Who Is Accessing IPSE Programs? Examining the Demographics of Students Enrolled in Inclusive Post-Secondary Education

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WHO IS ACCESSING IPSE PROGRAMS? EXAMINING THE DEMOGRAPHICS
OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN INCLUSIVE
POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

by

Madison Heider

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
of

Master of Science

in

Special Education

Approved:

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UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
Logan, Utah
2023
Who Is Accessing IPSE Programs? Examining the Demographics of Students Enrolled in Inclusive Post-Secondary Education

by

Madison Heider, Master of Science

Utah State University, 2023

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Department: Special Education and Rehabilitation Counseling

Options for individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) post high school graduation are expanding with the addition of Inclusive Post Secondary Education (IPSE) programs. Programs of this sort allow students with IDD to explore the option of attending a college experience alongside their peers without disabilities. While accessing post-secondary education is a milestone for any student, literature on this topic emphasizes that this type of academic access is notable for students with IDD. However, there is a lack of understanding of which students are actually able to participate in these programs from a demographic standpoint. In this paper, we report the results of a study in which we surveyed directors of IPSE programs to gather information about demographic data for students attending the programs, program characteristics, and director commentary on perceived barriers and efforts to increase diversity within these programs. We found that when looking at diversity beyond disability, there were various demographic areas that lacked diversity across the
IPSE programs surveyed. The potential barriers outlined within the data give guidance to what should continue to be addressed in the development and expansion of IPSE programs. Additionally, the practical guidance reported by program directors could be utilized by other programs to address diversity and equity issues within their own programs. These results add to the ongoing discussion surrounding IPSE programs and further support the need for continued research in this area. Understanding who is currently accessing IPSE programs provides a starting point for expanding access to all students who want the opportunity.

KEYWORDS: Inclusive post-secondary education (IPSE), intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), diversity, equity
PUBLIC ABSTRACT

Who Is Accessing IPSE Programs? Examining the Demographics of Students Enrolled in Inclusive Post-Secondary Education

Madison Heider

This initial survey study was designed to examine the demographics of students attending inclusive post-secondary (IPSE) programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). IPSE programs are designed to deliver a similar, if not identical, collegiate experience to students with IDD as their peers without disabilities. Previous research has investigated IPSE programs and their impact, but there is limited information regarding student makeup. The researchers looked to identify the diversity of students beyond their disability categories; research questions surrounded student diversity, barriers to accessing IPSE programs, and what, if anything, programs do to increase diversity within their programs. The study was conducted through a survey of IPSE program directors that asked both multiple-choice and open-ended questions regarding current program attributes. The survey was distributed to 303 programs across the United States and received a response rate of 12.2% (n = 37). Overall, findings suggest that IPSE programs could be more diverse in areas beyond disability (e.g., race, intelligent quotient [IQ] range, sexuality). Finances, program capacity, and support needs of students are some of the largest identified barriers, and most program directors would like to improve the diversity of their programs, while many are actively trying to do just that. This research provides a foundation for further
exploration of the impact of socioeconomic status on access to these programs, specific interventions to improve diversity, and overall success of IPSE programs.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Madison Heider
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Introduction

Inclusive post-secondary education (IPSE) programs are supportive programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) that are designed to mirror the college experience of their peers without disabilities. Intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs) are disorders that are usually present at birth that negatively impact the trajectory of the individual's physical, intellectual, and/or emotional development (About Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities [IDDs], 2022). This definition describes the students that access IPSE programs, so it will be used most consistently throughout the study. The author notes that peers without disabilities is a term that refers to students outside of the inclusive postsecondary setting and may include some students who identify as having a disability.

Enrollment nationwide in postsecondary education for students with any disabilities is significantly less, at 19.4% when compared to students without disabilities at 80.6% (Digest of Education Statistics, 2020). Although only introduced in 2008 (Higher Education Opportunity Act), the Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability (TPSID) model is one of the trailblazers for inclusive postsecondary settings for students. In the 2018-2019 school year, 59 programs offered postsecondary educational experiences for 981 students with intellectual disability (ID; Grigal et al., 2019). The majority of students served had an ID (64%), followed by students dual-diagnosed with ID and autism spectrum disorder; (ASD; 28%), and the remaining students had ASD diagnoses (4%) or other disability diagnoses (4%). ID is utilized when “there are limits to a person’s ability to learn at an expected level and
function in daily life,” and ASD is a developmental disability caused by differences in the brain (CDC, 2022a; CDC, 2022b). The majority of students presented as male (61%), and most students identified as White (60%; Grigal et al., 2019). These statistics only capture the students enrolled in TPSID programs and exclude other IPSE programs for students with disabilities.

Students with disabilities within postsecondary education programs participate in academic, social, and vocational enrichment opportunities beyond high school, while receiving the necessary support to be successful. Hart et al. (2006) described three main types of postsecondary experiences for students with IDD: the substantially separate model, the mixed/hybrid model, and the inclusive individual support model. The substantially separate model offers little to no inclusive academic opportunities for students but may offer employment opportunities on or off campus; this model is not commonly referenced within the literature on IPSEs (Alqazlan et al., 2019; Brewer & Movahedazarhouligh, 2021; Causton-Theoharis et al., 2009; Hart et al., 2006).

Barriers to accessing postsecondary education extend to the realm of inclusive programs. While accessibility to inclusive coursework is a focus of many studies surrounding IPSE programs (Becht, Blades, et al., 2020), there is a limited discussion within the literature about students’ ability to participate in these programs. High cost of attendance, location of programs, access to applications, and knowledge of programs are only a few of the barriers that stand between students with disabilities and IPSE programs (Grigal & Hart, 2009). While college is not the only option for students with IDD, just as it is not the only option for their same-aged peers, these programs should be working towards being accessible to the largest percentage of students possible.
IPSE programs are a relatively new development within the field of postsecondary education within the last 10-15 years; while the research surrounding these programs is new and upcoming, it is rather limited. Individuals with IDD have multifaceted identities just like their nondisabled peers, yet inclusion within IPSE programs focuses almost exclusively on their disability status. The interest in equity within higher education is a hot topic for colleges across the board, yet rarely focuses on the accessibility of students with IDD (Aquino, 2016; Becht et al., 2020; Brady, 2021). The research focus for IPSE programs thus far has been surrounding the creation of programs (Baker et al., 2018; Brewer & Movahedazarhouligh, 2021), sustainability of programs (Becht, Blades, et al., 2020; Becht, Roberts-Dahm, et al., 2020; Causton-Theoharis et al., 2009), and student experiences within said programs (Alqazlan et al., 2019; Brewer & Movahedazarhouligh, 2021; Causton-Theoharis et al., 2009). Yet, there needs to be a shift to look at the accessibility of these inclusive programs for students with IDD who are looking to participate. To make determinations regarding the accessibility of inclusive higher education programs, it is precedent to know who is truly accessing IPSE programs. This study looks to explore just that by looking at the demographics of students accessing IPSE programs across the country.

**Methods for Review**

To examine the literature on IPSEs, I searched for relevant literature across eight databases: Academic Search Ultimate, APA PsycInfo, Education Source, ERIC, MEDLINE, OpenDissertations, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection, and
Vocational and Career Collection. Keywords used in the search included inclusive post-secondary education, disab*, college*, equity, and demographics. Initial searches produced 212 results, which were reduced to 137 articles once exact duplicates were removed; I initially reviewed titles and abstracts to determine eligibility based on the mention of inclusion, disability, or higher education. Articles were included within the literature review if they were peer-reviewed, published in a journal, published within the last 20 years, included studies conducted in the United States, and focused on postsecondary outcomes. Of the initial 137 publications, 24 results matched the initial criteria and were subject to a full article review to ensure the scope of research included students with IDD within postsecondary education. Five of the 24 articles were excluded due to their reports on students with a variety of disabilities (e.g., learning, physical, blindness) that did not fit within the scope of this study. Five articles were excluded because they did not include research within the United States. Five articles were excluded because they did not contain the results of an empirical research study. One article was excluded because it was not a peer-reviewed journal article, and one article was excluded because it was published more than 20 years ago. This process resulted in the inclusion of a total of seven relevant articles reviewed in detail below.

**Literature Review**

**Access & Inclusion**

Taylor et al. (2020) conducted a review of the literature to investigate links between inclusive education within secondary educational experiences and postsecondary
outcomes for individuals with IDD. The first author reviewed and coded relevant literature and was checked by the coauthors to ensure agreement on inclusion criteria. Nine studies met the following inclusion criteria: empirical research, education provided within the United States, focus on middle/high school students, and postsecondary outcomes in employment or education. Results of the literature review included multiple studies comprising a total of 1,910 students with IDD, ages 10-25. A variety of methodologies were used across the studies included within the systematic review, with most data being drawn from surveys. Taylor et al.’s (2020) study provided preliminary support for inclusive experiences within the secondary educational context as a potential indicator of postsecondary education enrollment. The findings of the individual studies included in the review vary, with one study finding no positive correlation between time spent in general education classrooms and postsecondary education (Foster & Pearson, 2012), another finding that inclusive experiences in secondary school could double students’ chances of participating in postsecondary education, and another study finding that secondary inclusive experiences can multiply students’ with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) chances of participating postsecondary education by 432%. Limitations of the Taylor et al. (2020) study included the exclusion of (a) nonpeer-reviewed articles, such as dissertations; (b) least restrictive environment (LRE) literature, and (c) other educational experiences beyond middle/high school-aged experiences. A need for further exploration of the relationship between inclusive experiences and postsecondary outcomes to better understand this potential relationship is noted by Taylor and colleagues. The findings from this study suggested there is limited knowledge of best practices for students with IDD to promote access to college experiences.
Becht, Blades, et al. (2020) conducted a literature review to explore how students with IDD within inclusive postsecondary programs were accessing course content and how academic progress was measured for these students. The authors reviewed studies published from 1987-2017 that pertained to postsecondary education (PSE) programs for students with ID on college campuses. They included empirical studies that had at least one participant with ID and reviewed studies to determine whether study participants with ID were enrolled in or attended academically inclusive courses on college campuses. The researchers evaluated inclusive academic access of students with ID by examining methods of engagement with course material, activities, assignments, and assessments (e.g., tutoring, accommodations, modifications, technology, mentoring). Becht, Blades, et al. found that 40% of studies reviewed had students attending courses with peers without disabilities, while 7% of studies had students in specialized courses. The majority of studies reviewed (53%) did not focus on the academic inclusion of students, instead focused on other relevant outcomes of postsecondary education (PSE) programs (i.e., internships and job placements, independent living skills, post-program outcomes, etc.). Only four studies were found that measured how students accessed inclusive courses and their progress; access varied from note-taking interventions and study techniques to adapted assignments and evaluations. The authors noted limitations such as the inclusion of only peer-reviewed research, exclusion of studies that did not include at least one participant with ID, and limiting search terms to postsecondary education and ID. A need for research that focuses on academic access and progress of students with ID in PSE programs was stressed by
the authors, as well as intervention research to assist with the modification and accommodation process for students within inclusive settings.

**Stakeholder Perspectives**

Alqazlan et al. (2019) sought to summarize the experience of students with IDD within inclusive postsecondary experiences from the perspectives of multiple stakeholders. The search for relevant literature was done both in English and Arabic. The first author did all initial coding for inclusion, which was based on empirical research published in a peer-reviewed academic journal that focused on postsecondary education for students with IDD that were currently enrolled in such programs, as well as any relevant stakeholder perspectives. Twenty-two studies met the inclusion criteria and were included in the review. The study included 1,310 participants, 12.9% being students with ID, 1.5% being parents of students, 59% being nondisabled peers that participated in inclusive classes, and 26.6% being program staff. There were 30 different postsecondary experiences for students with IDD that spread across eight countries, with the majority being in the United States, included within the study. Most programs utilized an inclusive or mixed model approach, although there was data from a few separate model programs. Overall, the study found that most of the stakeholders involved with these programs reported positive results, especially in areas of benefit to students such as social skills, self-determination, and independence. Benefits to students were reported at a higher rate from stakeholders involved with programs that utilized an inclusive model. Student perspectives related mostly to motivations to attend postsecondary experiences, which were opportunities for social and professional growth. The program staff was found to be
critical in the implementation and sustainability of these programs; specifically, strong advocacy for the rights of students in inclusive settings was noted as a necessity.

Obstacles for implementation varied across programs, but some notable challenges faced by programs included in the reviewed studies included academic and physical accessibility barriers, lack of staff training, instructor right to refuse students participation in courses, accessing campus resources, and funding. Limitations of the study, as mentioned by the authors, included uneven stakeholder representation, highly concentrated United States presence, and a limited focus on student perspectives. The authors suggested further longitudinal research be conducted across models of postsecondary programs for students with IDD to compare the effectiveness of outcomes.

Causton-Theoharis et al. (2009) investigated early outcomes from two inclusive/individual support model programs serving students with significant disabilities. Programs were stationed at two private universities in central New York, and both demonstrated characteristics of inclusive postsecondary education for students with IDD. The researchers intentionally identified eight stakeholders that were connected to one of the programs at the time of study or were involved in the initial formation of one of the programs. Participants included one parent of a student with a disability, five program staff, and two university faculty. A qualitative study was conducted through in-depth and open-ended interviews with the eight stakeholders, during which researchers asked questions regarding stakeholder participation within the program, views on student outcomes, and opinions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the program structure. Researchers coded interviews to find reoccurring themes and connections between topics.

Results showed that stakeholders believed that inclusive postsecondary education was
providing benefits to students within the program, nondisabled peers enrolled at the university, and faculty alike. Some of the benefits highlighted were opportunities for student growth, the creation of natural friendships, and the implementation of inclusive classroom practices. The data also outlined various obstacles to implementing an inclusive support model discussed such as limited access to services that nondisabled peers utilized, limited course selection, and faculty hesitance towards providing services to students with significant disabilities. This preliminary study demonstrated the potential of inclusive postsecondary education programs while identifying potential barriers that other programs should seek to mitigate when designing programs of this sort. The authors note that the limitations of this study were the sample size of participants and the lack of student representation within their interview process. A need for further investigation of student outcomes from the perspectives of students within these programs was also noted by the author.

Brewer & Movahedazarhouligh (2021) sought to better understand the perspectives of stakeholders within one newly developed postsecondary program for students with IDD surrounding social and academic inclusion, barriers to implementation, and strengths of the program. The program was stationed at a university in the United States. Eleven participants were included in the study, including four university instructors, four program staff, and three students within the program. Researchers conducted in-depth interviews with all participants to support the phenomenological qualitative design of the study, and answers were coded by both authors in two coding cycles. The overall findings of the study supported a positive view of inclusive postsecondary educational opportunities for students with IDD, but the themes of the
interviews varied slightly by stakeholder group. Staff members reported distress with the lack of structure that there was in implementing a program of this type, the need for precise roles in supporting students, and the usefulness of natural supports and everyday situations for learning. Instructors reported an overall positive experience of having students within their courses but had varying views on inclusive practices and expressed the need for additional training and support from program staff. Students within the program expressed their excitement about the opportunities for independence and socialization but also indicated the rigor of college coursework can be off-putting.

Limitations of this study, as reported by the authors, included limited scope, small sample size, limited time frame, and mainly White/non-Hispanic population. A need for further exploration of postsecondary outcomes and longitudinal research was also mentioned by the authors.

**Diversity**

Becht, Roberts-Dahm, and colleagues (2020) investigated academic access within inclusive postsecondary education programs for students with IDD. The study included 11 postsecondary programs stationed in Florida where students had access to inclusive academic coursework, including five universities, four community/state colleges, and two career/technical colleges. For this ethnographic study, data were collected through multiple methods, including semi-structured interviews. The information was provided by program directors, but interviews also included school district and program staff. Information from each of the sources was gathered and compared to create a comprehensive understanding of each program. Results from this
study supported previous findings that most IPSE programs expected students to be enrolled in two or more general catalog courses per semester. The author also noted that academic access in this context refers to a student’s physical presence within an inclusive course and that further exploration of academic engagement is needed. Each of the programs offered different levels of access, use of evidence-based practices, and requirements for completion, which both give students options for the best fit and blur expectations of students with IDD in the postsecondary context. Limitations noted by the author included a lack of dynamic understanding of IPSEs that are constantly changing, limited ability to generalize findings, and uneven representation of transition programs. The diversity among these programs, regarding policy and practice, leads to the need for further examination of outcomes to ensure best practices across the field.

Harrington (2019) studied how the act of inclusion within postsecondary education opportunities can exclude certain types of learners through acts of normalization (i.e., racism, ableism, sexism). Harrington used intersectional framework analysis to propose a shift within inclusive postsecondary contexts utilizing black women’s knowing, visionary pragmatism, disability critical race theory, and critical disability studies. The main theme found for inclusive educational spaces was that creating an “inclusive” space deems that individuals within these spaces could not function within the original educational “norm.” This approach is essentially providing the additional measures to provide access to education instead of working on the barriers that prevent students from participating in higher education in the first place. The author’s conclusions suggested that educational spaces cannot and should not follow simple inclusion approaches that focus on aiding the differences between learners but
should embrace the uniqueness in all learners and create educational spaces where there are no bounds to what is considered normal. The author suggested the TARDIS [sic] effect as a possible conceptual framework for inclusive postsecondary spaces to allow individuals to exist with multiple identities and avoid “othering” of certain groups. This framework utilizes intersectionality to break down the “othering” that can be created by inclusive settings, to help look at each student as their own unique learner. The author also argued for the expansion of pedagogical practice that is inclusive for all students; instructors should seek to engage and assess in nontraditional ways that allow for the success of all learners. No limitations were noted by the author.

**Summary of Literature Reviewed**

From the literature reviewed, it is apparent that IPSE programs are providing benefits to students with IDD, but it is just as clear there is more research to be done. There are varied reports about how students are gaining access to higher education and what inclusion looks like once they have been admitted (Becht, Roberts-Dahm et al., 2020; Becht, Blades, et al., 2020; Taylor et al., 2020). Diversity among program structures provides additional challenges when trying to compare outcomes as each offers a different expectation for students within the postsecondary context (Alqazlan et al., 2019). The most consistent message from IPSE programs is that most stakeholders find the experience to be beneficial to the students, even with the discourse that program improvements could be made (Alqazlan et al., 2019; Brewer & Movahedazarhouligh, 2021; Causton-Theoharis et al., 2009). These programs seem to be adding additional
benefits to the lives of many but there is little concrete evidence of best practices in this emerging field (Becht, Blades, et al., 2020; Harrington, 2019; Taylor et al., 2020).

The gaps in the literature surrounding postsecondary education do not stop at best practices. An overall lack of demographic data for students enrolled in IPSE programs have been missing within the reviewed literature. Demographic data on variables such as race/ethnicity, income level, gender, etc. could lead to information regarding barriers to academic access, diversity of IPSE programs, and longitudinal outcomes of different groupings of students. Ensuring that these types of programs are accessible and effective is the first step but making sure they are being accessed by all types of learners should be the next.

As beforementioned, equity within IPSE programs for students with IDD is a minimally explored area within the literature. The high cost of attendance, the limited number of programs, and the narrow scope of students who are accepted to said programs all pose additional barriers to students with IDD. This present study looked to explore the demographics of IPSE programs through a survey distributed to program directors of IPSEs across the country.

**Purpose and Research Questions**

The purpose of this study was to gather data from IPSE program directors on students who are accessing IPSE programs in the form of student demographics, program characteristics, and overall campus inclusiveness. The study aimed to identify areas of improvement for increasing equity within IPSE programs for students who face barriers
in addition to intellectual disability when looking toward postsecondary experiences. The research questions for this study included:

1. How demographically diverse are the populations accessing IPSE programs across different program structures?
2. What are some of the most common barriers for students accessing IPSE programs, as reported by IPSE program directors?
3. What is being done to increase the diversity of students within ISPE Programs?

Method

Participants

This study included program directors of IPSE programs within the United States. Program directors were defined as individuals who are involved with at least 50% of the management of an IPSE program for students with IDD. Directors of substantially separate programs were not included due to the model’s lack of academic inclusion in college coursework. The survey was distributed to all identifiable IPSE programs in the United States as listed in the ThinkCollege database. The survey was sent to 303 IPSE contacts found within the directory with no prior screening. A response rate of approximately 10% was anticipated; the survey produced a response rate of 12.2% (n = 37), which met the criteria of at least five participants for data analysis.
Materials

Study data were collected and managed using Research Electronic Data Capture (REDCap) tools hosted at Utah State University (Harris et al., 2019; Harris et al., 2009). REDCap is a secure, web-based software platform designed to support data capture for research studies, providing 1) an intuitive interface for validated data capture; 2) audit trails for tracking data manipulation and export procedures; 3) automated export procedures for seamless data downloads to common statistical packages; and 4) procedures for data integration and interoperability with external sources. The survey was distributed through email and social media posts to participants (Appendix). The survey began with a letter of information outlining the purpose of the study, what is being asked of the participant, and potential risks/benefits. For respondents who provided consent, the survey continued by asking for information about the program characteristics, student demographics, director recommendations, and director demographics.

The student researcher and supervising faculty created the survey to collect information related to the identified research questions. The survey was broken into three sections, addressing Program Characteristics, Director’s Recommendations, and Director Demographics. The survey varied between 37 and 82 total questions depending on participants’ responses; the program characteristics section contained up to 64 questions in both multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank format, the director’s recommendations section contained five optional open-ended questions, and the director’s demographics section contained nine multiple choice questions.
Procedures

The researchers obtained approval from the USU Institutional Review Board. Once approval was granted, the researchers recruited and distributed the surveys electronically. The main form of recruitment for this survey was through the ThinkCollege database but was supplemented with targeted distribution through professional contacts and social media (e.g. ThinkCollege Facebook Group, USU Special Education and Rehabilitation Counseling Department Page, personal pages). The researchers sent an invitation email to the identified contacts describing the purpose of the study, instructions to participate, and a link to the survey.

When participants clicked on the link in the invitation, they were directed to the REDCap survey, which again provided detailed information about the study, including potential risks and benefits, and gave participants the option to indicate their informed consent. If participants provided consent, they were guided to a two question-screening; both questions within the screening must have been answered “yes” to allow participants to proceed. If participants indicated that they did not wish to participate in the study, they were provided a brief message via REDCap thanking them for their time; these participants did not have access to the survey. The survey asked for information regarding program characteristics, student demographics, director recommendations, and director recommendations; a copy of the survey is found in the Appendix. All answers obtained from the survey were anonymous and optional, besides the two screening questions to ensure the program met inclusion criteria.
Data Analysis

Data were collected for approximately two months to ensure the highest rate of response. To minimize risks to confidentiality, all data and related materials were stored in a secure file on Box.com. Different analytic techniques were used depending on the question type. Multiple choice questions were analyzed by calculating the frequencies of each selected response. These frequencies were converted to percentages by dividing the total number of each selected response by the total number of responses. Questions that required respondents to provide numeric answers were analyzed by calculating means, medians, and ranges. To analyze open-ended questions, two researchers independently reviewed 100% of the responses to identify themes based on the frequency of responses. Once initial themes were identified, the researchers compared their coding notes to finalize themes; all discrepancies within the coding were discussed until complete agreement (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003).

Results

The researchers distributed surveys to 303 identified IPSE programs in the United States, and responses were collected over the span of two months. Of the surveys sent out, 52 records were recorded within REDCap. One respondent opened the screening questions and did not complete them, whereas the remaining 51 answered the screening questions completely. Five respondents were screened out of the survey because they did not meet the inclusion criteria. Nine respondents started the survey but did not input any reportable data. The remaining 37 responses were utilized for data analysis with 35
complete responses and two partially complete responses. All open-ended questions were optional for respondents.

Program Characteristics

Many programs were geographically located in the South \((n = 15, 40.5\%)\), followed by the Northeast region \((n = 9, 24.3\%)\), the West \((n = 7, 18.9\%)\), and then the Midwest \((n = 6, 16.2\%)\). Programs within the study were mostly classified as public \((n = 32, 86.5\%)\), with only 5 programs self-identifying as private \((13.5\%)\). Thirty-six respondents answered the question about program setting; programs were housed in a variety of settings, with the most prevalent being the university setting \((n = 23, 63.9\%)\), followed by the college setting \((n = 9, 25\%)\), technical school setting \((n = 3, 8.3\%)\), and “other” setting \((n = 1, 2.8\%)\). The “other” response was further described as a “private company separate from [the] college” (Figure 1). Program directors were asked to report the number of students enrolled in their program, as well as the institution in which they are housed. The range of student enrollment was highly variable for the institutions, with a low of 607 students and a high of 65,000, whereas programs varied from 3 students to 112 students.
Figure 1

Where are IPSE Programs Housed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>College</th>
<th>Technical School</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>64%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Programs reported to utilize state grants ($n = 17, 45.9\%$) and/or be self-sustaining ($n = 17, 45.9\%$) as their primary funding source. Additional funding sources included university/institution funding ($n = 7, 18.9\%$), endowments ($n = 5, 13.5\%$), federal grants ($n = 5, 13.5\%$), TPSID funding ($n = 5, 13.5\%$), and internal grants ($n = 4, 10.8\%$). Respondents indicated a variety of payment options available to students: Vocational Rehabilitation ($n = 28, 75.7\%$), Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) ($n = 27, 73\%$), familial support ($n = 27, 73\%$), self-pay ($n = 26, 70.3\%$), internal scholarships ($n = 16, 43.2\%$), university scholarships ($n = 14, 37.8\%$), and “other” payment options ($n = 14, 37.8\%$). See Figure 2 for an analysis of payment and financial support options utilized by each program type. Programs reported an almost equal
number of students that have/have not (18 [48.6%], 19 [51.4%] respectively) had to decline acceptance into their program due to financial constraints.

**Figure 2**

*Payment Options Available across Institution Type*

While students are in the program, most programs reported no requirement to live on campus \((n = 29, 78.4\%)\). The types of support offered to students varied from program to program, but academic advising \((n = 34, 94.4\%)\) and peer mentor support \((n = 32, 88.9\%)\) were the most prevalent across the programs surveyed. Other supports included independent living skills training \((n = 24, 66.7\%)\), mental health support \((n = 19, 52.8\%)\), on-call support \((n = 16, 44.4\%)\), transportation \((n = 10, 27.8\%)\), and live-in support \((n = 6, 16.7\%; \text{Figure 3})\). Upon completion of the program, the majority of students received a certificate of completion \((n = 30, 81.1\%)\). Additional recognitions included university certificates \((n = 3)\), associate degrees \((n = 2)\), diplomas \((n = 2)\),
industry certification(s) \((n = 1)\), employment \((n = 1)\), technical certificates \((n = 1)\), or nothing \((n = 1)\).

**Figure 3**

*Supports Offered by IPSE Programs Surveyed*

Program Demographics

Student Demographics

Survey respondents provided data on the demographics of the students enrolled in their IPSE programs. All the demographic descriptors presented were represented by at least one of the programs surveyed. Total reported enrollment based on race and ethnicity for programs surveyed was White \((n = 474, 64\%)\), Black/African American \((n = 121, 16\%)\), American Indian/Alaskan Native \((n = 5, 1\%)\), Asian \((n = 49, \ldots\)
7%), Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander \((n = 3, <1\%)\), and Hispanic or Latino \((n = 87, 12\%\); Figure 4).

**Figure 4**

*Race & Ethnicity for Total Student Enrollment*

Aggregated across respondents, race and ethnicity demographics for students within IPSE programs on University campuses were reported as White \((n = 292, 73\%)\), Black/African American \((n = 45, 11\%)\), American Indian/Alaskan Native \((n = 2, 1\%)\), Asian \((n = 33, 8\%)\), Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander \((n = 1, <1\%)\), and Hispanic or Latino \((n = 28, 7\%)\). Students within IPSE programs on College campuses were reported as White \((n = 99, 49\%)\), Black/African American \((n = 47, 23\%)\), American Indian/Alaskan Native \((n = 1, <1\%)\), Asian \((n = 16, 8\%)\), Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander \((n = 2, 1\%)\), and Hispanic or Latino \((n = 38, 19\%)\). Race and ethnicity of students within ISPE programs on Technical School campuses were reported as White \((n = 64\%\), Black/African American \((n = 16\%\), American Indian/Alaskan Native \((n = 12\%\), Asian \((n = 7\%)\), Native Hawaiian or Other Pacif...
= 57, 56%), Black/African American (n = 21, 21%), American Indian/Alaskan Native (n = 2, 2%), Asian (n = 0, 0%), Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (n = 0, 0%), and Hispanic or Latino (n = 21, 21%). See Figure 5 for race and ethnicity enrollment data by institution type.

**Figure 5**

*Race & Ethnicity of Students Enrolled in IPSEs by Institution Type*
The average gender distribution across programs was 8 males, with a range of 1-61, to 9 females with a range of 1-47, with occurrences of transgender ($n = 3$), genderfluid ($n = 1$), and non-binary ($n = 1$) students (Figure 6).

**Figure 6**  
*Gender Distribution for Total Student Enrollment*

The majority ($n = 30, 83.3\%$) of program directors were unaware of the religious affiliation of their students. Each religious affiliation was reported by at least one program; Christian was the most prevalent ($n = 22, 61.1\%$, followed by Jewish ($n = 13, 36.1\%$), Muslim ($n = 5, 13.9\%$), Hindu ($n = 4, 11.1\%$), Buddhist ($n = 2, 5.6\%$), and Atheist/Agnostic ($n = 2, 5.6\%$). See Figure 7 for reported religious affiliation information for all current students.
Figure 7

Reported Religious Affiliations for Total Student Enrollment

Note. This figure represents the religious affiliations of students reported to each category and does not showcase the students labeled within the “unknown” category (n = 294).

All 13 disability categories were represented in the programs surveyed. Almost all programs reported having at least one student with the diagnoses of ID (n = 35, 94.6%) or autism spectrum disorder (n = 35, 94.6%); see Figure 8 for enrollment totals per disability category. All programs reported serving students with mild disabilities (N = 33, 100%). Most served students with moderate disabilities (n = 22, 66.7%). Few reported serving students with severe disabilities (n = 3, 9.1%), and none reported serving students with profound disabilities. See Figure 8 for enrollment totals of each disability.
classification. See Figure 9 for intelligent quotient (IQ) ranges for total student enrollment.

Figure 8

Disabilities Represented by Current Student Enrollment
All programs responding to this question \((N = 26)\) reported serving students who identify as straight/heterosexual, with some serving gay/homosexual \((n = 9, 34.6\%)\) students, and fewer serving asexual/aromantic \((n = 4, 15.4\%)\) and bisexual/pansexual \((n = 3, 11.5\%)\) students. See Figure 10 for a breakdown of reported sexualities for all currently enrolled students.
**Director Demographics**

Most program directors reported identifying as female \( (n = 29, 87.9\%) \), with 4 male directors \( (12.1\%) \) and no genderqueer reporting individuals. The majority of respondents identified their race as White \( (n = 31, 91.2\%) \), followed by Black/African American \( (n = 4, 11.8\%) \), American Indian/Alaskan Native \( (n = 1, 2.9\%) \), and Asian \( (n = 1, 2.9\%) \). One director identified as being Hispanic or Latino \( (2.9\%) \). Experience working with IPSE programs ranged from 1-15 years, with many of the respondents having only worked within IPSE programs for one year \( (n = 9, 25.7\%) \). Even more directors reported only having worked within their current position as director for one year \( (n = 11, 32.4\%) \), with one respondent reporting having worked in their position for 13 years. Most directors reported working with only one IPSE program \( (n = 29, 85.3\%) \) during their
time, but many reported working in various positions: general support ($n = 10, 28.6\%$), vocational support ($n = 9, 25.7\%$), mentor ($n = 7, 20.0\%$), academic support ($n = 7, 20.0\%$), coordinator ($n = 2$), internship ($n = 1$), recruitment/grant-writing ($n = 1$), adjunct professor ($n = 1$), consultant/researcher ($n = 1$), office manager ($n = 1$). Most of the directors reported having earned a master’s degree or higher ($n = 29, 82.8\%$) with 6 participants reporting to have earned a bachelor's degree (17.1\%). The highest-reported area of study for the directors was special education ($n = 13; 37.1\%$). Additional areas of study included rehabilitation ($n = 4, 11.4\%$), education ($n = 3, 8.6\%$), higher education administration ($n = 3, 8.6\%$), counseling ($n = 2, 5.7\%$), social work ($n = 1, 2.9\%$), psychology ($n = 1, 2.9\%$), disability studies ($n = 1, 2.9\%$), communication studies ($n = 1, 2.9\%$), leadership ($n = 1, 2.9\%$), nonprofit ($n = 1, 2.9\%$), and occupational therapy ($n = 1, 2.9\%$).

**Director Recommendations**

**Research Question 1 (RQ1): Diversity of Student Population**

We asked program directors if the demographics of their current students, as reported in the survey, were reflective of the overall institution in which they are housed. The majority responded yes ($n = 23, 65.7\%$) that their program was reflective with the remaining 34.3\% ($n = 12$) reporting that the program was not reflective of the overall institution. We asked program directors to explain their typical program demographics or how their program’s student demographics differed from the demographics of the institution; 14 directors provided responses to this question. We
categorized the directors’ responses into the themes of Lack of Diversity (8), Diversity (4), Women (2), Intellectual Disability (2), and Program Capacity (2).

We categorized the responses that indicated a lack of diversity within IPSE programs as “lack of diversity.” Examples of responses categorized in this way included “There is a greater diversity across campus, with a wide range of race, culture, and SES,” and “We lack diversity in our applicants.” Responses that indicated diversity within IPSE programs were categorized as “diversity.” An example of responses categorized in this way is “…a student that was Asian.” Any responses that specifically mentioned female applicants were coded as “women.” An example of responses categorized in this way included “We have more female students than ever before.”

Several responses mentioned intellectual disabilities. We classified these as “intellectual disability.” Examples of responses categorized in this way included “We expanded the program to include individuals with IDD” and “…more students identified with ID.” Lastly, examples of responses that we categorized as “program capacity” include “The enrollment number for this semester is a reflection of the work that was done to dramatically increase the visibility of the program,” and “We have such a small number.”

**Exclusion Criteria.** We also asked directors what would exclude a student from being admitted into the program (n = 32). We classified the directors’ responses as to what things would keep students from being admitted to their programs into the themes of Behaviors (21), Support Needs (16), Attitude (7), Eligibility (6), Safety (5), and Capacity (2). The majority of responses mentioned maladaptive attributes for a college campus; we categorized these responses as “behavior.” Examples of responses categorized in this way include “a student who has a pattern of maladaptive behavior that
would not be appropriate for a university setting” and “severe behaviors that interfere with learning.” Responses that indicated a need for additional support (e.g., communication, medication management, guardianship) were categorized as “support needs.” Examples included “lack of communication,” “not able to administer their own medication,” “under social guardianship,” “inability to learn and navigate campus even with training,” and “needing full 24/7 direct support.” Several responses mentioned student motivation to participate in the program. We categorized these as “attitude.” An example of responses categorized in this way includes “A student must be ‘bought in’ to the program and want to participate.” Examples of responses that were categorized as “eligibility” included "failed to have a diagnosis of Intellectual Disability” and “…very low IQ-comprehension, must be able to read and basic math at least at the 3rd or 4th-grade level.” Responses that discussed safety concerns or alluded to behaviors that could be a threat to the student or others were classified as “safety.” Examples of responses coded in this way included “inability to live independently with our supports (due to safety…concerns) and “if the student was a danger to himself or others.” Responses that dealt with program processes or staffing concerns were categorized as “capacity.” An example of responses coded in this way is “…more students apply (who meet admission criteria) than we can support as a program.”

Research Question 2 (RQ2): Common Barriers for Students within IPSEs

We asked program directors to describe barriers that students experience when seeking admission to IPSE programs and while in the program (n=33). Based on what program directors identified as barriers to accessing admission to the program, we
created the themes of Financial (18), Awareness (12), Support Needs (9), Transition (4), Program Capacity (3), or Eligibility (3). Multiple responses mentioned personal or institutional financial barriers; examples of responses categorized as “financial” include, “lack of funding opportunities,” “…the biggest barrier is the cost of our supports,” and “families self-weeding out due to cost.” We categorized responses that surrounded the visibility of postsecondary options for students with intellectual disabilities as “awareness.” Examples of responses coded in this way included “The real barrier right now is making sure families and students know we exist,” “Parents did not prepare for a college experience for their student,” and “lack of awareness of PSE options.” Responses that discussed varying support needs of potential students (e.g., transportation, behaviors, housing) were classified as “support needs.” Examples included “transportation,” “completing the application,” “…some students have difficulty with submitting a self-recorded video introduction using Flip Grid,” and “paperwork and documentation collection and submission.” We categorized responses related to the transition from high school to postsecondary options as “transition.” An example of responses categorized in this way is “They [students] must be approved to come to our program by their home school district. We are a dual enrollment program.” Several responses mentioned programmatic limitations, these were categorized as “capacity of the program.” An example of responses coded in this way is “… can only accept small amounts of students.” Responses that discussed eligibility requirements were categorized as “eligibility.” An example of responses coded in this way included “IEP and Evals that are not reflective of current students eligibility or needs.”
We asked program directors to also describe the barriers that students experience within the program itself (n = 32). We categorized the barriers directors identified for students within the program into the themes of Support Needs (20), Transition (11), Attitude (10), Finances (9), Awareness (3), and Capacity (1). Several responses mentioned varying support needs of students (e.g., accommodations, college expectations, transportation); these were classified as “support needs.” Examples of responses categorized in this way included “The coursework is difficult for students with average IQs, oftentimes, our students spend hours studying and re-reading their texts,” “lack of accommodations,” and “independence on campus.” Responses that were categorized as “transition” discussed the process of acclimating to the college environment; examples of responses categorized in this way included “Some of the students don’t have the support at home to attend college,” and “parents overprotecting and not providing dignity of risk.” Examples of responses categorized as “self-efficacy” discussed students’ perceived motivations and hesitations, like “[W]e have had students who do not want to attend, but it is their parents dream,” and “motivation, anxiety, mental health emergence.” We categorized responses that mentioned financial barriers as “finances.” An example of responses coded in this way included “[F]unding may limit how many classes someone can take.” Responses mentioning disability awareness (e.g., support of inclusion, universal design for learning [UDL], IPSE best practices) were categorized as “awareness.” Examples included “lack of college-wide support for inclusion…,” and “[T]he largest barriers we see are internal policies that are not disability or equity minded.” We categorized a response reporting program limitations as “capacity.” The response categorized in this way was “staffing issues.”
Research Question 3 (RQ3): Action to Increase Diversity

We asked program directors if they were satisfied with the current diversity of their IPSE program; the majority of respondents (63.6%) were satisfied, leaving a little over one-third of respondents dissatisfied (36.4%). Dependent on their responses, directors were asked what have they done to increase diversity within their program (n = 20), or what they are currently doing to increase the diversity of their program (n = 12). Themes of Targeted Outreach (19), Recruiting (12), Support (8), and Process (5) were found across both questions. Responses that reported diverse recruiting actions or a desire to do so were categorized as “targeted outreach.” Examples of responses coded in this way include “consistently strive to represent the community and the university” and “we are trying to educate K-12 educators regarding college being an option for students with I/DD.” Examples of responses categorized as “recruiting” include, “we attend transition fairs,” “increase marketing efforts,” and “reach out to local schools.” Several responses mentioned supportive measures or a need for additional support as “support.” Examples of responses categorized in this way include “ensuring that we are financially accessible,” “trying to find a funding stream to dedicate to scholarships for students…,” and “…fostered a relationship with Vocational Rehabilitation.” We categorized responses that discussed the program process as “process.” Examples included “providing documents and our info session in Spanish,” “we do not look at identifying information,” “limited by applicant pool,” and “diversity represents the district as it should.”

Aspiration. We also asked all participants what they would like to do to increase diversity, equity, or inclusion of IPSE programs (n = 31). We classified the
directors’ responses into the themes of Desire to Increase Awareness (15), Increase Opportunities (14), Increase Student Diversity (11), Solve Support Issues (4), or Do Nothing (3). Examples of responses categorized as “increase awareness” include, “I would like to see an environment and culture that is more conducive to accepting persons with disabilities,” “develop campus-wide UDL and inclusion of students with IDD in credit-bearing classes,” and “increase awareness about IPSE programs to communities that may not have heard about it.” Responses that mentioned increasing opportunities (e.g., additional funding, increasing capacity, on-campus relationships) were categorized as “increase opportunities.” Examples included “I would love to increase the number of students we could have,” “I would like to find a way for our program to receive money from the university,” and “increase equity on campus for work/job experiences.” We categorized responses that discussed diversity as “increase student diversity.” Examples of responses categorized in this way include “recruit students of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds,” and ”accept students with a variety of disabilities.” Several responses expressed a desire to fix current programmatic issues. These were classified as “solve support issues.” Examples of responses categorized in this way include “solve transportation and tuition barriers” and “have safe and supported living accommodations.” Some responses showcased no desire to increase diversity within their program; examples of responses categorized as “do nothing” include “nothing it’s statistically appropriate,” and “we are in line with our university.”
Discussion

Key Findings

Program Characteristics

The findings of this survey indicated the vast majority of IPSE programs are housed on university and college campuses. While previous studies have not examined the distribution of settings in which inclusive postsecondary settings are housed, prior research conducted on IPSE programs have all been conducted within the context of those housed on college/university campuses (Becht, Blades, et al., 2020; Becht, Roberts-Dahm et al., 2020; Brewer & Movahedazarhouligh, 2021; Causton-Theoharis et al., 2009). Technical schools work on hard skills that could be utilized within specific occupational fields, which could fit the career goals of some individuals with IDD. Based on the results of this survey, it is surprising that more programs did not indicate being housed within this setting. Across the board, IPSEs were offering similar support, despite where their program is housed, yet very few programs were offering transportation and live-in support, which are two of the barriers identified later in the survey. The biggest concern with these inclusive postsecondary options was often the price tag (Alqazlan et al., 2019). While it is known that universities and colleges have well-established funding options, it was interesting to see how many programs have students that qualify for university-funded scholarships. Additionally, in some instances, vocational rehabilitation can be used to completely cover the costs of inclusive postsecondary programming, showcased heavily by technical schools within this survey. Considering this, it is
important to examine and understand which programs qualify for vocational rehabilitation funding, the rationale for such eligibility, and potential ways for students to access vocational rehabilitation funding.

**Diversity of Student Population**

It was not surprising the majority of students within the inclusive postsecondary settings surveyed were White and male, as this is consistent with previous studies (e.g., Brewer & Movahedazarnaghouligh, 2021; Grigal et al., 2019). What was surprising was the comparison of diversity across program types; all programs were near or above 50% enrollment for White students, but universities had a significantly higher percentage of White student enrollment alongside higher enrollment totals reported. This showcased an alarming accessibility and/or awareness issue for students with minoritized identities in the university setting. It was exciting to see that there were students identified by their program director as transgender, genderfluid, and nonbinary; this insinuates that some students are advocating for their appropriate gender expressions to be recognized. Interestingly, 95% of students were reported by directors to be heterosexual. This number could be influenced by a lack of sexual education for students with IDD on different types of relationships, the misconception of society on the sexual rights of individuals with disabilities, and the misconceptions and/or unawareness of program directors on the sexual preferences of their students. Adding an “unknown” option for directors to choose from could have resulted in a more accurate representation, as heterosexuality is often recognized as a default. The religious data were also interesting, as the majority of program directors were unaware of the religious practices of at least a few of their
students; however, the breakdown of students reported similarly represented the US Census on religion (PRRI Staff, 2022). Intellectual disability and autism spectrum disorder were the two highest reported disabilities, which supports past research and aligns with the entrance criteria for the majority of IPSEs (Grigal et al., 2019). What was most shocking about the demographic data reported was the range of IQs supported within these programs, as almost all of the individuals reported were within the mild and moderate ranges of disability. Given that IPSEs were originally developed to provide postsecondary pathways for students with ID, this finding was surprising because it indicates that IPSEs are perhaps enrolling students with different capabilities than their originally intended populations (Grigal et al., 2019).

**Common Barriers for Students within IPSEs**

Many of the findings within this section were not necessarily shocking, as financials, transportation, behaviors, awareness, and having the appropriate support to attend college are similar to the barriers that typical college students face. Yet, some of the highest reported barriers to the programs were the support needs of students. For programs that are identified as inclusive, there were still high exclusion criteria across ISPEs that are preventing certain students from accessing this experience (e.g., behaviors, medication management, transportation). While some programs referenced the capacity of a program as a barrier, it was far less frequently mentioned than the additional needs of students, insinuating that students should be more independent and not that these programs should provide additional support. Finding the balance between maximal inclusion and the availability of program resources seems to be a theme represented
throughout responses in this section. A troubling finding from the study was the lack of awareness in all areas surrounding inclusive postsecondary options, both from a consumer side, where students and families infrequently see college as an option and from a provider side, where the institutions that are housing these programs have cultures that do not fully promote inclusivity. The most motivating finding was that program directors reported a correlation between student self-efficacy and their ability to succeed in the program; this should push transition staff to work to get students who want to attend postsecondary education programming excited for their postsecondary life to hopefully increase success.

**Increasing Equity**

Many of the programs reported completing tasks such as targeted outreach, recruiting, etc. to increase the applicant pool for their programs, which is fairly intuitive. Intriguingly, a few programs reported they are doing nothing. Programs in this category reported that there was no need to try to increase diversity, which seems counter-intuitive to the mission of inclusive experiences. This could either be due to a narrow understanding of diversity or a misunderstanding of the question, as it was intended to obtain aspirations about increasing diversity across IPSEs nationwide. The more interesting part of this section discussed the aspirational goals of these programs; program directors wanted to increase awareness, opportunities, and student diversity while solving many of the support issues mentioned above. This further suggested a capacity issue among these programs; as if there were more resources available, they
might be better able to engage in increased outreach efforts to achieve greater diversity and equity.

**Limitations**

There are a few limitations that should be considered when analyzing the results of this study. First, this was a survey that included self-report data, which can be unreliable, as there is a possibility that participants misreported data requested within the survey. Along with this, there were no opportunities for follow-up from participants after giving open-ended responses; this left the qualitative analysis to the interpretation and understanding of the researchers without the option to conduct member checks to ensure the accuracy of analysis and reporting. When interpreting the data, it should be noted that the figures do not indicate how many students identify with more than one race/ethnicity category because respondents could select all categories that applied to one student. There appeared to be some confusion with questions regarding ethnicity, which could be due to the general misunderstanding of ethnicity descriptors (e.g., Hispanic/Latino vs. non-Hispanic/Latino). Data reported within the study captures responses that directly reported students or program directors within the Hispanic/Latino category but should be interpreted with caution. With gender and sexuality, a potential limitation is that directors did not have the capability to account for students whom they were unsure of, which could have led to false reports or inaccuracies. It is also important to note that the findings of this survey are not generalizable to all IPSE programs, as the sample size, while relatively good, still only captured 12.2% \( (n = 37) \) of identified IPSEs. Lastly, even with screening questions, there is potential that this survey could have captured
information regarding inclusive programs that served different functions (e.g. post-high programs, dual-enrollment programs).

**Directions for Future Research**

Research of this kind is upcoming in the field of inclusive postsecondary programs for students with IDD, and researchers should continue to advance in this area of research. One perspective that is missing from this study is the voices of students themselves. Researchers should include students in future studies to garner a more precise capture of the demographic topics addressed in this study. Different methodologies should also be utilized to provide a more in-depth understanding of who is achieving diversity and equity among IPSEs. For example, researchers could gather rich data about topics in this area by conducting studies that employ case studies, interviews, or focus groups to allow for a more in-depth examination of the topic. It would also be interesting to hear about barriers to accessing IPSEs from a parent/guardian standpoint; researchers could look to investigate parents of students who did not apply, who were interested and chose not to attend, as well as students who ended up enrolling in a program. Researchers should also further explore the effects of socioeconomic status, area of living, the proximity of an IPSE program to students’ homes, and available housing options on enrollment. These studies should look to compare institution types (e.g., university, college, technical school) to further parse out the accessibility, success, and potential limitations to accessing inclusive programs housed in each institution type. Finally, researchers should conduct additional studies to evaluate the effects of interventions that target the barriers to students accessing IPSE programs. If effective,
these strategies could then be utilized as best practices to access inclusive postsecondary options across institutions for students with IDD.

Conclusion

IPSE programs are emerging and growing across the country as postsecondary options for individuals with IDD. As with any new entity, researchers should look to understand how the program works, how it is benefiting the individuals served, and how the program is reaching intended audiences. Previous research has addressed the first two topics, but this study looked to preliminarily assess who is attending IPSE programs within the United States to better understand the demographics of currently enrolled students. The survey results confirmed the initial hypothesis that finances appear to be a significant barrier to attending programs of this type, which may be contributing to the limited diversity of students who attend. IPSE program staff should utilize the information obtained from this study to self-assess their own programs and determine the next steps to increase equity and diversity in ways that are meaningful to their program. Given the intent of these programs to deliver an inclusive experience, it seems instinctive for these programs to include the most diverse grouping of students possible.
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Appendix

Screening Questions:

Does your program offer students opportunities to take classes with peers without disabilities?
  o Yes
  o No

Does your role involve at least 50% of managerial duties related to your IPSE program?
  o Yes
  o No

Program Characteristics:

Where is the program you work for located? (For a reference map, click HERE)
  o Northeast
  o Midwest
  o South
  o West

Please select the classification that you feel best describes your program:
  o Public
  o Private

Please select the classification that you feel best describes the institution where your program is housed:
  o Technical School
  o University
  o College
  o Other: Please describe

How many students are currently enrolled in your institution for the 2022-2023 School Year?
  o Number entry

How many students are currently enrolled in your program for the 2022-2023 School Year?
  o Number entry

What is your program’s primary source(s) of program funding? (Select all that apply)
  o Endowments
  o Internal grants
  o State-level grants
  o Federal grants
TPSID funding
- University/Institution funding
- Self-sustained

Please select all methods that students use to pay for access to your program:
- FAFSA (loans, federal grants, etc.)
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Internal scholarships
- University scholarships
- Familial support
- Self-pay
- Other

Has a student ever declined acceptance due to financial constraints?
- Yes
- No

What recognition to students receive after completion of the program?
- Certificate of Completion
- Diploma
- Associate degree
- Other: please describe

Is this recognition institutionally recognized/granted?
- Yes
- No

Is it mandatory for students enrolled in your program to live on campus?
- Yes
- No

What additional support does your program provide to students? (check all that apply)
- Transportation
- Independent living skills training
- On-call support
- Peer mentor supports
- Live-in supports
- Academic advising
- Mental health supports

Please select all demographic descriptions that represent students you are currently serving:
- White
- Black/African American
- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Asian
Please enter the number of (race/ethnicity descriptor) students enrolled in your program for the 2022-2023 school year:

Please select all demographic descriptions that represent students you are currently serving:
- Male
- Female
- Other:

Please enter the number of (gender descriptor) students enrolled in your program for the 2022-2023 school year:

Please select all demographic descriptions that represent students you are currently serving:
- Christian (protestant, catholic, LDS,
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Atheist/Agnostic

Please enter the number of (religious descriptor) students enrolled in your program for the 2022-2023 school year:

Please select all demographic descriptions that represent students you are currently serving:
- Specific Learning Disability (SLD)
- Other Health Impairment
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Emotional Disturbance
- Speech or language Impairment
- Visual Impairment
- Deafness
- Hearing Impairment
- Deafblindness
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Intellectual Disability
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Multiple Disabilities

Please enter the number of students with (disability descriptor) enrolled in your program for the 2022-2023 school year:
Please select all demographic descriptions that represent students you are currently serving:
  o  Mild (50-55 to 70)
  o  Moderate (30-35 to 50-55)
  o  Severe (20-25 to 35-45)
  o  Profound (less than 20-25)

Please enter the number of students with (IQ range descriptor) enrolled in your program for the 2022-2023 school year:

Please select all demographic descriptions that represent students you are currently serving:
  o  Asexual/aromantic
  o  Bisexual/pansexual/fluid
  o  Gay/homosexual
  o  Straight/heterosexual

Please enter the number of students with (sexuality descriptor) enrolled in your program for the 2022-2023 school year:

Are the above listed demographics representative of a typical year for your program?
  o  Yes
  o  No

  ** If no, please explain the typical demographics of your program.

Is the demographic makeup of your IPSE reflective of the demographic diversity of your overall campus?
  o  Yes
  o  No

  ** If no, please explain how your program’s demographics differ from the diversity of your institution.

**Director’s Recommendations:**

Describe the barriers, if any, that you have seen students encounter when seeking admission to the program?

At a programmatic level, what would exclude a student from being admitted to your program? (i.e., medication management, mental health concerns, behavior, etc.)

Describe the barriers, if any, that you have seen students encounter within the program?

Are you satisfied with the diversity of your IPSE program?
Yes
No

** If yes, what have you done that has increased the diversity of your program?
** If no, what are you currently doing to try and increase the diversity of your program?
What would you like to do to increase diversity, equity, or inclusion of IPSE programs?

** Director Demographics:**

Date of Birth:
  o Date of birth entry

What gender do you identify with?
  o Male
  o Female
  o Other: please describe

Race/Ethnicity (please select all that apply)
  o White
  o Black/African American
  o American Indian/Alaskan Native
  o Asian
  o Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  o Non-Hispanic or Latino
  o Hispanic or Latino

How many years have you worked with IPSE programs?
  o Drop down 1-30

How many years have you worked in your current director position?
  o Drop down 1-30

How many IPSE programs have you worked with?
  o Drop down 1-15

What roles have you served within IPSE programs?
  o Mentor
  o Academic Support
  o Vocational Support
  o General Support
  o Director
  o Other: please describe

What’s the highest degree that you have obtained?
- High school diploma
- Associate degree
- Bachelor’s degree
- Master’s degree
- Doctoral Degree

What best describes your area of study?
- Education
- Special Education
- Social Work
- Psychology
- Rehabilitation
- Counseling
- Higher Education Administration
- Disability Studies
- Other: please describe