CTP TRENDS

Navigating College, Employment, Community, and Independent Living by Bringing the Research to Practitioners
Each week a tremendous amount of information is published that could be helpful for educators who deliver postsecondary comprehensive transition programs for college students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Unfortunately, much of this work does not make it into the hands of professionals and families who are working to develop, expand, and sustain these programs. This research bulletin disseminates the lessons of research and practical reports to help get this information into the hands of professionals who deliver these postsecondary programs, and individuals and their families who participate in these programs.

The professionals at the Academy for Community Inclusion (ACI) at Florida Atlantic University (FAU), a Florida Postsecondary Comprehensive Transition Program (FPCTP), regularly review over 30 peer-reviewed journals to identify promising practices and research findings that can improve these programs. Each article that is selected is summarized to report the major findings, and to provide pragmatic recommendations for college programs. Those research synopses are gathered into an issue of the research-to-practice bulletin, and disseminated to you to support your effort to deliver a meaningful postsecondary comprehensive transition program.

We hope you enjoy the issue. Please provide us with feedback to improve our effort. If you see an article that you think might be helpful to others, please use the Article Template found at the end of this bulletin to summarize it. Send it to us and we'll run your contribution.

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Purpose of the Study
There is a distinct need for a research agenda that drives research, practice, and policy for college students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). This paper provides a brief summary of the rapid growth of college programs in the absence of any organized research agenda. A research framework and agenda is proposed, and a brief summary of each of the papers in the special issue is provided.

Relevance of the Article
The passage of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) in 2008, opened the door to new opportunities for adults with IDD. Dr. Brady provides an overview of the growth of inclusive postsecondary education (IPSE) programs since HEOA and discusses if IPSE research and practice align. Additionally, he provides an emerging research agenda encompassing intervention, impact, policy, and institutional effectiveness research. This article is useful to researchers and practitioners in institutions of higher education (IHEs) and IPSE programs. It can be used to determine where current research fits within the agenda and to develop new research ideas that align with the agenda.

Lessons Learned
The author explained that professionals agree that the field has emerged without a well grounded research base. He compared the rapid growth of the programs and the success of students who complete the programs to building an aircraft while flying it. Utilization of the proposed research agenda will enable professionals and families to advocate for funding that will establish IPSEs as an expectation at IHEs.

This bulletin is a result of Dr. Michael P. Brady’s love of serving and advocating for individuals with disabilities and his drive to improve the field through research. We have renamed the bulletin to, The Brady Bulletin, in his honor.

In loving memory of Michael P. Brady
1954 - 2021
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**Reference**

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Students with intellectual and developmental disabilities have more opportunity to attend postsecondary education than ever before. Peer mentors who support these students sometimes need to manage challenging behavior. This study examined the impact of training and coaching with performance feedback on peer mentors’ fidelity in implementing function-based intervention plans. A nonconcurrent single subject multiple baseline design across three peer mentor-student pairs was used. All peer mentors improved their fidelity of implementing student behavior plans immediately after being trained and further improved after being coached. One to two coaching sessions were necessary for peer mentors to reach high levels in implementation fidelity. Students also decreased problem behaviors and increased prosocial behaviors when function-based support was implemented with fidelity. Study implications, limitations, and suggestions for future research are presented.

RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

In this study, university peer mentors were taught how to implement with fidelity a function-based intervention plan for college students with autism and intellectual disability enrolled in an inclusive postsecondary education (IPSE) program. This study would be of interest to job coaches, IPSE instructors, and transition teachers. The findings from this study could be applied on college and university campuses with IPSE programs for students with developmental disabilities.

STRATEGY SPOTLIGHT

Training and coaching with performance feedback are part of a behavior skills training approach. These strategies have been used to teach many different people many different skills. Training and coaching with performance feedback were used to teach peer mentors to implement the three items below central to each student’s function-based intervention plan.

LESSONS LEARNED

Training and coaching with performance feedback was effective in peer mentor implementation of student functioned-based intervention plans with high fidelity. This study also found that the student target behavior improved with the peer mentor implementation of the function-based intervention plan.

REFERENCE

VIDEO-BASED INTERVENTION
TO IMPROVE STORYTELLING IN JOB INTERVIEWS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH AUTISM
SYNOPSIS WRITTEN BY KELLY KEARNEY

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Job seekers with autism will likely benefit from explicit instruction in job interviewing skills given their social communication support needs. The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of a video-based intervention (VBI) to increase storytelling ability in responding to Patterned Behavior Description Interview (PBDI) questions in mock job interviews for college students with autism. PBDI questions are increasingly used in job interviews as a tool to select and hire candidates. A concurrent multiple-probe across participants design was used with four college students with autism (ages 19–38 years). Results indicated a functional relation between VBI and storytelling abilities was present for all participants. Implications for practice and research related to enhancing the job interviewing skills of college students with autism are discussed.

RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

In this study, college students with autism were taught how to improve their job interviewing skills—specifically regarding responses to Patterned Behavior Description Interview (PBDI) questions. An example of this kind of question is, “Can you tell me about a time you had to handle a difficult client?” PBDI questions are frequently asked in interviews to determine future behaviors of the potential employees based on their past behaviors. This study would be of interest to job coaches, IPSE instructors, and transition teachers. The findings from this study should be applied in the classroom prior to real-world interviews.

STRATEGY SPOTLIGHT

Video-based interventions (VBI) use video technology, such as video modeling, video feedback, or virtual reality, to teach the desired skill. VBI has been used to successfully teach other social skills and job interviewing skills such as building rapport with an interviewer, speaking professionally, and sharing information in a positive manner.

LESSONS LEARNED

Using VBI to teach the job interviewing skill of responding to PBDI questions was effective for all students. Students also reported that the VBI intervention was acceptable, feasible, and effective, therefore socially valid. VBI is a good way to teach job interviewing skills to students.

REFERENCE


Graphic Organizer
(Munandar et al., 2021)

What did the interviewer ask me? (Write the question)

Highlight the KEY WORDS or PHRASES in the question. (Use the underlined key words or key phrases to help you)

I have to tell a story about when I had to...

CHALLENGE: Start with situation when you had challenge

When did the story happen? (Situation of the challenge)

Where did this story happen? (Situation of the challenge)

What did I have to do in this story? (The challenge)

ACTIONS

What did I do to complete the challenge?

RESULTS

What happened after I took the actions?
Purposes of the Study

This paper describes a universal high-impact practices (HIPs) taxonomy for intentional design of engaging educational experiences. The taxonomy provides explicit definitions for the quality elements that make HIPs engaging, thus providing a tool to increase parity across HIP experiences. It can be applied to any educational experience and provides milestones of increasing student engagement for each of the quality elements. This taxonomy can be used during the design or evaluation of a student learning experience, and at higher levels for curricular planning, program review, resource allocation, and “badging” of HIP courses.

Relevance of the Study

The paper focused on identifying, defining, and expanding educational practices that lead to better student outcomes in college by increasing a student’s level of engagement and participation in their learning. High-impact educational practices (HIPs) are educational approaches that require college students to focus their time and energy for gains in academic skills, persistence to graduation, higher levels of engagement in the learning process, and more satisfaction with their overall college experience.

Each practice was identified based on the work of Chickering and Gamson (1987) and the framework proposed by Kuh and O’Donnell (2013) outlining principles and key elements associated with good practice in undergraduate education. The need to then define or operationalize these HIPs was to provide a common language and consistency for professionals that work with students or design programs and curricula to ensure high levels of student engagement in the learning process.

The HIPs taxonomy proposed in the article “…provides structure and intentionality to the design of a course or experience” (p.192) so that practitioners can embed elements of high-impact practices into their programs or courses at varying levels of intensity. In the proposed taxonomy, each element is specified and increasing levels of student engagement are identified via milestones. For example, the element of “experiences with diversity” is defined as “engage in activities and inquiry regarding diverse communities, cultures, and/or ideas” and then milestones or increasing levels of engagement are outlined such as in a rubric.
**Strategy Spotlight**

High-impact educational practices (HIPs) have been identified as the following:

- Common Intellectual Experiences
- Learning Communities
- Writing- and Inquiry Intensive Courses
- Collaborative Assignments and Projects
- Undergraduate Research
- Diversity/Study Away/Global Learning
- Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
- Internships and Field Experiences
- Capstone Courses and Projects
- ePortfolios

Key elements of HIPs include the following:

- Performance expectations set at appropriately high levels.
- Significant investment of concentrated effort by students over an extended period of time.
- Interactions with faculty and peers about substantive matters.
- Experiences with diversity, wherein students are exposed to and must contend with people and circumstances that differ from those with which students are familiar.
- Frequent, timely, and constructive feedback.
- Opportunities to discover relevance of learning through real-world applications.
- Publication demonstration of competence.


**Lessons Learned**

Although this paper did not focus exclusively on postsecondary inclusive education for students with intellectual disabilities, it outlined educational practices that can lead a wide range of students to achieve better outcomes in higher education. The information outlined in this paper is beneficial for faculty that teach courses or develop curricula for undergraduate programs to ensure that courses and programs are embedded with HIPs that lead to higher levels of student engagement and participation. The HIP taxonomy proposed is flexible in nature and can “...be adapted to fit the needs of a particular institution and different users (e.g., faculty or staff, department or program, administration), while allowing for a variety of applications including design, badging, and assessment” (p.199).

**Reference**

Purpose of the Study

This qualitative study examined the desired and perceived outcomes of inclusive postsecondary education (IPSE) for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) from the perspective of their parents. Currently, little is known about how individuals with IDD benefit from IPSE. Twenty-three parents of students or graduates of one, four-year certificate program of study, participated in phone interviews, where they were asked about their young adults’ college experiences. Data were analyzed using constant comparative methods. Several themes were identified, including desired outcomes (e.g., development of independent living, career, social skills, and inclusion) and perceived outcomes (e.g., increased levels of social involvement, perceptions of self, and independent living skills). Parents witnessed their young adults gaining new capabilities that resulted from the transition to college, which helped them in the process of “letting go.” These findings enhance our understanding of the benefits that are afforded to individuals and families whose lives have been impacted by the “life-changing” experience of IPSE.

Relevance of the Study

With the passage of the Higher Education Opportunity Act in 2008 the door was opened to design and implement comprehensive and inclusive postsecondary programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) who wanted to have a college experience thus making “dreams into reality” (p.267). This study examined the perceptions of 23 parents whose students attended a four-year certificate program to explore their desired and perceived outcomes. A semi-structured telephone interview was used to ask parents: 1) why they thought it was important for their son/daughter to attend college; 2) what they hoped their young adult would gain from attending college; and 3) what actual gains, benefits, and outcomes they observed in their student.

Through a constant comparative method of data analysis, categories, themes, and sub-themes were developed. Desired outcomes included the development of independent living skills, opportunities for the development and maintenance of social relationships, employment and career, and the college experience as a “stepping stone.” Perceived outcomes focused on independent living and perceptions of self.

The information shared in this article is relevant to faculty, staff, and administrators that develop and implement postsecondary inclusive programs for students with IDD and want to better understand the role parents play in the transition process of their young adult as well as the “criteria for success” parents establish.
**Strategy Spotlight**

I. Parents’ Desired Outcomes

- **Independent Living** – by participating in a postsecondary inclusive program students with IDD would be provided with opportunities to develop the necessary skills to be independent such as caring for their personal needs, cooking, financial management, etc.

- **Social Relationships** – opportunities in college would allow a student with IDD to develop and maintain social relationships and engage with peer role models as well as influencing the perceptions of typical college students.

- **Career Skills and Employment Opportunities** – although the focus on employment is recognized by parents, they emphasize more the need for their student to make a valuable contribution to society.

- **College Experience as a Stepping Stone** – participating in college is like a window to the real world for students with IDD; “...a stepping stone between the sheltered world of a segregated high school to living independently in an inclusive community...” (p. 271).

II. Parents’ Perceived Outcomes

- **Independent Living** – although initially parents shared concerns or doubts about their student being able to develop independent living skills, they witnessed the development of these skills in their student such as using public transportation, engaging in personal care, and using technology.

- **Perceptions of Self** – parents reported increased self-esteem, self-confidence, and a sense of pride in their student as well as engaging in self-advocacy as a result of having participated in a postsecondary inclusive college experience.

III. Parents “Letting Go”

- Parents shared that because of their students’ participation in college they have gained a new perspective about their students’ capabilities and their ability to “let go.” “Letting go is not easy...However, it is important that parents and the community give our children the opportunity to grow and become productive citizens” (p. 274).

**Lessons Learned**

The most important takeaway from this study is the recognition that parents still play an important role in the transition to college and understanding what parents value as a result of their student participating in an inclusive postsecondary program should be explored and understood; what they value is the “criteria for success” for what it means to transition into adulthood. In addition, the notion of “letting go” is reported as being mutually beneficial to both the student with IDD as well as the family’s quality of life.

**Reference**

**Purpose of the Study**

This study examined the efficacy of an electronic essay-writing strategy to improve the expository writing skills of 20 young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) enrolled in a program at an institute of higher education in the Midwest. A pretest and posttest experimental design with random assignment to treatment or control group was used to investigate the mnemonic-driven electronic writing strategy. The writing strategy supported students’ construction of essay responses using a computer. Students used the strategy and a computer word program to examine an electronically presented essay test question, plan through the construction of an electronic outline, and create and revise an electronic essay response. Pretest and posttest essay responses were evaluated through proximal and distal rubrics. Results revealed a significant positive effect for the treatment group when compared to the control group for overall essay quality including use of ideas and content, and word choice.

**Relevance of the Study**

The authors noted barriers in school achievement, communication, and workplace success when writing skills are not acquired. The information shared in this study can be used by stakeholders involved in academic and post secondary success of individuals with IDD. Stakeholders include post secondary program staff, high school transition teachers, professors, and researchers.

**Strategy Spotlight**

The researchers used the lessons from the Essay Test-Taking Strategy manual (Hughes et al., 2005) to teach the writing skills. Students learned to examine essay prompt questions, plan and construct an outline, and construct and review an essay response. The intervention consisted of 5 lessons that occurred once a week across 8 weeks.

**Lessons Learned**

Students in the treatment group improved their essay writing skills (areas: overall essay quality, the use of ideas and content, and word choice) compared to the control group. They also maintained these skills 2 weeks after the intervention was removed.

**Reference**

Purpose of the Study

Recent research has shown the effectiveness of literacy-based behavioral interventions (LBBIs) as an instructional strategy for a host of skills and routines, including employment skills. This study compared the effects of three LBBI storybook formats (print, e-book, and e-book enhanced with video clips) on the accuracy and independent completion of new employment skills in college students with developmental disabilities. Comparisons of LBBI formats were made across office tasks including filing papers and reports, using an office copier, and answering a telephone and taking a message. All three LBBI formats were effective in increasing acquisition and maintenance of students’ employment skills. When the formats were compared directly, the enhanced e-book was most effective, followed by the e-book and paper book delivery modes. However, this comparison differed somewhat across specific indicators used to establish differential effectiveness, suggesting that tasks and students also influence the effectiveness of the LBBI formats.

Relevance of the Study

This study used the strategies discussed below to teach college students with intellectual and developmental disabilities vocational skills while at a job training site on a university campus. The vocational skills were filing papers and reports, copying documents, and answering the phone. This study would be of interest to job coaches and other professionals teaching vocational skills to students either on campus or in the community.

Strategy Spotlight

This study compared three different modalities of LBBIs. LBBIs are a class of interventions that use print, visuals, and behavioral rehearsal in a storybook format to teach new skills and routines. The different skills were presented through different LBBI modalities of traditional paper-based storybook, an e-book on a tablet, and an enhanced e-book with the video embedded into the pages.

Figure 1. Sample page from a Literacy-Based Behavioral Intervention storybook on filing papers and folders.
This study focused on teaching adults with DD three job skills: filing papers and reports, using an office copier, and answering a telephone and taking a message. Each job skill was task analyzed and stories were constructed to depict how to perform the skills. To differentiate between the print book, e-book, and e-book enhanced with video clips, the print book was printed from PowerPoint and put into a 3-ring binder, the e-book was presented on an iPad in the PowerPoint app, and for the enhanced e-book, the same presentation was used but the accompanying pictures were replaced with a short video clip of the step, also presented from a personal point of view. The following visual depicts the general steps of the intervention:

Lessons Learned

Individuals with developmental disabilities tend to struggle with obtaining and maintaining meaningful employment due to the lack of consistent supports available. The researchers offered employment skill training in the form of a LBBI and each student who participated in the training increased their accuracy and independence on three different tasks. When the LBBI was removed, each student continued to perform the new skills during the follow-up observations weeks later.

The researchers found all three modalities to be effective to teach vocational skills, but the most effective modalities were the e-book and enhanced e-book. Students would zoom into pictures on the e-book or replay the video from the enhanced e-book without prompting in order to better understand the step in the task analysis, increasing their progression towards mastery of the skill.

Reference


The authors of this article are part of the Academy for Community Inclusion at Florida Atlantic University, a Florida Postsecondary Comprehensive Transition Program (FPCTP).
Journals Reviewed for the Dissemination

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**Article Title**

**Purpose of the Study**
What was the Study About? (Article Abstract)

**Relevance of the Study**
Where Would This be Relevant? In this section, discuss the relevance of the article: population, who should use it (practitioners such as teachers, job coaches, professors, IPSE administrators, parents, etc.), and where it is useful (social skills, community, employment, classroom, recruitment, etc.)

**Strategy Spotlight**
Discuss the strategy that was used so that practitioners can implement it. This is a good place for visuals.

**Lessons Learned**
What were main takeaways from research? What would researchers want practitioners to know?

**Reference** APA 7th edition
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Photo credit: Markus Spiske