals give to the evaluative practice and to their own work; that is, to their own professional esteem. In this sense, the professionals assess the usefulness of the evaluation and how it is related to their commitment to working with people involved in the evaluative process versus a way of social acknowledgement, or of valuing the exercise of professional competence (see table 4).

Table 4 - *Descriptives: usefulness of the evaluation as a support on developing evaluation tasks.*

		Statistic	Std. deviation
Assessing the exercise of acquired competencies during training	Mean	2.439	.064
	Median	3.000	
	Std. deviation.	.661	
Acting with commitment toward the people involved in the evaluating process	Mean	2.710	.053
	Median	3.000	
	Std. deviation.	.550	
Favoring professional self-recognition	Mean	2.308	.068
	Median	2.000	
	Std. deviation.	.706	

The table 4 shows that the variables "assessing the exercise of acquired competencies during training" ($\overline{x}$= 2.439; σ=0.661) and "favoring professional self-recognition" ($\overline{x}$=2.308; σ=0.550) present similar central tendency and dispersion values, as it is the median (M_e=3). The item "acting with commitment with involved people in the evaluating process" ($\overline{x}$= 2.71; σ =0.70592) has higher values in terms of the average and the variability, while the 50% of the responses accumulation is placed one point below from previous (M_e= 2).

We verified if the differences can be generalized by using the Friedman test. It indicated, with a confidence level of 95% (p=.000), that there are statistically significant differences. The Wilcoxon rank test enables us to locate these differences, showing us a higher estimation of usefulness of the evaluation to act with commitment with people involved in the evaluative process, compared to the value of assessing the professional competencies and promoting social recognition. In a descriptive level, we can say that these professionals assess positively the usefulness of the evaluation to reflect the mistakes and the progress during the development of their evaluative tasks (86.1%) and to detect the sensitive areas or aspects for improvement (83.3%).

Thus, as it is seen in the high self-evaluation of the professionals, the self-evaluation has a central role in relation to the professional activity, both in terms of their own perception of the made work, and of the values, attitudes and responsibilities in their process. But also, the difficulties in the use of the "skills and abilities to evaluate themselves" (McDonald et al., 2009, p. 47) are observed, such as those related to a negative attitude towards evaluation and self-evaluation.

Finally, in the very specific field of functional diversity, there are other influencing factors such as that the "relatively high number of people to evaluate is the cause of these difficulties; it doesn't enable us to do an individualized evaluation adapted to the needs of everyone"; "lack of a common script to evaluate people with disability individually" or "the lack of specific evaluation scales for people with intellectual disability".

Discussion

In recent decades, there have been a number of transformations in research on intellectual disability. Progressively, the central theme has been focused on claiming the authority and the importance of the voice of these people at the heart of the debates on quality of life and on the quality of the actions carried out (Barton, 1986/1988; Beresford & Campbell, 2006/2008; Gerber, 2006/2008; Riddle, 1986/1998).

These changes require professionals who work in these institutions to find new ways of dealing with evaluation. With regard to this, the professionals who intervene and evaluate in functional diversity institutions demand to be an active part of the teamwork, have a central leading role in joint reflection and in the proposals of improvements for the institution and its members. But also, we must question the role of people with disability in the intervention and evaluating processes in these institutions: What role do these people play when making decisions? To what extent is there a commitment from the evaluators and organizations to give them a voice in the promotion of their own autonomy and the self-regulation of their activities?

Studying the concept of evaluation, its usefulness, its value and its relevance to the development of a number of professional activities in functional diversity institutions enables us to understand and define it as a process of joint reflection between the evaluator and the evaluated individual, as well as a process of self-evaluation, with support for the understanding all those facets that facilitate or constrain the professional acts, and attention on how the quality of their work and the quality of life of the people with intellectual disabilities can be increased or improved. This focus on continuous improvement in evaluating processes requires

paying attention to some elements such as "identifying the principal actors (*stakeholders*) involved in the program and determining their role in relation to the intervention" (Ballesteros, 2013, p. 48), and paying attention to "the audience it addresses and what they need to know" (Zufiaurre & Albertín, 2006, p. 36) because, in this way, the influence of difficulties that limit the professional´s acts both in the field of functional diversity and in other social and educational contexts could be minimized. In this regard, various research has focused on analyzing those care and intervention professional practices on the personal, social, academic and professional development of people with disabilities that are based on an inclusive model applied to different social and educational contexts, such as university (Álvarez-Pérez, Alegre-de-la-Rosa & López-Aguilar, 2012; Novo-Corti, Muñoz-Cantero, & Calvo-Porral, 2011), or school context (López-Torrijo, 2009; Muñoz-Cantero & Espiñeira, 2010).

In their career development, the evaluators will see their activity influenced by factors such as the previous theoretical knowledge and its application, and their values, attitudes and responsabilities towards the evaluative processes. In this sense, the esteem and value they confer to their activity, both for the evaluation of the intervertions and their own professional work, will act as indicators of their interest on continuous improvement and self-improvement. If they feel they work as simple informers or executors of the decisions made by other people, they perceive their labour as meaningless, and it could cause jealousy and disagreement between them.

Nowadays, specifying the qualifications and levels required by the professionals is one of the most complex and relevant topics in post-modern society (Martínez Clarés & Echeverría, 2009; Martínez-Clarés, Martínez-Juárez, & Muñoz-Cantero, 2008; Martínez López, 2008; McDonald et al., 2009). The increasing demand for trained and qualified staff for developing the evaluative tasks, as

outlined in the research of Aguado (2010), Leyva (2012) and Samperio (2006), extend the possibility for research on the career development of the evaluators who work in functional diversity institutions, focusing mainly on the issues that concern their ability to apply their skills to the specific context of work and to intervene and evaluate appropriately the clients, as well as their training needs, their interest and their possibilities to receive continuous training, etc.

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Annex

Theoretical coding process for the analysis of the open questions in the questionnaire.

The results obtained from the qualitative analysis of some professionals' views who work in functional diversity institutions are presented below. This analysis relates to the open question of the designed instrument: "Expose all the difficulties faced in the development of your evaluation task". In table 5, the views of many of the surveyed professionals (from a total of 108) are presented. These are identified and classified as fragments with independent meaning that enable us to extract the codes and their related annotations (see table 5). This analytical procedure is based on open coding, integrated on theoretical coding process proposed by Flick (2002/2007).

Table 5. - *Thematic unit: Difficulties in developing evaluation in the field of functional diversity.*

Individual	Cite	Code
Sd2	External support; information	Lack of administrative support; too general information
Sd3	Administration support	Lack of administrative support
Sd4	External support; information	Lack of administrative support; too general information
Sd5	The lack of training	Lack of specific training
Sd6	External support; information	Lack of administrative support; too general information
Sd17	The lack of evaluation resources in occupational therapy.	Lack of resources
Sd18	Sometimes, the relatively high number of people who has to be evaluated is what causes these difficulties; it doesn't allow an individualized evaluation adapted to the needs of everyone.	Difficulties to provide individualized attention.
Sd20	The ambiguity of some evaluations; the difficulty for quantifying some aspects in the field of mental health.	Difficulties to provide individualized attention; subjectivity.
Sd21	In terms of the evaluation of some aspects, I found quite difficult assessing the results, due to the collective that I work with.	Difficulties to provide individualized attention; subjectivity.
Sd23	The need of more training; lack of time; training is always outside working hours, so it is difficult reconciling it with family life.	Lack of training; lack of time; difficulties in training.
Sd25	The type of students itself.	Difficulties to provide individualized attention.
Sd27	More specific training; having more tools for the evaluation.	Lack of training; lack of resources.
Sd36	The lack of training in this area; lack of a common script to evaluate people with disability individually.	Lack of training; Difficulties to provide individualized attention.
Sd37	The lack of specific evaluation scales for people with intellectual disability. The unawareness of the real skills in DLA, because there are aspects we can't evaluate *in situ* and, sometimes, the information from the families is conditioned by their own abilities or by what they consider enough (sometimes, their answers match what they expect from the relative, not in comparison with the normal population or with the real skills of the evaluated person: "is not a big deal" or "it is enough"	Difficulties to provide individualized attention; lack of training; lack of coordination among professionals; families.
Sd41	The lack of training; the need of more specific evaluation according to the area of work	Lack of training; lack of initiative

Table 5. *Thematic unit: Difficulties in developing evaluation in the field of functional diversity. (cont. 1)*

Individual	Cite	Code
Sd42	The lack of knowledge and training.	Lack of training; too general information.
Sd43	The lack of training in the area	Lack of training.
Sd47	Sometimes, not having enough training and not knowing how to do it.	Lack of training; lack of initiative.
Sd49	Most of evaluation tools, especially those aimed to dual disorder, are made in a foreign language and there aren't adapted; the small number of evaluation instruments oriented to severely affected people; the little training of principal informers.	Lack of training; too general information; lack of resources.
Sd51	The lack of hours for designing and implementing the evaluation; the lack of knowledge of evaluation instruments.	Lack of time; too general information
Sd54	The technical resources, the lack of time and the job position doesn't fit.	Lack of resources; lack of time; inadequacy of the job position.
Sd55	The lack of time; an almost unintegrated dynamic, based only on data collection without analyzing	Lack of time; difficulties in the evaluating process.
Sd56	The large amount of time required by evaluating process; the complexity of analyzing results; obtaining representative samples.	Lack of time; difficulties in the evaluating process.
Sd69	The need of specific training and instruments to its design and functioning; an specific legislation to this type of centers (EEC)	Lack of training; poor legislative framework.
Sd70	The need of specific training and instruments to its design and functioning; an specific legislation to this kind of centers (EEC); personnel with expertice with this children and in this type of centers (EEC)	Lack of training; poor legislative framework.
Sd76	The children's reality and the achieved aims from the regional government are not taken into account; in fact, there are not included in the XADE the notes of special educational needs students in a Special Educational Center (SEC).	Aims; poor legislative framework.
Sd81	Basically, the lack of time due to the multiple functions to develop in my workplace, and the lack of personnel.	Lack of time; lack of personnel.
Sd82	The difficulties of training offer; the lack of specific material to evaluate.	Difficulties in training; lack of resources
Sd83	The lack of time and the few instruments we have for evaluating people with intellectual disability.	Lack of time; lack of resources.
Sd86	The lack of time, personnel and professional preparation.	Lack of time; lack of resources; inadequacy of the job position.
Sd89	The time for evaluating the aspects we have done is not always enough and it limits the possibility to talk among peers about each case, rather tan in the final team meetings. Coordinating and communicating have to improve.	Lack of time; lack of coordination among professionals.
Sd92	The excess of daily work	Lack of time; lack of personnel.
Sd101	The lack of training in evaluation.	Lack of training
Sd102	The lack of training in evaluation.	Lack of training
Sd103	The Little training in evaluation.	Lack of training.
Sd106	The difficulty of evaluating/measuring the subjectivity and the feelings and emotions. How to measure the pity, the love, the anguish, the fear, the compassion? How to measure the warmth and the quality of a professional intervention in psychology?	Subjectivity.

In table 6, we present our annotations related with the professionals' comments about the difficulties they experience in the development of their evaluation tasks in the center.

Table 6. *Annotations about the thematic unit.*

- They express that there is an excessive number of clients, that make difficult the individualized care and evaluation.
- The lack of training refers both to the general evaluation and to the evaluation in the field of intellectual disability.
- The lack of training, information or the ambiguity in the evaluating process make difficult to visualize the usefulness of evaluation.
- There are certain aspects, subjective in nature, which are not possible to quantify.
- The lack of legislation and aims in Special Educational Centers.
- Some professionals express the inadequacy of the job positions to the personal skills, or the lack of training of the professionals who formally carry on the evaluations.
- The lack of resources and of technics and instruments adapted to the needs of the professionals and clients, as well as the bias in the information which is provided to the relatives, can limit the professionals' ability to intervene and to propose improvements.
- The constrained time, either by the overwork or by the requirements of making an adequate evaluation.

Once submitted the opinions and their respective codes, the second phase of the theoretical coding, called axial coding, has been conducted (Flick, 2002/2007). Through this, we have interpreted the codes from the professionals' contributions, giving them a sense of cause-consequence and, at the same time, we have treated and differentiated the codes, with the aim of establishing the difference between codes and subcodes (see table 7).

Table 7. *Description of the codes and subcodes*

Codes	Description and relationship between concepts
Poor administrative support; poor legislative framework.	It is expressed the difficulties derived from the lack of administrative support and/or external agents' support, and the inaccuracy or the absence of legislative policies related to the children with intellectual disabilities.
Support other professionals; lack of coordination among professionals, families.	It is highlighted the importance of a collaborative and interdisciplinary work, where each professional with their skills give mean to the evaluative practice in the field of intellectual disability.
Difficulties to provide individualized attention	The excessive number of clients that professionals have to attend limits the possibilities of giving an individualized attention and evaluation of each person.
Difficulties in training	The lack of time or the training offered outside working hours are difficulties that prevent the continuous training for the professionals.
Lack of sources	The lack of resources for evaluation, and of techniques and instruments suited to the professionals and clients' needs, as well as the bias in the information provided by the families, can limit the ability of professionals to intervene and propose improvement.
Lack of time	The constrained time, either by the overwork or by the requirements of making an adequate evaluation, as well as the fact that the training usually take place outside working hours, can be the reasons of the lack of training of the evaluators.

When the codes and the possible relationships between them have been defined, then, we have regrouped the initial codes in codes and subcodes. As a result, we have extracted the subcategories, until their saturation which has enabled us to formate the category "The evaluation in functional diversity institutions". This category integrates the difficulties previously presented in tables 5, 6, and 7.

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