University of Alberta

Inclusive Post-Secondary Education: Practices for a new frontier

by

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ABSTRACT

This study explores and describes the practice of including adults with intellectual disabilities into mainstream post-secondary education. Through purposive interviews with senior staff members of Inclusive Post-Secondary Education programs, the data reveals an emerging education experience for adults with intellectual disabilities that benefits more than just these exceptional students. This adult education initiative has the potential to redefine what post-secondary education is about, as well as what might be possible for graduates of special education public schooling. The results of this study are described through journal articles and a conference proceeding.

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Chapter 1

The term 'disability' and its resulting inferences are said to be culturally produced and socially structured (Oliver, 1990; Skirtic, 1995). In this social theory of disability, the value a society places on persons with disabilities is related to that society's mode of production and the central values of that society. In our post-industrial western culture where material goods and body-image are generalized ideals, high value is attributed to those with intelligence, attractiveness and self-sufficiency (Dudley, 1997), and proportionate to a persons' market productivity and resultant consumerism. It is a global perspective of society that attempts to explain social stratification and how it relates to disability issues. It is a complex idea that describes how our society comes to marginalize persons with disabilities, and I wonder how much of it explains how I came to develop my own world-view of disability. In reflecting, I see my view of disability is a composite of social constructs and personal experiences, however, one that has undergone transformations.

When I went through the public education system, I never saw or heard of special education or disabled students. My schooling occurred in two provinces and the schools I attended were large, urban institutions. Looking back, I am now sure that there indeed were classrooms of students who required specialized supports and curriculum in the schools I attended. However, it is a testament to the power of the special education system to marginalize students that I could participate in a dozen years of schooling and never cross paths with these students.

In recalling my past, I cannot remember knowing of, much less playing with, any children with any form of disability in my neighborhood. I had an uncle who used a

wheelchair to get about, but no one ever mentioned the word 'disabled.' I was blissfully naive and unaware that there were people who were being kept secret and separate from me, because they were likely feared and/or detested.

My first introduction to the concept of disability came in my undergraduate years, where studies in adaptive physical education required me to memorize labels and etiology, more for recall in testing situations than for any practical or functional purpose. I came to learn that persons with disabilities were 'special' and needed our help. Although it was never explicitly communicated, disability meant 'them and us.' There were children with disabilities and children without disabilities. Then there were the professionals who would be helping children with disabilities. This was long before I knew anything about inclusion or disability issues. Segregated schooling was the norm from what I could tell from my classroom and field experiences.

It was not until the final year of my undergraduate degree, participating in a pre-school play-program for children with intellectual and physical disabilities, that I came face to face with the concept I had been studying. I was in my late twenties and this would be the first time I would interact with a person with a disability.

I started my professional career as a Teacher Assistant in a segregated special education class at the high school level, with a teacher who I now can see did not have any previous experience, or formal training and was comfortable with the status quo of the special education system. We did all of the things you might expect to see in a special education class. Coloring, cooking, rote learning of basic survival skills for the classroom and street, walks to the local mall to 'practice daily living skills,' and work projects such as stuffing envelopes or sorting nuts from bolts. It was the template of most special

education classes, unlike anything any other student was doing, and occurring in a wing of its own that was separate from all other students. The only interaction these students had with other students in the high school was at lunch (under the watchful eye of a Teacher Assistant) and at the beginning and end of the day when all most students were interested in, was getting to class or going home. To say it was not integration, much less inclusion, would be an understatement. Yet, this is how I came to believe these students should be educated. By my late twenties, I had come to personally experience the power of social stratification and how it can impact the creation of social hierarchies (Zeitlin & Brym, 1991). I was in for the proverbial paradigm shift over the next 13 years.

By some chance, which I will call luck, I decided to apply for a position at my university alma mater where a new program was starting. All anyone knew of this program was that students previously enrolled in the special education system would be attending and it was at the university. Being a graduate of the university with extensive contacts through my sports involvement, not to mention being one of two males who interviewed for the job, I successfully landed a position with the founding team of the On Campus Program at the University of Alberta.

It seems we all came into this new endeavor with our own special education experiences, little knowledge of what we would be doing, or any idea of what we would eventually accomplish. The rest of this team were graduates of a Rehabilitation Practitioner Program, which gave them a greater foundation in supporting people with intellectual disabilities than I had. My foundation was based on my two years in a special education program and my field placement in university. My metamorphosis was about to begin.

Under the tutelage of Bruce Uditsky, the founder of Inclusive Post-secondary Education, we all began to slowly take the journey that would take us from our special education training and experiences to an entirely different place. The beginning years saw us holding onto the concept of separate and segregated classes and experiences. It took us three years of Bruce's influence and other opportunities to explore the concept of inclusion and Wolfensberger's Principles of Normalization (1972) to break the habits of our special education assimilation so we could begin re-thinking on how students with intellectual disabilities could be involved in university. In hindsight, they are embarrassing years, tempered only by the knowledge that we knew no better and that no one else in the country, and for what we knew, in the world, had ever attempted anything like this before.

From very humble beginnings, and without any template for gauging our progress, we started the process of establishing an adult education practice that is recognized internationally for its best practices and serves as a model for other post-secondary institutions who wish to create similar initiatives. I have had the great benefit of not only working at the On Campus Program, but of also having the opportunity to establish a similar program at the college level at Grant MacEwan College.

Influences on my personal perspectives

From the beginning, my Inclusive Post-secondary Education (IPSE) experience has allowed me the great opportunity to work with a team of people who always questioned what they were doing. Many times we would gather as a group to discuss what we were doing and to critique and challenge our efforts. We were never afraid to admit that we had made a mistake and were always willing to change and learn from

those mistakes. The experience of working with the founding team of the On Campus Program has been one of the most significant times on my life. After those first three years, we began to turn the idea of inclusion into the practice of inclusion.

In the time I have been involved with Inclusive Post-secondary Education and in my continuing education, which has centered on the practice of inclusion, I have come to develop a belief system that mirrors this educational practice. It extends beyond school to community and everyday life. It goes beyond my professional life into my personal life. It has become intrinsically woven into my being and affects me in many ways.

So, this experience influences my efforts in writing this thesis. This study examines Inclusive Post-secondary Education with the intention of describing its practices and ultimate benefits for students. Seale (1999) speaks of the need to reflect on one's suppositions and beliefs so that the researcher can understand how their personal history and perspective might influence the study. For the last 13 years, I have had the opportunity to present and publish on IPSE. Has this skewed my perceptions regarding inclusion? Obviously, however, it has also provided me the opportunity to explore the student experience and the impact it can have on the individual, their family and the community at large, to the traditional post high-school experiences for other adults with intellectual disabilities.

My review of the literature demonstrates that there is a great body of literature that supports the practice of inclusion and that it is an educational movement that is slowly becoming embedded in the public school system, and as this study demonstrates, beyond as well. There are detractors, as there are for any ideology, yet my experiences with university and college staff and students has demonstrated to me that it is not just

professionals in the human service or public education fields that believe in inclusion. There are many proponents of inclusion who are everyday citizens, without any formal training in special education or human service delivery, who inherently see the value of us all living and participating together.

Participants

The purpose of this study is to describe the practices and principles shared by IPSE programs. The intention of doing this was to provide a framework by which people could understand IPSE from philosophical and practical perspectives. When I started to ponder how to gather the data that would enable me to do this, it became apparent that there were a number of perspectives I could consider for my data collection.

I could have chosen to interview students and their families. This path would have given me some exciting insights into the perceptions of IPSE from a student perspective. I might have found some interesting themes describing what it feels like to be the only person with an intellectual disability in a college or university class, and how that impacts their interaction with their peers or with their learning. Parents might have been able to describe how they felt their son or daughter's inclusion into post-secondary education impacted not only their child, but their family, their extended family, their friends and their own perceptions of their son or daughter. Choosing to include this group of participants would have given the study an insider's perspective that would be unique to IPSE.

I might have opted to survey college and university staff and students about their attitudes regarding the benefits and outcomes of IPSE from a dual perspective. This sample could have provided me a perspective on what the average student or staff

believes to be the benefits to not only the IPSE student, but themselves and the post-secondary institution in general. These data may have illuminated whether IPSE is supported by post-secondary institutions, whether students are accepted by their peers, and whether there is a belief from the general populace that these exceptional learners belong in college or university.

There are other sample groups I might have included in this study, for instance, employers of graduates, and field placement supervisors. However, I wanted to interview people involved in IPSE who would be able to provide the most holistic perspective of the IPSE experience. Students and families would provide data that would represent a single perspective to the value of their own participation, but would lack a global perspective on how IPSE can benefit all people, and would lack a perspective on the mechanics of IPSE. Post-secondary students and staff insights would be limited to their individual beliefs regarding the value of IPSE and would be extremely limited regarding the over riding practices and principles. Thereforee, I chose to collect my data from the senior staff of IPSE programs.

These staff, more so than any other individuals involved in IPSE, would have the most knowledge about the history of IPSE, the values inherent in these programs, and the desired benefits and outcomes for students. Through their intimate involvement with all students, families, college or university staff and students, senior staff would provide the most comprehensive information regarding the practices and principles of IPSE. These staff carry the responsibility of turning the philosophies of these programs into practices, and of educating the students, their families and the public in general, of the practices and

principles of IPSE. From the perspective of a researcher, using senior staff as my sample group made the most sense for this particular study.

Data collection

This study is primarily a descriptive analysis of IPSE programs. I chose to invite senior staff of IPSE programs in Alberta to participate in the study through an interview. Their responses to the questions provide the foundation of data analysis. The themes of the IPSE principles, practices and student outcomes are derived from the opinions of the interviewees.

There are 4 programs in Alberta, one of which I am the senior staff member. This meant interviewing senior staff of three programs and utilizing my own experience of 13 years to guide the interview process using a semi-standardized script. The interviewees consisted of 5 senior staff members among the three programs.

An introductory letter outlining the study was sent to these programs, accompanied by a consent form and the interview questions I would be asking. Prior to the initiation of the interview, I reviewed the consent agreement with the participants, the purpose of the study, and the interview questions I would be using.

The interviews followed the script I developed and the questions were open ended enough to allow the interviewees the opportunity to expand on a question or go onto a new strand of thought. The participants were very cooperative and provided a great deal of data to analyze.

Data analysis

After transcribing the interviews, the process of searching for common themes began. The questions themselves were developed with the intention of categorizing the data into broad themes. Specifically, these included:

1. Could you describe your program philosophy(ies)?
2. How is your program organized and administered?
3. What are the key principles of practice for your organization?
4. What is your operating model?
5. What are the key benefits to students involved in your program? i.e., personal, psychosocial, academic, vocational, other
6. What types of support do these students receive?
7. What are the main outcomes of your program? a) for students b) for the community c) for the institution

From these broad categories, the data began to explicitly illustrate more refined streams of ideas regarding IPSE practices and principles. Still, there were some data that did not exhibit themselves so clearly. Having an insider's perspective of IPSE assisted me to deduce a conclusion about whether those data fit into existing categories or deserved a place of their own in the findings. However, this close relationship with the data also posed problems of its own. Rossman and Rallis (1997) describe this dilemma for the researcher who cannot entirely separate their voice from the voice of the "others" as problem researchers' have with moving from the field experience to the writing. The entire experience prevents them from being entirely objective in the interpretation of the data and the creation of the thesis. I struggled with the desire to interpret the data based

on my own experiences and believe that I was able to remain objective about interpreting the data. Still, there are parts of the data where I included my own experiences as a way of adding to the data, while being cognizant that I not lead the study in a direction other than the data dictated.

Thesis format

From the inception of this study, I was certain that I wanted my findings to be shared publicly, hence the paper thesis format. Offering the study to the public seemed to be the best way to put IPSE on the quintessential 'soap box' so that it might be debated on its merit and so that this unique adult education practice becomes a more commonly known endeavor.

IPSE is a practice that is gaining a reputation in the special education and human service fields, but one that is new in the domain of pedagogy. This format allowed me the opportunity to share the study with two audiences: Human Service Professionals and Adult Educators. The 'chapters" are:

Finding a home: Inclusive post-secondary education and the adult education field

This paper is intended to address the fact that there is a new adult education practice that deserves a place in the adult education field. When I began my master's studies in adult education, I was discouraged that adults with intellectual disabilities were never mentioned as a group of learners who participate, let alone benefit from, adult and continuing education. The literature and discussion I was exposed to often spoke of marginalized workers and citizens who had come to reap the benefits of adult education, but these learners were never the focus of attention. What little literature I found in this field that dealt with adult education for people with intellectual disabilities often

discussed Adult Basic Education (ABE) opportunities, which are for adults with intellectual disabilities who are at the high end of the academic skills continuim. The learners in IPSE represent a much different student body and the practices IPSE programs employ to include them into university and college is much more inclusive and holistic than you would find in ABE programs.

College and University? You've got to be kidding: Inclusive post-secondary education for adults with intellectual disabilities

The statistics speak for themselves. Hundreds of thousands of adult Canadians access post-secondary institutions as a natural pathway to their place in the work force and community participation. In comparison, graduates of high school special education have little to look forward to. For the most elite, it might include one of 130 spots in Alberta's Transitional Vocation Programs. For the rest, it is segregated work, leisure, community participation, and home life. This article attempts to point out the disparity in opportunities between graduates of the public education system and those from the special education system and to describe that this needn't be the case.

Breaking the mold: Inclusive post-secondary education

The practice of inclusion, albeit an ambiguous term, has been implemented in the public education system with both fanfare and opposition. Students in the special education system are being provided the opportunity to experience inclusion along different continuums, with positive results. Yet, when these students reach high school and begin to prepare for their roles in the adult world, they are not being provided an opportunity to continue being included into their communities. Once again, IPSE is described as one alternate avenue that graduates of special education programs might

access as a way of continuing their meaningful participation in their education and community involvement.

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Chapter 2: Finding a Home: Inclusive Post-secondary Education and the Adult Education Field

Abstract

Over the last 13 years, a new adult education initiative has been gaining interest and popularity nationally and abroad. Originating in Alberta, Canada, Inclusive Post-secondary Education (IPSE) programs are supporting adults with intellectual disabilities to be included into mainstream college and university campus life.

This represents a radical departure from traditional adult education opportunities for these learners. IPSE is demonstrating that adults with intellectual disabilities no longer need to be isolated from their non-disabled peers who are also continuing their education. IPSE signifies a new vision of adult education for adults with intellectual disabilities.

Yet, in a field as vast as adult education, finding a place for IPSE is difficult. It shares similarities with other adult education practices and philosophies, yet it is distinct enough to warrant its own position in adult education.

Introduction

The term "adult education" is not one that is easily defined. Adult education encompasses many practices and educational settings and might be most easily described in broad terms. Spencer (1997) uses the terms formal (institutional setting with students receiving credit), non-formal (organized by an institution, with activities being non-credit, and delivered in alternate formats) and informal education (learning that happens all the time) as a means to illustrate 3 broad categories that might capture the activities of adult education. These broad terms are able to set the boundaries of what adult education encompasses, but can such non-specific labels describe the essence of adult education?

For some, adult education is most associated with Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of Freedom teachings (Freire, 1998). Freire's premise that adult education is intrinsically related to "the act of involving oneself in the world around themselves" (p. 6) in order to achieve self-awareness and empowerment in an open ended learning experience provides a broad definition of the adult education experience. Yet, Freire's emancipatory vision is still not encompassing enough to adequately describe all adult education experiences.

Trying to describe who is involved in adult education is even more difficult as it could potentially be any adult who participates in a learning experience. Yet, there is still a need to find a niche for a particular adult education practice to assist us in envisioning the experience and outcomes for those particular learners. This might be why the field of adult education includes the terms (and practices) General Adult Literacy, English as a Second Language (ESL), Workplace Education/Training, Family Literacy, Technology, Professional Development, Homeless Education, Math Education, and Adult Basic Education (ABE) (American Association for Adult and Continuing Education, 1997).

With all of the labels pertaining to adult education, it may not be possible that any one term or phrase might succinctly describe the adult education experience. Perhaps this is why Selman and Dampier (1991) emphasize that what "adult education" means to each of us is dependant upon the "institutional setting...regional and occupational idiosyncrasies and (is) developing too rapidly to make the prospect of standardized terminology a realistic one" (p. 2).

It is difficult to try and define adult education when new adult education initiatives are developed that expand what is already a distensive field. Still, new adult education initiatives are reshaping the adult education landscape.

One such endeavor that may add to the lexicon of adult education terms is Inclusive Post-secondary Education (IPSE). Its origin began 13 years ago in at the University of Alberta and has since begun to expand on a national and international level. With five programs nationally and at least two internationally (Australia and Finland), IPSE is creating a new image of what adult education might include.

Methodology

In the spring of 2000, a purposive interview with the Project Coordinators and staff of 3 IPSE programs in Alberta was undertaken to perform a qualitative approach to data collection. The use of a semi-standardized script of open-ended questions was used to illicit insights and experiences of participants

After each of the interviews, the audio from the videotapes was transcribed. After the transcription process, emergent topics and themes were exposed from these categories. An operational definition of IPSE programs' principles, practices and outcomes was identified. This operational definition revealed common practices and principles of these adult education initiatives as identified in the data collected from the senior staff of these IPSE programs.

Inclusive Post-secondary Education (IPSE)

The following section describes the students participating in this adult education initiative, the learning environment in which they assume their student role(s), and the learning processes that are undertaken to meaningfully include them into college or university. As well, the outcomes of their inclusion into post-secondary education is also discussed.

The Learners

IPSE supports adults with intellectual disabilities to continue their education beyond their high school experiences. These are adults who would be labeled as developmentally disabled or mentally handicapped. Students usually come from special education systems, where their learning experiences consisted of separate curriculums and segregated classes from their peers. These students would not attain a general high school diploma. Their educational outcome would generally be to prepare them for segregated workshop employment, non-occupational activities such as recreation and leisure and at best minimum wage jobs (Morrison and Polloway, 1995; Ticoll, 1995). Research has shown that more often than not, graduates of special education experience a lack of opportunities once they leave high school, which invariably leaves them unemployed and socially isolated (Guy, Hasazi & Johnson, 1999; McLaughlin, Schofield & Hopfengardener-Warren, 1999). For these particular learners there are clearly few options to continue on with their education in the college or university settings.

The Learning Environment

IPSE programs operate at both the college and university levels. Having students with intellectual disabilities participate in adult education at a college or university is not unique in itself. Indeed, there is a growing increase in the number of adults with disabilities enrolling in Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs (White & Poison, 1999).

In the province of Alberta, ABE programs are labeled Transitional Vocational Programs (TVP) and operate only at the college level. There are 8 TVP programs in the province with a cumulative enrollment of 76 students. This means that only a small fraction of the adults with intellectual disabilities who complete their high school

experience are able to continue their education. These adult education experiences have a severely restricted enrollment quota and as such, are available only to adults with mild intellectual disabilities and have a focus on academics, career and life skills and supervised work placements. There is less emphasis on education for its' own sake with learning occurring once again in segregated classrooms, with a separate curriculum from other learners at the college (Gowdy, 1998).

In contrast, IPSE students attend the same classes as their peers, participate in the same assignments, exams and other learning activities as other students and participate in the same out-of-class activities as any other college or university student. Rather than creating a separate experience for these students, IPSE programs utilize the existing learning environment and expertise of the professors and instructors to construct a totally inclusive adult education experience.

Including learners who have extremely limited reading or writing skills, if any, requires modifications to curriculum, learning materials, assignments, exams, and any other related learning activities. These adaptations are tailored to the capabilities of each individual student to ensure a successful learning experience that is not measured against the learning of the other students, but based on the educational goals of the IPSE student.

With these modifications to content and materials, students are included into virtually any college or university class they wish to participate in. This has included classes in Fine Arts, Law, Physics, Early Childhood, Astronomy, Education, Police and Security, Physical Education, Anthropology and History. The limits to what classes students can be included are dictated by primarily by student choice.

The Learning Process

To assist students in becoming part of the college or university experience, IPSE staff, referred to as facilitators, are available to provide support and recruit support for students. Facilitators are responsible for providing direct support to students in ways such as turning text into plain language or graphics, preparing notes, creating modified assignments and/or exams and any other academic modification that might be needed. They are responsible for meeting with individual students to review materials and to provide them with any assistance students might need to complete class work. This support is done in collaboration with instructors and professors so that the learning experience for students is as close as possible to the mainstream experience of other students. Instructors are not asked to change the content or delivery of their courses, rather, it is the responsibility of the facilitator to modify course materials (i.e., text books, readings) outside of class time so that students can follow along with their classmates.

As well, facilitators provide indirect support through recruiting and supporting volunteers to assist students in both classroom and out-of-classroom participation. As a general rule, facilitators do not accompany students to either of these experiences, but seek out natural supports to assist IPSE students. Natural supports are "those who would typically be in the given environment"(Hunter, 1999, p. 144). The role and supports these natural supports might provide are dependent upon the particular need of the student and the demands of the environment. In the classroom, these supports might include note taking, helping students to participate in the classroom, and being a "buddy." In out-of-classroom activities, natural supports are recruited to assist IPSE students to participate in

recreation, leisure, social, and student association events. Once again, the role of the natural support is dependent upon individual student needs.

IPSE students audit college or university classes. This provides the flexibility to modify curriculum and accommodate individual student capabilities. In this way, students learn to the best of their abilities and are not constrained by predetermined criteria for academic success.

The amount of classes an IPSE student might take in any term is determined by individual choice. Since they audit classes, their educational experience is not dictated by the normal student schedule. This means they may take as few as one class or as many as they feel they can. The average IPSE student takes 2 to 3 classes per term, which provides them the time outside of class to go over materials with facilitator assistance and still have time to participate in out-of-class activities.

IPSE programs are 4 years in length, which provides students the time to explore areas of interest, and to focus on a career path of their choice. These programs are year round, with students attending classes and participating in college or university activities during the school year. During the summer months students are supported in summer jobs and work experiences that may or may not be related to their studies.

The Outcomes

Credit and non-credit adult education programs have desired outcomes for participants. IPSE students share some of the same outcomes as their post-secondary counterparts that might be viewed as distinctive end results considering the nature of these learners.

Social status enhancement: Through their participation in college, university, and community activities, IPSE assumes socially valued roles (Wolfensberger, 1989). Being a college or university student carries status and prestige that other adults with intellectual disabilities are not able to attain through sheltered and segregated experiences. As well, these socially valued roles contribute to future employment opportunities and enable them to become contributing members of their communities (Morrison & Polloway, 1995; Uditsky & Kappel, 1988).

Self-Esteem and Confidence: Participating in challenging and interesting experiences and being accepted by peers enhances self esteem and confidence both at school and the community.

Academic skills: Reading, writing, comprehension and language skills improve primarily through student participation in course work and study time. The amount of improvement is individual and dependant upon the amount of work one decides to undertake.

People skills: Throughout college or university, students are given an extensive amount of opportunities to meet new people, to engage with them, to learn more about other people and themselves and to develop friendships and relationships. These all contribute to an ability to interact with peers and others in the community.

Self-determination: Students are encouraged to decide what they want to be involved in and how much they want to be involved. They choose the types of supports they would like to receive, the people they want to be involved with, and the overall path they see for themselves during and after college or university. With this autonomy comes responsibility for the outcomes of the choices they make. Learning from mistakes and

participating in problem solving are seen as part of the learning process. Supporting self-determination develops student's autonomy and independence from supports (Freeze, 2000).

New Experiences: Students in IPSE programs have the opportunity to try things they would never be able to if they were involved in a supported employment activity or any other community support for adults with intellectual disabilities. They are encouraged to experiment and build their experiences with "real life" situations. These experiences all contribute to personal development and sense of themselves and others.

Job skills: Students are able to develop and refine specific job skills in a career path they have chosen. They receive individualized support while learning and enhancing these skills and learn that there are different workplace expectations than might be in a sheltered or segregated workshop. Students are also able to make valuable connections while at university or college. These connections could be students they come to know and who may be future employers, or instructors with connections to the workplace, or opportunities to make future connections through field placements and summer jobs.

Determining a place for IPSE in adult education

Finding where IPSE might fit in the adult education landscape is harder than I anticipated. Because of the nature of the learners (adults with intellectual disabilities), it would be assumed that IPSE be included in with Adult Basic Education (ABE). Although it is true that ABE targets people who are "marginally unemployed" (Brooke, 1972), with a large number of these adults having some type of disability (White & Poison, 1999), the students ABE programs serve is only one of two similarities the two programs share.

ABE programs have a separate curriculum and learning experience from other mainstream students. IPSE programs include students into the same classes and learning experiences as other students. With modifications and appropriate supports, the curriculum for IPSE students mirrors that of other students.

Both ABE and IPSE programs help to prepare students for the workforce. However, IPSE programs look at the entire college or university experience as being part of the "education" experience. Learning is not restricted to skill development that takes place in the classroom or on field placement, but is integrated throughout a student's post-secondary experience.

Although they may share a similar disability label (albeit that ABE programs in Alberta serve only adults with mild intellectual disabilities), the experience of the IPSE student is completely different of the ABE/TVP student. One is segregated with an emphasis on job training, the other is totally inclusive with an emphasis on overall personal growth, which increases employability skills, but is not the main focus of student involvement.

IPSE demonstrates that students develop and enhance literacy and other academic skills, yet it would be inaccurate to say they belong in the same domain as General Adult Literacy programs or any other literacy programs due to the nature of the environment and primary outcomes for the learners. ESL, Workplace Education/Training, Technology, Professional Development, Homeless Education, and Math Education all fail to embrace the practices and principles of IPSE. So, where does such a unique and powerful adult education experience fit?

It fits into the post-modern context of adult education. In this perspective the purpose of adult education more resembles the past ideals of learning through experiencing, education through engagement with others and the environment, and believing that adult education has a purpose of social change "whose ultimate goal is not vocational ends, but to teach us how to live" (Briton, 1996, p. 3). This social change certainly occurs for IPSE students as they become involved in college, university and community, and it must also occur for those students, staff and community members who decide to become involved in supporting IPSE students. There must be some reciprocal change that happens as a result of this experience.

IPSE also suits the beliefs of popular/critical education. In a very real sense, IPSE raises awareness of conditions of the oppressed and shares with them in the process of emancipation (Torres, 1995). Through their inclusion into college and university others gain insight into a world they would otherwise be secluded from. Volunteers, staff and others become personally involved with students who come from a different reality than their own. Through this interaction, they are given the opportunity to see that IPSE is a way of addressing ethical and political concerns (Apple, 1999) that are part of experience of adults with intellectual disabilities. IPSE students are seen to belong in the same places as others, to have the right to share in the same experiences as others.

As well, IPSE lends itself well with Ward (1994) and McKenzie's (1991) assertion that adult education is a means of constructing a world-view through socialization and community participation. The acquisition and development of knowledge is seen as a product of social interaction, which also serves the purpose of enabling one self to understand the world around them in relation to their life

experiences. New world views are developed through new social experiences which frees them to overcome past "traditions" or prejudices that were based on old experiences. IPSE provides an opportunity to create a new vision of what inclusive communities can be like and how socialization with differing people can be a catalyst for re-defining one's beliefs about themselves and others.

Conclusion

Adult education is so expansive in its reach and evolution, that the field continues to grow and encompass programs, policies, institutions, and learners at a steady rate. With this expansion comes new adult education endeavors that reshape the terminology and practices of adult education. One such enterprise is IPSE.

IPSE programs support adults with intellectual disabilities to continue their education beyond high school to college and university. Rather than this education occurring in separate learning environments, with distinctly different curriculums that other college or university students, IPSE students are supported to learn alongside their peers with individual modifications to learning materials that match the demands of the environment and the need of the student. The outcomes for graduates of IPSE enable them to meaningfully participate with the rest of us in the adult world of work and community life.

The problem arises of where to station IPSE in the framework of adult education. True, it has similarities with other adult education domains, yet it is distinct enough that it does not adequately fit in any of the categories described in the field. Thereforee, IPSE lacks a legitimate place in adult education, and that is a problem.

IPSE programs fill a void in adult education. Klugerman (1989) recognizes this when she speaks to the need for new adult education opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities when she states, "A prime alternative is adult education programming conducted in an integrated community setting and offering a full complement of training and instructional components" (p. 607).

The fact that IPSE both meets a need and serves a purpose is obvious. However, for IPSE to gain any legitimacy in the adult education field, it needs a home. Since there is no home that suits this new citizen, perhaps a new home needs to be built that will provide accommodation and whose tenants will be welcomed into the adult education community.

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Chapter 3: College and University?: You've got to be kidding. Inclusive post-secondary education for adults with intellectual disabilities

Abstract

There is a group of students in our public education system who are being denied a fundamental opportunity granted to hundreds of thousands of other high school graduates each year – post-secondary education. Rather than considering going to college or university after high school, students from the special education stream are moving into an adult life of limited choices and isolating opportunities. This means that on an annual basis, thousands of young Canadians are being denied the opportunity to participate in a natural pathway into the world of employment and community participation, solely because they have an intellectual disability.

However, over the last 13 years, a new adult education initiative has been gaining interest and popularity nationally and abroad. Originating in Alberta, Canada, Inclusive Post-secondary Education (IPSE) programs are supporting adults with intellectual disabilities to be included into mainstream college and university campus life.

This represents a radical departure from traditional adult education opportunities for these learners. IPSE is demonstrating that adults with intellectual disabilities no longer need to be isolated from their non-disabled peers who are also continuing their education. IPSE signifies a new vision of adult education for adults with intellectual disabilities.

This paper describes how 4 IPSE programs in Alberta, Canada utilize inclusive education philosophies and practices to create a model for providing an education for adults with intellectual disabilities in colleges and universities.

Allan's story: *Allan was a graduate of the public special education system. When he finished his high school program he moved into what all might consider a traditional job for someone with an intellectual disability. He was doing janitor work in a local restaurant and fitness centre, but still dreamed of working with young children in a classroom setting. He wanted a job much like the Teacher Assistants he had seen in all of his special education classes. When his mother told him of a new opportunity to go to college and learn to work with children, he realized that he might be able to achieve his dreams.*

Allan was accepted into an IPSE program at a local college that offered a one-year Teacher Assistant program. Allan knew he would not be able to work at the same pace as other students and would need extra time to get his work done. With the support of his parents and the staff of the IPSE program, Allan was confident that four years would give him enough time to succeed in class and field placements and decided on courses he would like to audit. Allan also decided on a schedule that would allow him time to be in class, to meet with staff to get work done, to find time to continue his interest in weight lifting and to spend some time with classmates and others during his free time.

IPSE staff recruited classmates to help him out by taking notes that could later be adapted and by including him in group work and discussions. They also talked to his instructors about are the most important things Allen should be getting from their classes.

Allan needed a lot of modifications to his texts and other learning materials as he could not read or write very well. Staff developed notes that incorporated pictures and very plain language, which worked well for his reading skills and spent time with him

daily going over these modified notes. Rather than giving Allan marks for his work, his instructors would either meet with him to provide feedback or write comments on his work.

Allan went to classes, studied, worked on modified assignments, went to field placements, worked out, "hung out" with other students, went to parties, met students from other college programs and got involved in the student association. His time at college, other than being in a four year program (all other programs are 1 or 2 years long), looked a lot like any other active student.

By his fourth year, Allan had become very accustomed to going to college and learning. He had improved his reading and writing skills. He had met friends that he kept in touch with and made new connections to others each year. With the help of everyone, he had built skills that would enable him and the staff of the IPSE program to carve out a role for Allan in a kindergarten or grade one classroom. Even though he had not received a certificate, he was able to take what he had learned in and out of the classroom and turn it into a paid job at an elementary school.

Allan convocated in his fourth year and received a tremendous applause from the audience. The classmates, instructors, and other students he had met recognized all of the work and effort he had put into realizing his dream.

He still works at the same school and is seen as a valuable employee. He is in touch with people from past college days and is moving out of his group home into a condominium by himself. He hopes that his fiancée will one-day move in with him and the two of them will enjoy a long life together that includes work, friends, family, and community.

Because of the opportunity he had to continue his education, Allan was able to realize his dream and to enjoy a life that very much resembles what other adults would experience. IPSE enabled him to do something that is taken for granted by his peers, yet is very uncommon for an adult with an intellectual disability; to go to college or university and to enjoy and benefit from this experience as hundreds of thousands other adults do.

Introduction

In 1991, there were 128, 910 Canadian students who attended special education schools or special education classes in a regular school (Statistics Canada, 1991). In the province of Alberta, government estimates of the number of students with severe special needs (not including students with mild or moderate special needs) attending school to be 10,500 in the 1999-2000 school year (Unland, 2000).

In 1997-1998, 37, 064 students were enrolled in high school special education programs (Statistics Canada, 1999). In the Capital region alone, there are 27 high schools with special education programs. Each year, Canada's school boards are graduating thousands of students who have received a special education. But what are they graduating to?

Statistics show that in 1996-1997, 968, 900 of their non-disabled peers were enrolled in some form of post-secondary education, either through a community college or university (Statistics Canada, 1998). In the province of Alberta 114, 802 full and part-time students enrolled in post-secondary education.

In contrast, in the fall of 1997, 130 adults with mild intellectual disabilities were enrolled in Alberta's eight Transitional Vocational Programs, the only post-secondary

education opportunity available to adults with intellectual disabilities. Transitional Vocational Programs (TVP) are the closest opportunity for adults with intellectual disabilities in Canada to continue their education. These adult basic education programs are generally one-year college programs, available exclusively to adults with mild developmental disabilities whose educational experiences are segregated from other learners. With a focus on academics, career and life skills, and supervised work, these 1 to 2 year placements far to quickly prepare students for a life of work. A recent review (Gowdy, 1998) of these programs found there is little emphasis on education for its' own sake and minimal interaction with non-disabled students. These programs are primarily segregated and recommendations have strongly urged them to increase the amount of time that students are included into other college classes. Aside from this separate and segregated learning experiences for a very few, post-secondary education opportunities are non-existent for adults with intellectual disabilities.

For the thousands of other graduates of special education the traditional experiences of high school education have not seemed to adequately prepare students for life beyond high school (McArthur, 1996). Most options for graduates of special education programs revolve around supported employment, vocational rehabilitation, sheltered workshops and enclaves (Morrison & Polloway, 1995) all of which keep them separate from the normative experiences of their non-disabled peers. After years of inclusive experiences, youth with disabilities are thrust back into segregated experiences (Haring & Lovett, 1990). It is at the high school level and the transition to beyond high school and into the community that inclusion meets its' biggest obstacles. Research indicates a lack of opportunities in post school employment, living arrangements and

social outcomes, for graduates of special education programs, which invariably leads to social isolation and unemployment (Guy, Hasazi & Johnson, 1999; McLaughlin, Schofield, & Hopfengardener Warren, 1999).

There is a disparity in opportunities for adults with intellectual disabilities to continuing one's education that needs to be addressed. Finding ways for these learners to participate in a post-secondary education, either at college or university, is imperative. Advocacy organizations are now looking at this issue of continuing education for adults with intellectual disabilities as an education and human rights issue (Roeher, 1996), emphasizing that past barriers to college and university participation need to be systemically dismantled.

Inclusive post-secondary education (IPSE) is seen as one strategy for addressing this issue and is demonstrating that virtually any adult with an intellectual disability is able to participate meaningfully in the same college and university experiences as hundreds of thousands of other Canadians. With proper supports and a holistic perspective on educational and individual adaptations, IPSE programs are creating opportunities in the world of adult education that was previously unavailable. At the same time, they are creating a new paradigm of what is possible for graduates of special education programs in Canada and elsewhere.

Methodology

This study used a descriptive, qualitative approach to data collection. I chose to invite senior staff of IPSE programs in Alberta to participate in the study through an interview. Their responses to the questions provided the foundation of data analysis.

After each of the interviews, the audio from the videotapes used to record sessions was transcribed. After the transcription process, emergent topics and themes were exposed which enabled the researcher to develop an operational definition of IPSE programs' principles, practices and student outcomes. These practices, principles and student outcomes are derived from the opinions of the interviewees.

Inclusive Post-secondary Education in Alberta

The following section describes the history, practices and principles, and key benefits of Inclusive Post-secondary Education.

History of inclusive post-secondary education

While investigating what might be available for their sons or daughters who were approaching graduation from special education programs, a parent group in Edmonton, Alberta began to realize the limitations available in the community. When they began to discuss the options available to other young adults upon leaving high school, such as college or university, they questioned why this wasn't available for their children as well. With the support of the Gateway Association for Community Living and the Alberta Association for Community Living (AACL), a provincial advocacy organization for adults with developmental disabilities and interested allies from the local university, they began to actualize their vision and called it Inclusive Post-secondary Education (IPSE).

In February of 1987 the first IPSE program in Alberta was created. Since that time, other IPSE programs have been created modeled on the On Campus Program. These programs are now across Canada and in continents as far away as Australia.

Timeline of program development

1987: **On Campus Program**: University of Alberta. 11 students, 4 staff.
1992: **Varsity Education Program**: University of Calgary. 7 students, 4 staff

1994: **On Campus Program**: University of Jvaskyla, Finland. 6 students, 2 staff
1995: **College Connection Program**: Grant MacEwan College; Edmonton, Alberta. 6 s tudents, 2.5 staff
1997: **ACE Program**: University of Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown. 12 students, 4 staff
Up the Hill Program: Flinders University: Adelaide, Australia. 4 students, 1 staff
1998: **Campus Connection Program**: Lethbridge Community College. 3 students, 1 staff.

Principles of IPSE

In comparing the four programs, it becomes apparent that many of the inclusive principles utilized in the public education system are replicated in all IPSE programs. From its inception, IPSE has been guided by the following principles:

IPSE is available to any adult with an intellectual disability: "IPSE programs support a diverse group of learners." There are no academic or physical criteria used to select students. This means that IPSE programs are "open to any adult with an intellectual disability" including adults labeled as severely, profoundly handicapped who may not have any formal means of communication and who require personal care for their health and transportation needs. Conversely, students who are able to read, write and interact independently with others are also included into college or university.

IPSE is totally inclusive and is coherent with what other students' experience: Students are included into the same academic, social and recreational experiences as others. Respondents indicated there are "no separate classes, classrooms, academic or non-academic activities specifically for IPSE students."

Students in IPSE programs assume Socially Valued Roles: Through their participation in the same activities and environments, (along with modifications where necessary to make their participation meaningful) students in IPSE assume valued social roles. The student role at college or university, and their participation in the same activities as

others, gives them status and legitimacy with their peers and the community that would otherwise be unattainable or at the least, very difficult to achieve.

IPSE programs provide Individual Student Support(s): As noted above, the amount and types of supports that students need to participate in college or university activities is dependant upon the individual student and varies from student to student. As well, individual student supports may change from "day to day, term to term, and/or year to year." In consultation with the student, the people in the environment they wish to be involved in, family and any significant others, a plan around the intensity and type(s) of support is formulated and facilitated by program staff. This plan might include:

- volunteers to serve a support function
- Curriculum supports: text revision and modification, peer tutoring, class review and assignment completion with staff support
- Personal supports: informal counseling around decision making and problem solving related to any aspect of their experiences
- Job supports: coaching and connecting with co-workers who would provide natural supports

IPSE programs provide supports to others as well: Each of the programs believes it is imperative that program staff also provide support to the instructors, students and others involved in an IPSE student's tenure(Weinkauf and Bowman, 1998). An orientation to IPSE practices and philosophies is provided with an emphasis on how the individual can support student participation. There is also on-going support and collaboration throughout the term or year to give volunteers the opportunity to seek advice, ask questions, and engage in discussion relevant to a student's participation. IPSE program

staff believe that supporting volunteers is "fundamental to the program" and that they need to be vigilant of "supporting whomever is involved."

IPSE programs encourage Self -Determination of students: "Students gain self-knowledge, self-awareness, and self-management skills" (Freeze, 2000, p. 90) through IPSE. Goals associated with involvement in academic, recreation and social experiences are directed by each student's expectations for him or herself in these areas. How one's weekly schedule might look is directed by each student's interests and desires. Students are asked to share or take responsibility in shaping their participation in college or university. Program staff offers suggestions or advice to about these matters. Generally students in their first year require more support in deciding on their involvement in college or university than fourth year students.

IPSE programs involve Families: IPSE programs "respect and honor" the family of a student. Families are encouraged to become actively aware of a student's experiences in IPSE. They are kept informed of what is happening for their son or daughter and are asked to contribute to discussion regarding the creation of a meaningful college or university experience. Family input is also sought when necessary to ensure that the individual student's experience is derived from an invested perspective.

IPSE programs view students as adult learners: Students are viewed "as an adult learner and treated as such." With this comes the right to be included in the determination of what a particular experience will look like and the right to be included in whatever is available to other students. These students are learning, experiencing, and understanding the world through their participation in college or university, which is seen as preparation for adult life in their community. Participation in IPSE is thus a natural transition and

pathway to the world of work and community involvement, as it is for any other student in college or university.

IPSE programs see Friendships as an Educational Outcome: Part of the IPSE experience is the "opportunity to meet and be with others to establish friendships and relationships." These interpersonal opportunities are seen as a valuable outcome of their experience in college or university and "part of the bigger picture" to a student's participation. As is the case with other students, these friendships have the opportunity to continue beyond college or university.

IPSE is a tool for Community Education: IPSE is seen as a valuable tool in the education of others to the benefits of sharing common experiences with adults with disabilities both at school and the community at large. IPSE is an "instrument of social change that counters traditional and historical perceptions of intellectual disability" and can be a catalyst to acceptance and accommodation of in the community. Through involvement in IPSE, students are seen as participating in college or university for the same reasons as others.

IPSE programs believe that Education extends beyond the classroom: Students involved in IPSE are seen as learning from all of the experiences they participate in. A student's "education" is not limited to just classroom learning. This means that their education is facilitated through academic, recreation, and social activities of involvement. "These environments all provide a wealth of learning opportunities" (Weinkauf and Bowman, 1998).

Key Benefits to Students

Respondents believed that there were many benefits for students involved in IPSE programs. These ranged from academic and skill related attainments to personal growth and development. Some of the more salient outcomes for students included:

Self Esteem and Confidence: Participating in challenging and interesting experiences and being accepted by peers enhances self esteem and confidence both at school and in the community. Students now "know what they want to do and say what they want to do" and "they achieve things their parents and others never thought possible." They have shared experiences with others that provide connections that would otherwise not be possible.

Academic skills: "Reading, writing, comprehension and language skills improve" through student participation in course work and study time. The amount of improvement is individual and dependant upon the amount of work one undertakes.

Self-determination: Students are encouraged to participate in decisions and to choose "what they want to be involved in and how much they want to be involved." They choose the types of supports they would like to receive, the people they want to be involved with, and the overall path they see for themselves during and after college or university. With this autonomy comes responsibility for the outcomes of the choices they make. Learning from mistakes and participating in problem solving are seen as part of the IPSE process.

Job skills: Students are able to develop and refine specific job skills in a chosen career path. They receive individualized support while gaining these skills and learn about "different workplace expectations than might be in a sheltered or segregated workshop." Students are also able to make valuable connections while at university or college. These

connections could be "students they come to know and who may be future employers", or instructors with connections to the workplace, or opportunities through field placements and summer jobs.

Social status enhancement: Attending a college or university is a highly valued activity. Participation in generic post-secondary education gives IPSE students status they would otherwise not have. There is a "reduction of social deviancy" towards IPSE students and IPSE "students are often less identifiable to others as one with a developmental disability and more as a university student."

Summary

"Most students with severe disabilities finish school with few dreams and career ambitions; the mechanism for transition from high school to life as an adult are restricted" (Bowman & Skinner, 1994, p. 47). Aside from the extremely limited adult basic education programs available to only a select few, adults with intellectual disabilities can only look forward to a life of segregated employment and community participation. Yet, this needn't be the case.

Inclusive Post-secondary Education, a relatively new venture in adult education, is demonstrating that graduates of special education programs can look to continuing their education at college or university. Over the past 13 years, an increasing number of these programs are proving that with some founding principles and practices, a post-secondary experience can prove beneficial to not only these unique learners, but to the community at large.

For students, outcomes can include "friendship, enriching experiences, employment, ...self esteem, independence, community living skills, and the opportunity

to secure employment or supported employment in the community upon graduation" (Ticoll, 1995, p. 24). For the community, IPSE offers "the best opportunity for influencing community attitudes" (Klugerman, 1989, p. 607) and "will have a positive impact in our whole community" (Williamson, 1997, p. 17).

IPSE offers an opportunity for us to re-examine not only what we believe possible for adults with intellectual disabilities in our communities, but to re-evaluate what continuing "education" means to us all. As well, it provides us the chance to examine the roles and responsibilities we have in ensuring that there be equitable opportunities to post-secondary education for these exceptional learners.

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Chapter 4: Breaking the mold: Inclusive post-secondary education

Abstract

The last thirty years of the 20th century have seen students with intellectual disabilities increasingly become involved in "regular" education. This change is a result impart to the advocacy for, and use of, inclusive practices and principles derived from ethical and moral questions regarding the rights of people with disabilities. This gradual transition from separate and segregated school experiences to ones where students with disabilities are supported to participate in classes has challenged school systems to not only re-think what education means for students, but also how it might be best delivered.

The inclusion movement has impacted how schools educate students from pre-school to high school. A review of literature on inclusion found the majority of articles focus on these particular learners. Since the late 1980's a new inclusive movement has been taking place in Canada, the United States, Finland, and Australia. Referred to as Inclusive Post-secondary Education (IPSE), this inclusive education experience for adults with intellectual disabilities is drawing upon student experiences at the public school level and taking inclusion into another domain - colleges and universities across Canada and beyond.

This paper describes how 4 IPSE programs in Alberta, Canada utilize inclusive education philosophies and practices to create a model for providing post-secondary education for adults with intellectual disabilities.

Introduction

To understand Inclusive Post-secondary Education (IPSE), one must come to terms with the concept of inclusion; however, inclusion is a difficult concept to define. It

is a simple term that belies the complexity surrounding this educational practice and philosophy. Inclusion can be seen as the exact opposite of separate, segregated classroom experiences that most students with disabilities. However, inclusion is also a term that carries with it multiple definitions (Florian, Rose & Tilstone, 1998) and no single model to utilize for its' purposes (Winzer, 1999). Skirtic (1995) coined the term "inclusions" to describe how inclusion can mean different practices to different people. As such, educators see inclusion as a continuum of services, ranging from least to fully inclusive, with all practices along this continuum being considered to be "inclusive" regardless of the amount of meaningful participation by special education students in mainstream school activities.

Inclusion is but one term that can describe how education might be delivered to a group of students. In the public school system, regular classes and special education classes are one way to describe educational services for students with differing abilities. Some argue that inclusion and special education are simply frames of mind and more a way of organizing the world than an attempt to provide educational services (Bogdan & Knoll, 1995; Bunch, 1994). As such, inclusion and regular education are seen as terms reflecting the dichotomy of services and philosophies that act to bring students into either homogeneous or heterogeneous learning environments.

The way we view intellectual disability impacts the manner in which we will provide students with disabilities and educational experience (Steele, 1999). Segregated school services are derived from a deficit or medical model of intellectual disability where people are seen as inherently flawed and need fixing. The cure to the deficit or illness of the student with an intellectual disability is specialized instruction in separate

learning environments from their peers (Florian et al. 1998; Stewart 1999). This viewpoint supposes that students with disabilities are somehow lacking in some way or another, generally in intellectual capabilities. To combat this negative image of students with disabilities, educational paradigms that re-define the nature of learners need to be considered.

Inclusion pronounces that all children are capable of learning (Meyen, 1995; Orelove & Sobsey, 1996) and that how they learn and how much they learn is not important in defining them as learners. For all students, their education is best experienced in their neighborhood schools, alongside their neighborhood peers and with whatever supports a student requires in order to provide them with an equitable and effective education (Lipsky & Gartner, 1999). In the inclusive school environment, being different from others is seen as part of the human experience and this difference is valued (Ballard, 1995) and becomes part of the inclusive experience that impacts students both with and without an intellectual disability label.

The threads in the tapestry of inclusion practices and beliefs weave together some common themes that advocates and professionals use as guiding principles. From the proponent's perspective, inclusion means viewing the entire community, schools, and neighborhoods as learning environments (Guy, Hasazi & Johnson, 1999) where all students can benefit and learn. Learning therefore is not restricted to formal education, but encompasses both formal and informal learning experiences that include in-class and out-of-class learning with academic and personal growth outcomes. Inclusion is seen as looking beyond the traditional academic parameters of education such as reading, writing and arithmetic and striving to create such ideals as respect, acceptance, and friendship

amongst all students, regardless of ability (Epstein & Elias, 1996; Uditsky & Kappel, 1988). With the practice of full inclusion comes physical and social integration, in-class and out-of-class experiences that are common for all (Alper, 1996; MacArthur, 1996), as well as positive learning outcomes that incorporate individualized curriculum modification where necessary (Bunch & Valeo, 1997).

Inclusive education outcomes for students include high self esteem, confidence, friendships and relationships with peers, an expanded world view, respect of others, and an openness to diversity (Byers, 1999). Education outcomes can also include the development of self-awareness and knowledge, self-determination, and autonomy and independence from supports (Freeze, 2000; Tyne, 1999). These education outcomes can contribute to future employment and enhance student's potential to assume valued roles by becoming contributing members of their communities (Morrison and Polloway, 1995; Uditsky & Kappel, 1988).

However diverse the meanings of inclusion, there is a key concept to inclusion that sees all children, regardless of ability, receiving individual instruction and support in their school of choice. This assumes that students included into regular education are assisted to learn to the best of their abilities, alongside their peers and to meaningfully participate in the entire school and community experience.

Inclusion: Beyond Public School

Students with disabilities are included into regular school at the elementary and junior high school levels but as they move to the secondary level, inclusion becomes more difficult. There is less flexibility to accommodate specialized curriculums due to such factors as performance indicators that are tied to funding (Stewart, 1999). Teachers

and administrators become reluctant to accept students with disabilities into classrooms where their assessment results may negatively impact base funding.

The traditional experiences of public education have not seemed to adequately prepare students for life beyond high school (McArthur, 1999). Most options for graduates of special education programs revolve around supported employment, vocational rehabilitation, sheltered workshops, and enclaves (Morrison & Polloway, 1995) all of which keep them separate from the normative experiences of their non-disabled peers. After years of inclusive experiences, youth with disabilities are thrust back into segregated experiences due to a lack of opportunity (Haring & Lovett, 1990). It is at the high school level and the transition to beyond high school and into the community that inclusion meets the biggest obstacles. For graduates of special education, research indicates a lack of opportunities in post school employment, living arrangements and social outcomes, which invariably leads to social isolation and unemployment (Guy et al. 1999; McLaughlin, Schofield, & Hopfengardener Warren, 1999). There is an understanding of the importance of supporting persons after high school to realize normative lifestyles that include making friends and getting a job (Tyne, 1999).

There is very little literature that discusses students with intellectual disabilities continuing their education at a post-secondary institution (Ticoll, 1995) in any manner other than segregated opportunities. Transitional Vocational Programs (TVP) are the closest opportunity for adults with intellectual disabilities in Canada to continue their education. Transitional Vocational Programs are generally one-year college programs, available exclusively to adults with mild developmental disabilities whose educational experiences are generally segregated from other learners. With a focus on academics,

career and life skills, and supervised work, these 1 to 2 year programs attempt to quickly prepare students for a life of work. There is less emphasis than other post-secondary programs on education for its' own sake (Gowdy, 1998) and little interaction with non-disabled students. These programs are primarily segregated and recommendations by external reviewers have strongly urged these programs to increase the amount of time that students are included into other college classes. Aside from this separate and segregated learning experiences for a very few, post-secondary education opportunities are non-existent for adults with intellectual disabilities.

The benefits of inclusion become lost at this transition point from high school to beyond. From an education experience that generally mirrors their peers, students with intellectual disabilities are suddenly thrust into segregated work and recreation. Rather than looking at college or university as an option after high school, as other young adults do, students with intellectual disabilities graduate to a world of limited options.

However, this is changing. College and university education is now an option for adults with intellectual disabilities. The bridge from inclusive high school to post-secondary education has been created and it is called Inclusive Post-secondary Education (IPSE).

Methodology

In the spring of 2000, a purposive interview with the Project Coordinators and staff of 3 IPSE programs in Alberta was undertaken. The use of a semi-standardized script of open-ended questions was used to illicit insights and experiences of participants. Their responses to the questions provide the foundation of data analysis.

After each of the interviews, the audio from the videotapes used to record sessions was transcribed. After the transcription process, emergent topics and themes were exposed which enabled the researcher to develop an operational definition of IPSE programs' principles, practices and student outcomes. These practices, principles and student outcomes are derived from the opinions of the interviewees.

Principles and Practices of IPSE

In comparing the four programs, it becomes apparent that many of the inclusive principles utilized in the public education system are replicated in IPSE programs. These principles guide their inclusive practices and are woven together to create a model for IPSE programs. From its' inception, IPSE has been guided by the following principles and practices:

IPSE is available to any adult with an intellectual disability and so "IPSE programs support a diverse group of learners." There are no academic or physical criteria used to select students. This means that IPSE programs are "open to any adult with an intellectual disability" including adults labeled as severely, profoundly handicapped who may not have any formal means of communication and who require personal care for their health and transportation needs. Conversely, students who are able to read, write and interact independently with others are also included into college or university.

IPSE is totally inclusive and is coherent with what other students' experience, meaning that students are included into the same academic, social and recreational experiences as others. Respondents indicated there are "no separate classes, classrooms, academic or non-academic activities specifically for IPSE students." To ensure successful

inclusion for students into these areas, a number of modifications to regular delivery are utilized:

- Students have audit status in classes. Rather than attempting to meet the academic requirements of post-secondary classes, there is an emphasis on students participating (learning and socializing) to the best of their abilities.
- In collaboration with participating instructors, curriculum and learning objectives are modified to meet the capabilities of each student. Instructors are not asked to modify delivery of course content, rather the role of the IPSE staff is to consult with them to determine key areas of focus for the classes, and to modify learning materials and activities in conjunction with what is covered in class. If a student can participate in any portion(s) of the class without modifications, that would be the preferred manner. In this way, students share the same access to expert instruction, but in a way that makes the experience meaningful to them.
- Program staff spend time with students outside of class on a regular basis, going over modified materials (i.e., plain language notes/readings, assisting student's with getting assignments done, studying for exams or any other class related activity). Students are encouraged to become involved in the same activities as other students. This can include study groups, clubs, student association, recreation, leisure, fraternities and other activities available to students. Participation in these activities may or may not need modification, depending on the activity and the person. Modification may mean "partial participation" or some related adaptation so students can participate at a level "suitable to them and the environment."

IPSE programs are year-round with students are supported throughout the calendar year. Generally this would mean that students are included into college or university classes from September through April and then supported to find summer jobs or experiences that may or may not be related to their studies. These summer experiences prove to be "valuable opportunities to develop work related skills and make connections to future employers." These experiences utilize many of the same concepts and strategies used to include students into college or university life
(i.e., inclusivity, individualized support, natural supports, etc.).

Students in IPSE programs assume socially valued roles through their participation in the same activities and environments, (along with modifications where necessary to make their participation meaningful) as other college or university students. Their student role, and their participation in the same activities as others, gives them status and legitimacy with their peers and the community that would otherwise be unattainable or at the least, very difficult to achieve.

IPSE programs utilize natural supports, which means that when students become involved in post-secondary or community based activities, "people who are already involved in that environment" are recruited by program staff to provide support to IPSE students. The role(s) these volunteers assume is dictated by the activity and the capabilities and experience of the IPSE student. "For a first-year student, the amount of support needed to be involved in a class or any other activity will likely be more than for a student in his or her fourth year" of post-secondary education. In a classroom setting the role might be to assist with notes to include the IPSE student into the activities of class.

In a social or recreational setting, the role may be one of a mentor who provides guidance through the activity.

IPSE programs provide individual student support(s) in a way that the amount and types of supports that students need to participate in college or university activities is dependant upon the individual student and varies from student to student. As well, individual student supports may change from "day to day, term to term, and/or year to year." In consultation with the student, the people in the environment they wish to be involved in, family and any significant others, a plan around the intensity and type(s) of support is formulated and facilitated by program staff. This plan might include: volunteers to serve a support function

- Curriculum supports: text revision and modification, peer tutoring, class review and assignment completion with staff support
- Personal supports: informal counseling around decision making and problem solving related to any aspect of their experiences
- Job supports: coaching and connecting with co-workers who would provide natural supports

IPSE programs provide supports to others as well. Each of the programs believes it is imperative that program staff provide support to the instructors, students and others involved in an IPSE student's tenure (Weinkauf and Bowman, 1998). An orientation to IPSE practices and philosophies is provided with an emphasis on how the individual can support student participation. There is also on-going support and collaboration throughout the term or year to give volunteers the opportunity to seek advice, ask questions, and engage in discussion relevant to a student's. IPSE program staff believe

that supporting volunteers is "fundamental to the program" and that they need to be vigilant of "supporting whomever is involved."

"Students gain self-knowledge, self-awareness, and self-management skills" (Freeze, 2000, p. 90) through IPSE. Goals associated with involvement in academic, recreation and social experiences are directed by each student's expectations for him or herself in these areas. Therefore, that individual student's interests and desires direct how a particular student's schedule looks. Students are asked to share or take responsibility in shaping their participation in college or university, which includes in-class, and out of class participation. Program staff offers suggestions or advice to about these matters. Generally students in their first year require more support in deciding on their involvement in college or university than fourth year students.

IPSE programs "respect and honor" the family of a student. Families are encouraged to become actively aware of a student's experiences in IPSE. They are kept informed of what is happening for their son or daughter and are asked to contribute to discussion regarding the creation of a meaningful college or university experience. Family input is also sought when necessary to ensure that the individual student's experience is derived from an invested perspective.

Students are viewed "as an adult learner and treated as such." With this comes the right to be included in the determination of what a particular experience will look like and the right to be included in whatever is available to other students. These students are learning, experiencing, and understanding the world through their participation in college or university, which is seen as preparation for adult life in their community. Participation

in IPSE is thus a natural transition and pathway to the world of work and community involvement, as it is for any other student in college or university.

An integral part of the IPSE experience is the "opportunity to meet and be with others to establish friendships and relationships." These interpersonal opportunities are seen as a valuable outcome of their experience in college or university and "part of the bigger picture" to a student's participation. As is the case with other students, these friendships have the opportunity to continue beyond college or university.

IPSE is seen as a valuable tool in the education of others to the benefits of sharing common experiences with adults with disabilities both at school and the community at large. IPSE is an "instrument of social change that counters traditional and historical perceptions of intellectual disability" and can be a catalyst to acceptance and accommodation of in the community. Through involvement in IPSE, students are seen as participating in college or university for the same reasons as others.

The concept of collaborating, soliciting and including ideas and feedback from all involved in the IPSE experience is important to the successful involvement. Family members, friends, classmates, instructors, field placement supervisors, and others involved may have input that can contribute to the richness of a student's participation. Even though the student's own choices and decisions are the primary factor in shaping the experience, there is a belief that a multitude of perspectives can contribute to the success a student may enjoy. Utilizing a team based approach is inherent in IPSE programs.

IPSE programs believe that Education extends beyond the classroom. Students involved in IPSE are seen as learning from all of the experiences they participate in. A

student's "education" is not limited to just classroom learning. This means that their education is facilitated through academic, recreation, and social activities of involvement. "These environments all provide a wealth of learning opportunities" (Weinkauf & Bowman, 1998).

Key Benefits to Students in IPSE Programs

Education experiences carry with them outcomes that can be viewed as benefits to participating students. This is true of formal and informal education experiences, credit and non-credit learning opportunities, and in the case of IPSE programs, in-class and out-of-class learning opportunities as well. From participating in an inclusive and modified post-secondary education, it is believed that students share common benefits with their peers.

Participating in challenging and interesting experiences and being accepted by peers enhances self esteem and confidence both at school and in the community. Students now "know what they want to do and say what they want to do" and "they achieve things their parents and others never thought possible." They have shared experiences with others that provide connections that would otherwise not be possible.

"Reading, writing, comprehension and language skills improve" through student participation in course work and study time. The amount of improvement is individual and dependant upon the amount of work one undertakes.

Throughout college or university, students are given a range of opportunities to meet new people, to engage with them, to learn more them and to develop friendships and relationships. These all contribute to an ability to interact with peers and others in the community, therefore increasing the likelihood of success in the workplace as well.

Students are encouraged to participate in decisions and to choose "what they want to be involved in and how much they want to be involved." They choose the types of supports they would like to receive, the people they want to be involved with, and the overall path they see for themselves during and after college or university. With this autonomy comes responsibility for the outcomes of the choices they make. Learning from mistakes and participating in problem solving are seen as part of the IPSE process.

Students in IPSE programs have the opportunity to try things they would never be able to if they were in supported employment or community activities for adults with intellectual disabilities. They are encouraged to experiment and build their experiences with "real life" situations for "personal development and sense of themselves and others."

Students are able to develop and refine specific job skills in a chosen career path. They receive individualized support while gaining these skills and learn about "different workplace expectations than might be in a sheltered or segregated workshop." Students are also able to make valuable connections while at university or college. These connections could be "students they come to know and who may be future employers", or instructors with connections to the workplace, or opportunities through field placements and summer jobs.

Attending a college or university is a highly valued activity. Participation in generic post-secondary education gives IPSE students status they would otherwise not have. There is a "reduction of social deviancy" for IPSE students and IPSE "students are often less identifiable to others as one with a developmental disability and more as a university student."

Summary

Our personal experiences, values and beliefs shape the concept of inclusion and the meaning we associate with it. As such, there is a multitude of definitions for this educational practice. However, there appears to be agreement that inclusion brings with it, personal and academic benefits for students with intellectual disabilities, as well as positive outcomes for their non-disabled peers.

Students are realizing these positive outcomes throughout their public education experience, but still are left unprepared for community participation after high school. Rather than being able to continue their experiences of participating alongside of their peers, graduates of inclusive education are thrust into a human service world where the norm is segregated residential and community supports.

Outside of Transitional Vocational Programs, which serve only the most capable students with intellectual disabilities and focus primarily on employment, there is no opportunity to continue one's education. Even with the acknowledgement of the limitations for graduates of special education programs, there is very little research into inclusion beyond public education and into post-secondary education.

However, a new movement that capitalizes on the practices and principles of inclusion in the public education system, and transfers them into the post-secondary environment, is gaining attention with inclusion advocates and students alike. Although it has a short history, IPSE is demonstrating that students with intellectual disabilities can travel the same natural pathway into adulthood as their peers. This path takes them on a journey through college or university.

With modifications to learning expectations, curriculum and a holistic approach to education, and individualizes supports, students with intellectual disabilities are learning alongside other college and university students, and participating in the same activities as other students. This modified post-secondary experience provides them with a vehicle to achieve what all college and university students ultimately attain; personal and professional development so that they can become contributing members of their community.

What was once never dreamed of, is a reality; a university and college education for any adult with an intellectual disability. IPSE is re-shaping the future for adults with intellectual disabilities.

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Chapter 5: Abilities 2000 Achievements in Community Rehabilitation Conference:October 2000

Abilities 2000 planned to be a three-day conference specifically for professionals, community-based practitioners, educators, and researchers in the field of Community Rehabilitation. This intent of this conference was for participants to come together to examine issues, challenges and opportunities, to share programming successes, to learn about new research and educational opportunities, and to highlight new programs, services, products and research.

This package was developed, along with a power point presentation included in the appendices, to provide participants with an overview of the findings of the study. Unfortunately, the conference was cancelled one week prior to its start date. The material has since been used to consult with post-secondary administration at two Alberta colleges who are planning to initiate IPSE programs in the fall of 2001.

Introduction

With all of the positive advances in the services for persons with developmental disabilities, there remains at least one frontier that adults with developmental disabilities are excluded from; post-secondary education.

Post-secondary education (college and university) is a transition pathway that many adults choose to use for a bridge from public education into the adult world of work and community participation. A college or university education is recognized as a highly valued activity that prepares adults for employment and citizenship (Canadian Conference Board of Canada, 2000).

It is true that there are limited opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities to continue their education after high school. Referred to as Adult Basic Education (ABE)/Transitional Vocational Programs (TVP), these types of programs are segregated from the normal post-secondary experience, with classes, curriculums and outcomes that are different from the rest of the student body (Gowdy, 1998).

In the province of Alberta, there are eight TVP programs that serve 76 adults. Not only are there very few opportunities for high school graduates to attend these programs due to the number of funded spots, they are also exclusive in nature due to the fact that they are funded to serve only adults with mild developmental disabilities. Considering the number of students who are labeled with a developmental disability other than this (moderate, severe, FAS/FAE, autistic tendencies, and other labels), there are a large group of students who are excluded from participating in these types of programs.

Even so, for these students continuing one's education in a segregated education program is not the preferred option for these high school graduates. Access to the benefits of post-secondary education need to be more encompassing than these current options. As we have come to accept adults with developmental disabilities in many parts of our society, we also need to find ways to include these learners into colleges and universities as well. One proven way is Inclusive Post-secondary Education (IPSE).

Over the last 13 years, this new adult education initiative has been gaining interest and popularity nationally and abroad. Originating in Alberta, Canada, Inclusive Post-secondary Education (IPSE) programs are supporting adults with intellectual disabilities to be included into mainstream college and university campus life.

This represents a radical departure from traditional adult education opportunities for these learners. IPSE is demonstrating that adults with intellectual disabilities no longer need to be isolated from their non-disabled peers who are also continuing their education. IPSE signifies a new vision of adult education for adults with intellectual disabilities.

In the spring of 2000, a study involving 4 Inclusive Post-secondary Education (IPSE) programs in Alberta was undertaken to determine the practices and underlying principles shared amongst these programs. Senior staff from Alberta based programs were interviewed to collect data. Once the data were analyzed, emergent topics and themes was exposed which enabled the researcher to develop an operational definition of IPSE programs based on interviewee responses. This operational definition revealed common practices and principles of these adult education initiatives derived from the opinions of senior staff of these IPSE programs.

Origins of Inclusive Post-secondary Education in Alberta

Realizing the inadequacies of available options for their sons or daughters who were preparing for graduation, a local parent support group began to question what else might be available. Looking at the opportunities available to other students they realized a void needed to be filled. With the support of the Alberta Association for Community Living (AACL, a provincial advocacy organization for adults with developmental disabilities) and interested allies from within a local university, they began to create the vision and reality of IPSE.

In February of 1987 the first Inclusive Post-secondary Education (IPSE) program in Alberta was created at the University of Alberta, named the On Campus Program.

Over the next 13 years, the On Campus Program became the model by which other IPSE programs measured themselves.

The Varsity Education Program at the University of Calgary was the next IPSE program to be created (fall of 1992); followed by the On Campus Program at the University of Jvaskyla, Finland (fall of 1994); the College Connection Program at Grant MacEwan College, Edmonton (fall of 1995); the ACE program at the University of Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown and the Up the Hill Program at Flinders University, Australia (fall of 1997) and the Campus Connection Program at Lethbridge Community College (January of 1998).

The four programs in Alberta provided the basis for an exploration into the organizational description of IPSE practices and principles. All four programs share the same lineage and represent IPSE programs at both the university and college levels, which proved useful in comparing how these programs operate and what student outcomes are realized.

Operating Models: Funding

It is at the funding level that IPSE programs have the least in common with public education programs. All four programs (and incidentally all programs in Canada) are funded through a provincial government department that provides money for services to adults with intellectual disabilities. In Alberta the department of Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) handles this function. There are eight regional districts and boards of PDD in the province which fund residential, recreation, employment, day programs, and any other service or support that might be utilized by an adult with an

intellectual disability. No money is made available from Advanced Education, the traditional source for post-secondary funding, for students to attend IPSE programs.

Within PDD there are currently two mechanisms of funding: contract funding (CF) and individualized funding (IF). Contract funding refers to the practice of providing a negotiated amount of money to a service provider (in this case an IPSE program) in exchange for providing a service for a certain number of adults. Users of the CF service need to meet the eligibility requirements of the department. Beyond that, they need not apply for, or administer funds.

With IF, individuals apply to PDD for money to pay for each service(s) they are accessing. Seen as giving individuals more autonomy and control over services they desire to purchase, IF is applied for on an annual basis, for each of the services an individual requires (i.e., residential supports, recreation supports, employment supports, education supports).

In both CF and IF, money can only be used towards staffing and administration of a program. Neither contract nor individualized funding may be used for payment of fees related to college or university activities. The individual students must incur all such costs.

Operating Models: Institution affiliation and alignment

All IPSE programs share many philosophical and operational principles in spite of their development at different times, in different communities and in different post-secondary institutions. This could be attributed to new programs using the initial model at the University of Alberta as a template for their own development There are also some

interesting organizational differences across programs. Two models have evolved; internal and external.

1. An internal model is where the program has become formally entrenched in the institution. The policies and procedures of the institution govern the project; it is housed within a program/department and staff are part of the institutional body. Students pay fees to participate in classes (audit), to be part of the student association, and to have access to libraries and fitness facilities. IPSE students have the same rights and responsibilites as other students and carry student I.D.

2. An external model is where the program is associated or affiliated with a department or unit of the institution but not formally linked. The project is a not-for-profit society that has its' own policies and procedures and governance structures. Office space is donated to the project through its' affiliation with a unit. Staff are paid separate from other institutional staff. Students access classes on an informal basis and have access to library and fitness facilities through donations in kind.

Practices and Principles of IPSE

In comparing the four programs, it becomes apparent that many of the inclusive principles utilized in the public education system are replicated in IPSE programs. From its' inception, IPSE is guided by the following principles:

- **IPSE is available to any adult with an intellectual disability:** IPSE programs support a diverse group of learners. There are no academic or physical criteria used to select students. IPSE programs support a wide variety of students, not just the most academic or socially capable. This means that IPSE programs are open to any adult with a developmental intellectual disability including adults labeled

as severely, profoundly handicapped who may not have any formal means of communication and who require personal care for their health and transportation needs. It means there are also students who are able to read, write and interact independently with others.

- **IPSE is totally inclusive and is coherent with what other students experience**: Students are included into the same academic, social and recreational experiences as others. Their involvement in university or college would be coherent with what other students are experiencing. There are no separate classes, classrooms, academic or non-academic activities specifically for IPSE students. To ensure successful inclusion for students into these domains, a number of modifications to regular delivery are utilized:

    - Students have audit status in classes. Rather than attempting to meet the academic requirements of post-secondary classes and likely failing, there is an emphasis on students learning to the best of their abilities. In collaboration with participating instructors, curriculum and learning objectives are modified to meet the capabilities of each student. Instructors are not asked to modify delivery of course content, rather the role of the IPSE staff is to consult with them to determine key areas of focus for the classes, and to modify learning materials and activities in conjunction with what is being covered in class. If a student can participate in any portion(s) of the class without modifications, that would be the preferred manner. In this way, students in IPSE programs share the same access to expert instruction, but in a way that makes the experience meaningful to them. Program staff spend time with students outside of class on a

regular basis, going over modified materials (i.e., plain language notes/readings, assisting student's with getting assignments done, studying for exams or any other class related activity.

- Students are encouraged to become involved in activities other students might be involved in. This can include study groups, clubs, student association, recreation, leisure, fraternities and anything else that might be available to students at large. Student participation in these activities may or may not need modification, depending on the activity and the student. Modification may mean partial participation or some related adaptation so students can participate at a level suitable to them and the environment.

- **IPSE Programs are year round**: students are supported throughout the year. Generally this would mean that students are included into college or university classes from September through April and then supported to find summer jobs or experiences that may or may not be related to their studies. These summer experiences prove to be valuable opportunities to develop work related skills and make connections to future employers. These summer experiences utilize many of the same concepts and strategies used to include students into college or university life (i.e., totally inclusive, individualized support, natural supports, etc.).

- **Students in IPSE programs assume Socially Valued Roles**: through their participation in the same activities and environments, along with modifications where necessary to make their participation meaningful, students in IPSE assume valued social roles. Student's role as a college or university student, and their

participation in the same activities as other students, gives them status and legitimacy with their peers and others that would otherwise be unattainable or at the least, very difficult to achieve.

- **IPSE programs utilize Natural Supports**: when students become involved in post-secondary or community based activities, people who are already involved in that environment are recruited by program staff to provide support to IPSE students. The role(s) these volunteers may assume is dictated by the activity and the capabilities and experience of the IPSE student. For a first-year student, the amount of needed to be involved in a class or any other activity will likely be more than for a student in his or her fourth year of IPSE. In a classroom setting the role might be to assist with notes to include the IPSE student into the activities of class. In a social or recreational setting, the role may be one of a "buddy" or partner.
- **IPSE programs provide Individual Student Support(s):** the amount and types of supports that students need to participate in college or university activities, is dependant upon the individual student and varies from student to student. As well, individual student supports may change from day to day, term to term, and/or year to year. Supports are provided in different ways for different people. Supports around academics, social, and recreation involvement are determined by the capabilities of the student and the demands of the environment in which they are participating in.

In consultation with the student, the people in the environment they wish to be involved in, family and any significant others, a plan around the intensity and type(s) of support is formulated and facilitated by program staff. This plan might include:

- volunteers to serve a support function
- Curriculum supports: text revision and modification, peer tutoring, class review and assignment completion with staff support
- Personal supports: informal counseling around decision making and problem solving related to any aspect of their experiences
- Job supports: coaching and connecting with co-workers who would provide natural supports

- **IPSE programs provide supports to others as well**: each of the programs believes it is imperative that program staff also provide support to the instructors, students and others involved in an IPSE student's tenure. Time is taken to provide an orientation to IPSE practices and philosophies with an emphasis on how they can support student participation. There is also on-going support and collaboration throughout the term or year to give volunteers the opportunity to seek advice, ask questions, and engage in discussion relevant to a student's participation in college or university. IPSE program staff believe that the success IPSE students achieve is due to the amount of support they provide to others involved with these students.

➢ **IPSE programs encourage Self Determination of students**: how a one's schedule be (e.g., types and amounts of classes, the out of class activities they wish to be involved in, and how their week and term in general might look) is

directed by each student's interests and desires. Students are asked to share or take responsibility in shaping their participation in college or university. Program staff offer suggestions or advice to students who need it, to determine what might be best for them in terms of program(s) of study, courses in that program(s), and any outside activities that might be of interest. Generally students in their first year require more support in deciding on their involvement in college or university than fourth year students. Goals associated with involvement in academic, recreation and social experiences are directed by each student's expectations for him or herself in these areas.

- **IPSE programs involve Families**: the family of a student is encouraged to become actively aware of a student's experiences in IPSE. Families are kept informed of what is happening for their son or daughter and are asked to contribute to discussion regarding the creation of a meaningful college or university experience. Family input is also sought when necessary to ensure that the individual student's experience is derived from an invested perspective.
- **IPSE programs view students as Adult Learners**: students are viewed and treated as adult learners participating in any post-secondary education. With this comes the right to be included in the determination of what a particular experience will look like and the right to be included in whatever is available to other students. These students are learning, experiencing, and understanding the world through their participation in college or university and this is seen as preparation for adult life in their community. Participation in IPSE is thus a

natural transition and pathway to the world of work and community involvement, as it is for any other student in college or university.

- **IPSE programs see Friendships as an Educational Outcome**: part of the IPSE experience the opportunity to meet and be with others to establish friendships and relationships. These interpersonal opportunities are seen as a valuable outcome of their experience in college or university. As is the case with other students, these friendships have the opportunity to continue college or university.
- **IPSE programs utilize Collaboration and TeamWork**: the concept of soliciting and including ideas and feedback from all involved in the IPSE experience is important to the success of a student's involvement. Family members, friends, classmates, instructors, field placement supervisors, and anyone else involved may have input that can contribute to the richness of a student's experience. Even though the student's own choices and decisions are the primary factor in shaping the experience, there is a belief that a multitude of perspectives can only contribute to the success a student may enjoy.
- **IPSE programs believe that Education extends beyond the classroom**: students involved in IPSE are seen as learning from all of the experiences they participate. This means that their education is facilitated through the academic, recreation, and social activities of involvement.

Key Benefits to Students in IPSE Programs

Another comparison of the 4 IPSE programs, in addition to operating models, origins, and practices and principles, was student benefits. Many of the benefits students

in these programs could be generalized to any post-secondary education student and include:

- **Self Esteem and Confidence**: participating in challenging and interesting experiences and being accepted by peers enhances self esteem and confidence both at school and the community. They achieve things their parents and others never thought possible. They have shared experiences with other adults that provide connections to their non-disabled peers that would otherwise not be possible.
- **Academic skills:** reading, writing, comprehension and language skills improve primarily through student participation in course work and study time. The amount of improvement is individual and dependant upon the amount of work one decides to undertake.
- **People skills**: throughout college or university, students are given an extensive amount of opportunities to meet new people, to engage with them, to learn more about other people and themselves and to develop friendships and relationships. These all contribute to an ability to interact with peers and others in the community.
- **Self-determination**: students are encouraged to decide what they want to be involved in and how much they want to be involved. They choose the types of supports they would like to receive, the people they want to be involved with, and the overall path they see for themselves during and after college or university. With this autonomy comes responsibility for the outcomes of the choices they

make. Learning from mistakes and participating in problem solving are seen as part of the learning process.

- **New Experiences**: students in IPSE programs have the opportunity to try things they would never be able to if they were involved in a supported employment activity or any other community support for adults with intellectual disabilities. They are encouraged to experiment and build their experiences with "real life" situations. These experiences all contribute to personal development and sense of themselves and others.
- **Job skills**: students are able to develop and refine specific job skills in a career path they have chosen. They receive individualized support while learning and enhancing these skills and learn that there are different workplace expectations than might be in a sheltered or segregated workshop. Students are also able to make valuable connections while at university or college. These connections could be students they come to know and who may be future employers, or instructors with connections to the workplace, or opportunities to make future connections through field placements and summer jobs.
- **Social status enhancement**: attending a college or university is a highly valued activity. Participation in generic post-secondary education gives IPSE students status they would otherwise not have. There is a reduction of social deviancy towards IPSE students and IPSE students are often less identifiable to others as one with a developmental intellectual disability.

Benefits to Others

IPSE not only offers important benefits to disabled students, but to many others as well. IPSE is seen as a valuable tool in the education of others to the benefits of sharing common experiences with adults with disabilities both at school and the community at large. IPSE is an instrument of social change that counters traditional and historical perceptions of intellectual disability and can be a catalyst to acceptance and accommodation of differences and intellectual disability in the community. Through exposure to IPSE, students are seen as adults participating in college or university for the same reasons as others, rather than for their intellectual disability.

IPSE fits into the post-modern context of adult education where the "ultimate goal is not vocational ends, but to teach us how to live" (Briton, 1996, p. 3). Post-secondary education is seen as a medium by which students can learn to not only develop job-specific skills, but to have the opportunity to enhance social and interpersonal skills that will benefit them professionally and personally. This social change certainly occurs for IPSE students as they become involved in college, university and community, and it must also occur for those students, staff and community members who decide to become involved in supporting IPSE students. There must be some reciprocal change that happens as a result of this experience.

In a very real sense, IPSE raises awareness of conditions of the oppressed and shares with them in the process of emancipation (Torres, 1995). Through their inclusion into college and university others gain insight into a world they would otherwise be secluded from. Volunteers, staff and others become personally involved with students who come from a different reality than their own. Through their interaction with students

in IPSE programs, they are given the opportunity to see that IPSE is a way of addressing ethical and political concerns (Apple, 1999) that are part of experience of adults with intellectual disabilities. IPSE students are seen to belong in the same places as others, to have the right to share in the same experiences as others.

As well, IPSE lends itself well with Ward (1994) and McKenzie's (1991) assertion that adult education is a means of constructing a world-view through socialization and community participation. The acquisition and development of knowledge is seen as a product of social interaction, which also serves the purpose of enabling one self to understand the world around them in relation to their life experiences. New world views are developed through new social experiences which frees staff and students to overcome past "traditions" or prejudices that were based on old experiences. IPSE creates an opportunity for to create a new vision of what inclusive communities can be like and how socialization with differing people can be a catalyst for re-defining one's beliefs about themselves and others.

Conclusion

Great strides have been realized for persons with developmental disabilities, yet, there are still barriers to be overcome. One such barrier for adults with developmental disabilities is post-secondary education. Although there are limited and exclusive opportunities for continuing their education beyond the public system, adults with developmental disabilities need access to the same opportunities other adults in our society have.

Inclusive Post-secondary Education provides an opportunity for adults to attain personal and academic benefits that they cannot get through TVP/ABE programs. By

modifying the learning environment, adapting education outcomes and providing appropriate supports, IPSE programs are able to create a continuing education experience that benefits all students.

IPSE students achieve personal, academic and professional benefits while other students and staff involved in supporting IPSE students receives the opportunity to create a new world view for themselves. This new perspective of their communities is one where adults with developmental disabilities are included alongside themselves in all aspects of life.

IPSE is demonstrating that the inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities into our colleges and universities has tremendous benefits for participants, peers, educators and the community. IPSE is providing a model of inclusion that can shape a new paradigm of what is possible for adults with intellectual disabilities who are leaving high school and looking to the future. IPSE allows them to see how that future can look very much like any one else's.

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Chapter 6: Reflections on perspective

The model of IPSE described in this study has great promise for those adults with intellectual disabilities who desire to continue their education beyond high school. It provides a framework of philosophies and practices that can be, and have been, incorporated into a variety of post-secondary institutions.

There is a standardization of practices and principles that has remained constant from the inception of IPSE, 13 years ago. These foundational ideologies and resultant processes have paved the way for increasing numbers of disabled adults to embark on a natural pathway into adulthood that hundreds of thousands of other Canadians do on a yearly basis.

The data demonstrates real benefits to students, their peers, post-secondary institutions, and the community at large. The academic accommodations developed, which include a view of "higher education with both social and individual benefit" (Gregor, 1992), have proven to be resilient enough to meet the needs of a very diverse group of learners.

With an educational model with such promise and demonstrated results, the question could be asked that with a proven history and international interest "why has IPSE remained an enigma; an unknown opportunity?"

Part of the problem may be that the public education system still struggles with the need to a unified education system (Andrews & Lupart, 1993), which has always been inherent in post-secondary education. Whereas the public education system has evolved into two distinct administrative and philosophical paradigms that are fairly polarized and reflected in regular and special education routes, post-secondary education, with the

exception of some Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs, has no separate educational stream for adults with disabilities. At the college and university level, students with disabilities are supported to attend the same learning opportunities as other students. There is neither separate curricula, nor a separate administration for students with disabilities.

For the most part this places teachers and students from the special education pathway in public education in a juxta-position. On the hand they look for opportunities beyond high school, yet in the other, considering post-secondary education as an option simply isn't. Because of their 12 or more years experience with special education, most teachers, students, and parents continue to believe that specialized services outside of the daily events of other adults is the preferred norm. There appears to be a gradual change to this conundrum as more and more students who are graduating from special education have enjoyed an inclusive education, and they look for inclusive services beyond high school, but still the vast majority of special education graduates move into segregated community services.

Hopefully the Canadian public education system will move towards a general education reform (Turnbull, Turnbull, Shank & Leal, 1995) that will see the gradual assimilation of special education and regular education into a collaborative, general model serving all students. Until then, the vision of continuing one's education in college or university will be limited by people's inability to think outside of their own experiences.

In post-secondary education, proponents of IPSE might be lucky that colleges and universities do the same. However, post-secondary institutions have long seen themselves

as contributing to society in more than strictly academic ways. Lajeunesse and Davidson (1992) state that the essence of higher education is to provide three basic functions; teaching, research and community service. This community service function serves to place a responsibility on post-secondary institutions to respond to societal needs so their contribution to the community can be defined "more in social and cultural terms than in economic terms" (p.76). Colleges and universities then become a mechanism for shaping not only skills, but also values and attitudes (Roeher, 1996).

Realizing that all students can benefit from social and cultural interaction is a main tenant of IPSE and adult education in general. Government even realizes that participation in post-secondary education is seen as part of their responsibility to facilitate social policy reform (Advanced Education and Career Development, 1994). IPSE can therefore be viewed as a social equity issue where "Post-secondary institutions...are increasingly expected to demonstrate that they are responsive to the employment and educational aspirations of women, aboriginals and groups with distinctive needs" (Advanced Education and Career Development, 1994, pg. 41).

It appears there would be more support for IPSE in post-secondary institutions than one might fund in public education. Or is that just my perspective?

While conducting my research and developing the different chapters of this thesis, I began to reflect on the issue of researcher bias. Being so involved in the development and practice of IPSE from its beginning made me ponder my ability to be objective about the value of this unique endeavor. Bogdan and Bilken (1998) contemplate the aspect of researcher bias and offer the explanation that researchers are never truly able to separate their values and beliefs from their experience of the research itself. They must rely on the

fact that "data must bear the weight of any interpretation, so the researcher must constantly confront his or her own opinions and prejudices with the data" (p.34). Participating in the act of qualitative research is an "essentially interpretive" exercise with the data "filtered through the researcher's own unique way of seeing the world" (Rossman & Rallis, 1997, p. 26).

I am confident that my interpretation of these data provided by the interviews and any print materials provided by the programs surveyed is sound and credible. They are after all, the words of the participants themselves, captured on tape, and the text of the materials provided. There were multiple sources of data. Different staff from programs across the province, interviewed at different times and in different locations, with the use of a semi-standardize interview. Confirming the findings in another study would be another method in determining the validity of the study, but for the most part, I believe my research could stand up to the "criteria of soundness" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

Still, I wanted to go outside of my data, to determine if the value of IPSE to individual students, the institutions and the community at large I had described in my thesis was merely my own perspective or not. I needed to see if IPSE is serving a purpose and providing a benefit to adults with intellectual disabilities that goes beyond the vision of those staff intrinsically involved. I wanted to determine if there were others, with a less vested interest in the welfare of IPSE, who would see benefits of the existence of these programs.

I decided to search out statements from organizations who represented visions of what a meaningful life might mean for anyone, regardless of their abilities as well as vision and mission statements from organizations who supported people with disabilities,

but were not directly involved in IPSE. I hoped that this balanced approach would provide me with a holistic view on whether IPSE could be supported by everyone, or simply by special interest groups.

An international perspective on inclusive post-secondary education

Below are statements from international organizations that will be used to determine the value these institutions might place on the inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities into post-secondary learning environments.

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights: A broad perspective

The United Nations is an international organization of 189 countries that advocates for and proactively promotes for human rights across the world. This consortium of governments from around the globe have a mandate that includes such endeavors as promoting respect for human rights, protecting the environment, fighting disease, fostering development and reducing poverty (United Nations, 1995). Its' Universal Declaration of Human Rights serves as the standard for all member countries to achieve. Its 30 articles address the basic rights and freedoms that apply to "every individual" on this planet. Article 26 addresses education specifically and states:

(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote

understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

It is an article that does not differentiate from one person to another, and represents what the vast majority of countries in the world believe to be vital in the education of its citizens. Some key concepts relative to IPSE should be discussed.

Everyone has a right to education: The term "everyone" is very explicit. There is no interpretation. So, in the case of IPSE, one could say this experience is a right, not a privilege. But does this apply to university or college?

Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit: Generally available might be interpreted as where possible. If this is the case, our North American society surely has the means to provide access. With more than 700 colleges and universities in the United States (Association of American Colleges & Universities, 2000), and 92 higher education institutions in Canada (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 2000), there would seem to be enough opportunities to make IPSE opportunities "generally available."

Equally accessible to all on the basis of merit begins to deal with subjective interpretation. Implicit in the word merit, is a sense that the individual is deserving of higher education. It is a presumption addressed in the first statement of this article, that all people have a right to education. Thereforee, if post-secondary education could be

said to be generally available, based on opportunity, than I believe one could argue that persons with intellectual disabilities deserve the opportunity.

Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. The data has demonstrated that IPSE does have benefits to the development of the person and through the process of inclusion, this post-secondary experience indeed promotes understanding, tolerance and friendship.

Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children. The context of this statement does not deal directly with the status of adulthood and self-determination, yet it does have implications for those students whose guardianship is legally held by their parents. I do not have data on this aspect of student involvement, but an assumption can be made that both the students and parents involved in IPSE are doing so out of choice.

In reviewing this international document, particularly article 26, I believe that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights would support the practice and principles of IPSE based on the research data. Indeed, it might be argued that IPSE is a right for persons with intellectual disabilities.

The UNESCO Salamanca Statement (1994): A special interest perspective

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is an international organization of 188 member states that promotes "collaboration among nations through education, science, culture and communication in order to further

universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations (UNESCO, 2000). One of the arms of this research-oriented organization is the Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE). CSIE provides information and advice related to inclusive education. Its' mandate is clearly to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities into regular schooling.

In 1994, CSIE was responsible for hosting an international conference on special education that resulted in the creation of the Salamanca Statement. This international declaration endorsed by 92 governments and 25 international organisations "begins with a commitment to Education for All...calls on the international community to endorse the approach of inclusive schooling," and advocates that ordinary schools must recognise and respond to the diverse needs of their students, while also having a continuum of support and services to match these needs."(CSIE, 1994)

The Salamanca Statement of 1994 clearly and explicitly advocates for the "education for all children, young people and adults within the regular education system." To question whether UNESCO, an international organization would support IPSE would be rhetorical.

A national perspective on inclusive post-secondary education

Following is an examination of statements that could reflect a Canadian perspective on disability and the education of adults with intellectual disabilities in college or university.

In Unison: A Canadian Approach to Disability Issues: a broad perspective

In 1996, the federal Ministers responsible for Social Services in Canada developed a statement document about the future of persons with disabilities in our society. It is a powerful document created by representatives for all Canadians that states that "Canadians with disabilities are no longer viewed as 'exceptions' whose needs must be met through segregated programs." (Benefits and Services for Persons with Disabilities, 2000). It is a vision paper that looks at social policies and programs for Canadians with disabilities and states a course of action to ensure meaningful and full participation in our society for persons with disabilities.

The In Unison document speaks to full inclusion and "access to the systems and programs open to other Canadians." This paper advocates for the "elimination of barriers that prevent their full participation" and challenges Canada to become a nation where people with disabilities receive the same opportunities as other Canadians.

In Unison is a non-partisan, government perspective on the participation of Canadians with disabilities in everyday life. It does not state that Canadians with intellectual disabilities are any different than other Canadians with disabilities. In Unison clearly advocates for "inclusion and full citizenship" for all Canadians, not just those without disabilities.

I believe this vision of a Canada that sees all Canadians participating together in society would endorse IPSE as described in the research.

The Canadian Association for Community Living: A special interest perspective

The Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL) is a national advocacy organization who sees its mission as one of confirming the human rights for people with

intellectual disabilities, whose efforts include "to fight for more meaningful lives for people with intellectual disabilities in Canada" (CACL, 2000). They too speak of the need for persons with intellectual disabilities to be fully included in our society, which is often related to the idea of community living. Community living is an encompassing term that includes education, employment, community participation and reaching one's fullest potential. For the CACL, community living has both efficacy and efficiency benefits for all of Canada.

Relative to education, the CACL advocates that students with intellectual disabilities should "learn in regular schools...with the resources necessary to enable full participation." The CACL speaks to the concept of persons with intellectual disabilities meaningfully participating in the everyday activities with their peers, which would encompass a post-secondary education.

The provincial perspective on inclusive post-secondary education

Mission and value statements from two organizations from the province of Alberta were examined to determine the value these two diverse establisments might place on Inclusive Post-secondary Education.

Provincial Government: A broad perspective

If you believe that governments serve as a voice for the majority of its citizens, the statements and policies of a provincial government should reflect the values and views of the everyday citizen. In the province of Alberta, the provincial government has education legislation that states "One of Alberta Learning's directives is, whenever possible, to place students with special needs in regular classrooms as the first option." (Alberta Learning, 2000). Bill 19, the School Amendment Act of 1994 legislates to all

provincially funded school boards that they must "ensure equal opportunity to access a quality education" and that boards "increase student and parental choice in curriculum and education delivery methods with the public and separate school systems." (Alberta Learning, 2000). This discussion pertains to the public education system where students are publicly funded to attend school from kindergarten to year 12. In the post-secondary level, the provincial government has similar statements regarding adult participation in a post-secondary education stating the government of Alberta "ensure all Albertans have access to high quality learning opportunities." (Alberta Learning, 2000). Furthermore, the Adult Learning Division of the ministry sees their role as one of collaboration with the adult learning system which in turn "ensures the availability of accessible, responsible, affordable and accountable learning opportunities that facilitate adult learners access to and journey through lifelong learning experiences" (Alberta Learning, 2000).

The government of Alberta has also put into legislation the Premiers Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities Act, which enables the Council to make recommendations relating to "the opportunity for full and equal participation of persons with disabilities in the life of the Province." (Premiers Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, 2000).

All of these statements, from the authority of the provincial government would seem to support the concept, if not the practice of IPSE.

Persons with Developmental Disabilities: Alberta Provincial Board: A special interest perspective

The Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) provincial board's role is reflected in its mission, vision and value statements. These all speak to "an Alberta where

adults with developmental disabilities are included in community life...living and participating in communities as full citizens" and where they are seen "participating with other citizens in ordinary life activities of working, socializing and conducting daily affairs." (Persons with Developmental Disabilities, 2000). Their role includes developing a guiding vision of how services for persons with developmental disabilities should inspire to be, as well as setting provincial standards relative to service delivery.

IPSE programs are province wide and represent almost every region in the provincial board's mandate, and although the education of adults with developmental disabilities is not explicitly included in the vision statements of the Provincial PDD Board, one could assume IPSE practices and principles certainly coincide with their vision of an inclusive Alberta.

Post-secondary institutions perspective on inclusive post-secondary education

The mission, vision and value statements of the three post-secondary institutions involved in the study are examined to see if there might be institutional support for Inclusive Post-secondary Education.

An education institution's mission statement should "reflect the organization's fundamental purpose and should indicate what the organization wants to accomplish" (Brody, 2000, p. 47). Each institution's mission statement will be unique, as there are many factors that will be taken into consideration when developing the mission statement of an education institution.

IPSE programs operate in four post-secondary education institutions in Alberta. They are the University of Alberta, University of Calgary, Grant MacEwan College and Lethbridge Community College. Each of the mission statements for these institutions is

unique to the vision they have for their institution. What could they have to say about the participation of adults with intellectual disabilities in colleges or universities?

The University of Alberta:

The mission of the University of Alberta is to serve our community by the dissemination of knowledge through teaching and the discovery of knowledge through research. The mission will be carried out in a select number of fields and professions, to be determined within the context of a province-wide educational system and based upon the highest national and international standards (University of Alberta, 2000).

This mission statement in itself would not seem to support the inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities into mainstream university life, however, the University's statement on equity in student affairs which follows the mission statement would indicate otherwise:

Acknowledging the diversity of the Canadian population, and the University's obligation to remain open to all sectors of society...In this manner the University demonstrates its commitment to improving the representativeness of its communities (University of Alberta, 2000).

Furthermore, the statement on equity in student affairs also states:

The Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act, sections 3 and 11.1, requires that no individual be discriminated against on the basis of race, religious beliefs, color, gender, physical disability, mental disability, marital status, age, ancestry, or place of origin, family status, or source of income except where the discrimination can be shown to be reasonable and justifiable. The University of Alberta recognizes and accepts

its responsibility to comply with the requirements of this Act in its consideration of students for admission, promotion, and graduation.

It would seem there would be support for IPSE programs to operate within the institution, but what of aspect of "admission, promotion, and graduation"? Students in these programs do not participate in academic pursuits in the same way as other students. They are auditing the classes, receiving no credit and attaining no formal credentials for their participation and learning, so the aspect of meeting the same academic standards as others relative to receiving a degree or other credit status is mute. The question then becomes, based on the statements of the University, would students with intellectual disabilities be welcomed to participate to the best of their abilities with outcomes different than their peers?

The mission statement itself would not suggest this, but the statement on equity in student affairs would suggest otherwise. They are in fact, students who represent a unique sector of society and who add to the diversity of the university, as well as adding to community representation.

If the university were to not allow these programs to operate within the institution based on the fact that they could not meet the academic requirements due to their disability, could the university's actions "be shown to be reasonable and justifiable"? It is a fair question and one I hope does not have to be answered in the near future.

However, the point could be made that it is less explicit in this mission statement whether the university supports the concept of IPSE. Then again, they have been allowing an IPSE program operate on their campus for more than 13 years and the

President has formally recognized students' graduation from the On Campus Program at convocation. Actions do speak louder than words.

The University of Calgary: A vision statement

Innovation. Challenge. Opportunity. These words have become a part of our vision and our plan. We are building on a 30-year history and tradition of excellence with the goal of becoming a world-class institution. As a University, we are dedicated to the practice of scholarship which includes both teaching and research.

Through research the University makes a direct contribution to society and through teaching it prepares students to make their personal contribution. We recognize that the knowledge, ideas, research and development fostered at the University of Calgary benefit Alberta, Canada and countries around the world. Our aim is to enrich the experience of our students, make the University as accessible as possible, and prepare our students to take on challenges in Canada and elsewhere. (University of Calgary, 2000)

Once again, it may be less clear as to whether the University of Calgary might support IPSE programs operating within their institution. However, allowing students with intellectual disabilities to participate with their peers in the university experience does increase the accessibility of the university. This study would also demonstrate that there is recognition that all students and the university at large benefit from the IPSE experience, which enriches their overall university experience. It is clear that students in IPSE programs come out of their university or college experience much better prepared to take on the challenges in Canada and elsewhere.

Would the university see the connection their vision for the University of Calgary has with the outcomes for students in IPSE programs? Would their vision of an accessible institution that prepares *all* students for life after university be enough for them to support IPSE programs?

Again, this aspect of credit versus non-credit status impedes the ability to clearly determine the place of an IPSE program in a university institution achieving its vision or mission. So, once again, a historical perspective may help to answer this quandary.

The Varsity Education Program has been operating within the University of Calgary since 1992 and has maintained its position within the institution despite the continued pressures and cutbacks placed upon post-secondary institutions. Students in this program have participated in numerous university classes throughout a diversity of faculties. Their status within the institution is at the least status quo, which intimates at least a fair degree of support from the institution.

Lethbridge Community College:

To develop the present and future workforce by providing high quality lifelong learning opportunities based on knowledge and skills required by the community, business and industry. (Lethbridge Community College, 2000).

It is obvious that employment training is a key goal for this institution. Less clear might be who is the future workforce. One of Lethbridge Community College's five guiding value statements sheds light on whom this might be:

Accessibility: Believing in the importance of serving a geographically, socially, and economically diverse clientele, the College provides an open, supportive environment

that addresses student learning styles, enhances individual performance, and influences the way members of the College community relate to each other.

Adults with intellectual disabilities participate in the workforce. Could they become better workers through an IPSE experience? Would the College recognize how they could contribute these exceptional learners ability to participate in the workplace? Likely they would.

Another of the College's guiding values helps to answer these questions: Human Development: Believing in the necessity of personal and professional development, the College recognizes individual needs, abilities, and accomplishments; promotes opportunities for learning; supports career choice and career enhancement; and cares about psychological, social, and physical well-being of all individuals.

All of the points in the value statement would seem to support both the concept and practice of IPSE. Workforce preparation and human development are outcomes of both IPSE and the Lethbridge Community College. Indeed, Campus Connection Project has been operating at Lethbridge Community College for two years.

Summary

The point of this exercise has to been to look from the 'macro' to the 'micro' and from the broad perspective to the special interest perspective to determine if IPSE might have value beyond the perspective of staff, who have a vested interest in the continued existence of such programs. It is clear that there are organizations that would see IPSE as a human right that could be supported as a social justice cause. Both the United Nations and UNESCO could be compelled to look at IPSE as a change agent, with the power to shift the mind sets of not only those students directly engaged in these programs, but for

the community at large as well. Nationally, both the federal government and the CACL statements about the Canadian vision for persons with intellectual disabilities would support IPSE. Provincially the Alberta Government and the Provincial PDD Board should find common ground upon which to support IPSE. Locally, the AACL is a strong supporter of IPSE wherever it might be, but is particularly supportive of Alberta programs.

I was able to determine only implicit support for IPSE, based on mission and vision statements, from the 3 institutions whom have IPSE programs involved in the study. This lack of overt support can be tempered by the fact that mission and vision statements are intended to be broad in nature and inclusive enough to speak to all that an institution does. There does not appear to be explicit support for any one program of study in any of the mission or vision statements. However, each program within an institution must rely on their knowledge of their own path and find their place within the statements, which is what I have attempted to do for IPSE.

The second objective of this exercise was to convince myself that my interpretation of the data were valid, despite my long involvement in IPSE. I want this study to be seen as credible, sound research, which is why I reflect on my own subjectivity as a researcher.

It has been extremely difficult to stay out of the data, to avoid using my own words, ideas and visions of what IPSE is and what it can accomplish for people. I believe I have done so.

What I hope those who read this thesis learn, is that there is an opportunity for adults with intellectual disabilities to participate in what is recognized as the most elite

form of adult education, post-secondary education. I hope this study demonstrates that with a guiding vision based on the concept of inclusion, a creative and individual approach to student support and a holistic view of education, IPSE has much to offer us all.

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Appendices

Letter of Information and Consent

Dear Participant,

As part of my master's degree in Adult and Higher Education at the University of Alberta, I am conducting a study of benefits to students involved in Inclusive Post-Secondary Education (IPSE) programs in Alberta. This study will include IPSE programs at the On Campus Program, University of Alberta; Varsity Education Program, University of Calgary; and the Campus Connection Program, Lethbridge Community College. The study will also provide a description of philosophies and organizational practices shared amongst existing Inclusive Post-Secondary Education Programs. An overview of the study is attached.

I would like to invite you to participate in an interview about the program in which you are involved. An average interview may take 60-90 minutes. There will be no deception of any kind throughout the interview or study. All records, written and recorded, will be destroyed at the completion of the study. You have the right to refuse, at any time, to participate in the study and/or interview without any reason for cause and without penalty or cost.

If you are agreeable to this, please sign the consent form and return it to me with the self addressed envelope provided. I will contact you in the near future to make arrangements for a time and location that is convenient to you.

The cumulative results of interviews will be used to describe how IPSE programs operate administratively, how students are supported, and what outcomes for students are anticipated or realized. All interviewee information will be kept strictly confidential. You, or anything about your program and students will not be identified in any way.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions about this study, feel free to contact me or my advisor, Dr. Paula Brook, at:

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Consent to Participate

I, _____ give my informed consent to

to be interviewed for the *Inclusive Post-Secondary Education in Alberta* study

Signature_____

Date_____

Study Overview for Participants

Inclusive Post-Secondary Education in Alberta

Within the last 13 years, a radically different education opportunity for adults with intellectual disabilities has been evolving in Canadian universities and colleges. In Alberta alone, four programs referred to as Inclusive Post-Secondary Education (IPSE) have been developed and serve as models for other national and international IPSE programs.

Proponents and advocates of IPSE look to this unique endeavour as a possible remedy for years of limited access to continuing education opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities. As well, IPSE could provide adults with intellectual disabilities a means by which to meaningfully participate and be included in community life.

Literature explaining the principles and purposes of IPSE is limited and primarily anecdotal. As well, there is little information regarding the benefits to students involved in IPSE.

The purpose of this study will be to describe the benefits to students participating in IPSE in Alberta. The study will also provide a description of program philosophies, administrative structures and student experiences.

Data for this research will be collected by interviewing key personnel involved in these programs. Senior staff from three of the four Alberta IPSE programs will be interviewed to collect data that can be used to demonstrate and describe benefits to students. These staff will be self selective and will be invited to participate in an interview about their perceptions relative to their IPSE program. Open ended questions relative to IPSE practices, principles and student benefits will be used to facilitate discussion. The length of the interview process will vary depending on one's perspective

and role in their program. Interviews should last 1-2 hours. Tape recordings and notes will be taken during the interviews.

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to participants in this study. All participants have the right to refuse, at any time, to participate in the study without any reason for cause and without penalty or cost.

Participants in this study can be assured that any information provided will be kept strictly confidential. Data will be locked in a file cabinet (Grant MacEwan College) which only I will have access to. All data, written and recorded, will be destroyed at the completion of the study.

Participants anonymity will also be assured. The identity of the participants and respective programs will be guarded by substituting aliases for names and/or places.

PowerPoint Presentation

20th Century changes for people with developmental disabilities

- Scheerenberger
- Turnbull et al
- Crocker
- Wolfensberger/SRV
- Deinstitutionalization
- Community Participation*PDD resources

Post Secondary Education: a natural pathway

- Conference Board of Canada
- Employment outcomes

3

One option: TVP/ABE Programs

- Only for adults with mild developmental disabilities
- Limited enrollment
- Serve just a small number of students
- Separate classes, curriculums and outcomes

4

The next option: Inclusive Post Secondary Education (IPSE)

5

Origins

- Family involvement
- University of Alberta
- University of Calgary
- University of Jyvaskla
- Grant MacEwan College
- University of P.E.I.
- Lethbridge Community College
- Flinders University

6

Operating Models

- Funding
  Contract and Individualized Funding
- Institution Affiliation
  Internal and External Models

7

Practices and Principles

- Non-exclusionary
- Fully inclusive
- Year Round
- Students in Socially Valued Roles
- Utilize Natural Supports
- Provide Individualized Student Support
- Support all involved

8

Practices and Principles

- Encourage Self Determination
- Include Families
- Students are Adult Learners
- Friendships as an Outcome
- Utilize teamwork and collaboration
- Education extends beyond the classroom

9

Key Benefits to Students

- Self Esteem and Confidence
- Academic Skills
- People Skills
- Self Determination
- New Experiences
- Job Skills
- Social Status Enhancement

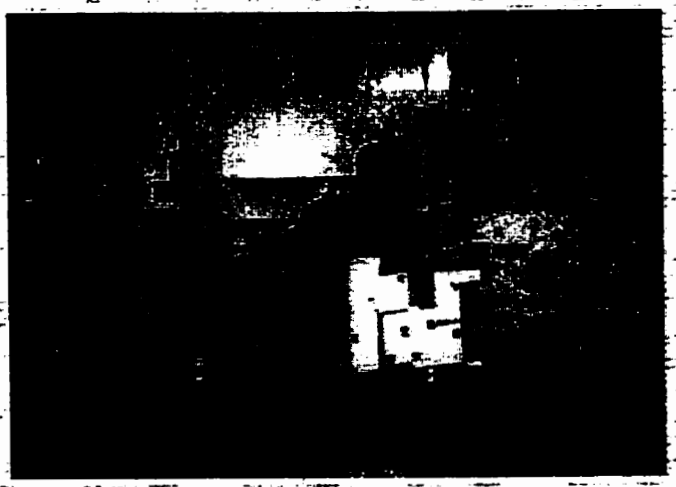
10

Community Benefits

- McDonald Study
- Community Education
- Social Change
- Conciousness Awareness
- New World Views

11

Summary



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