

AMSSA®

 Strengthening Diversity In BC



Accessing Support Services for Post-Secondary International Students

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Agenda Pt. 1

1. Research Background
2. Research Objectives
3. Methodology
4. Research Findings
 - Support Service Needs



Agenda Pt. 2

4. Research Findings:

- Barriers in Accessibility
- Gaps in Services
- Trends in Support Service Delivery
- Current SPO/PSI Collaborations
- Barriers to Service Delivery



Agenda Pt. 3

5. Recommendations
6. Directory
7. Q & A



Research Background

International students

- Bring social, cultural, and economic benefits to communities in BC
- Provide opportunities for BC students to have more global education experiences
- Help meet labour market needs
- Require specific settlement support services



Research Background cont.

- Research funded by the Ministry of Jobs, Trade, and Technology (JTT)
- Additional advice and input from the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training (AEST)



Research Focus

Public and private post-secondary institutions (PSIs)

- that are eligible for the Post-Graduation Work Permit Program (PGWPP)

Settlement service provider organizations (SPOs)

- that receive funding from BC Settlement and Integration Services (BC-SIS) to support international students



Research Objectives

1. Understand what **settlement support services** post-secondary international students in BC need

Pre-arrival

During
studies

Pathway to
citizenship

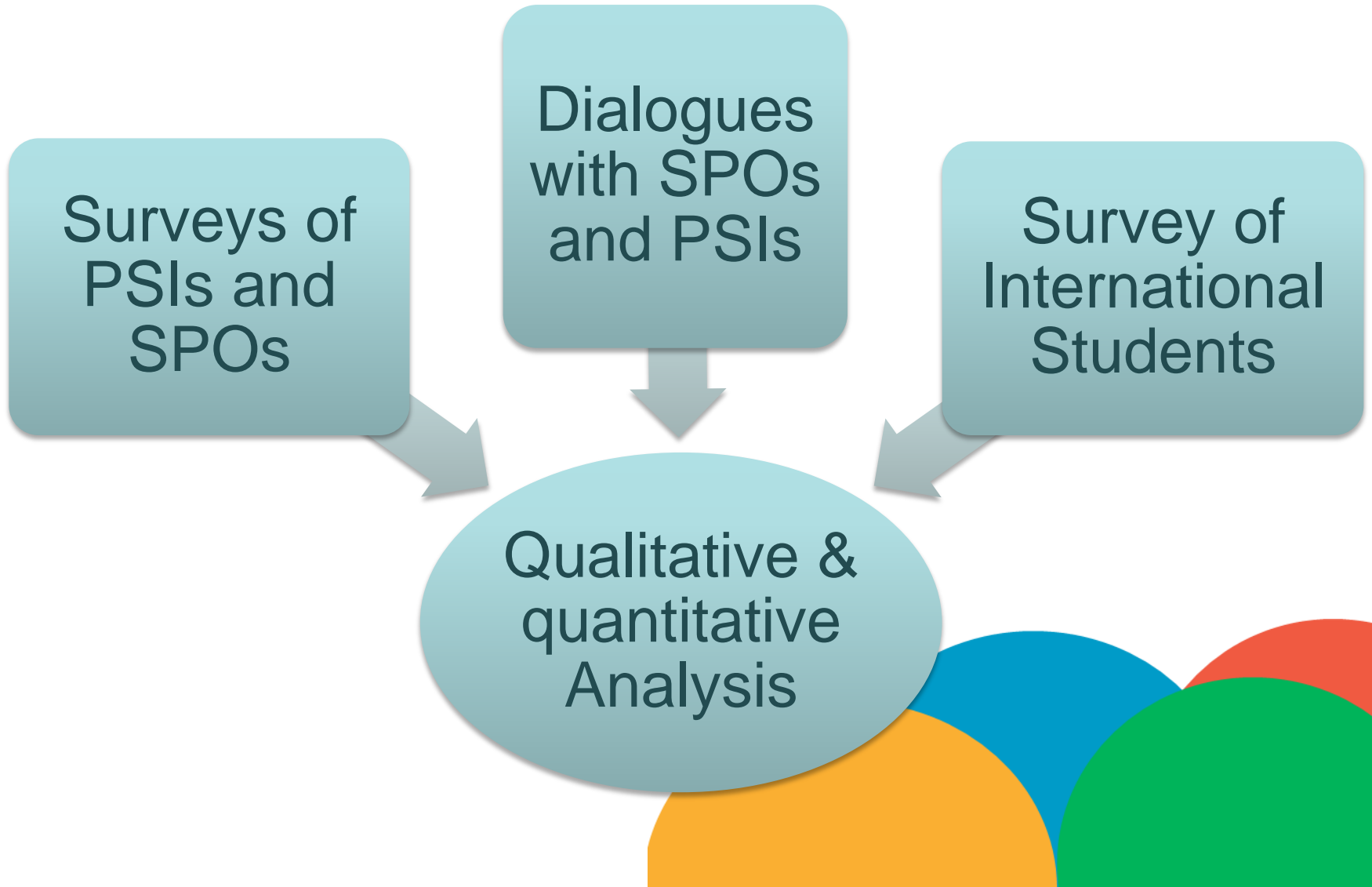


Research Objectives cont.

2. Identify **gaps and overlaps** in service delivery
3. Identify **barriers or challenges** to accessing or delivering support services
4. Explore current and potential areas of **coordination and collaboration** between PSIs and SPOs



Methodology

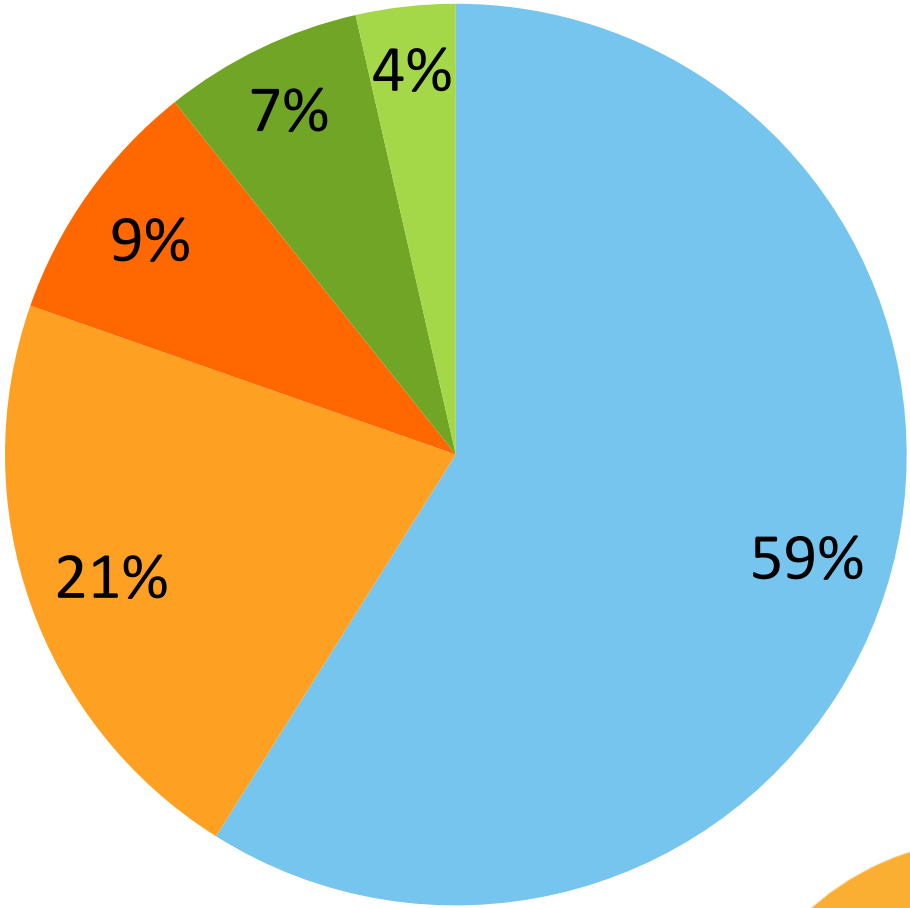


SPO & PSI Surveys

- **20 SPO staff** and **36 PSI staff** responded to the survey
- 93% of respondents work directly with international students



SPO & PSI Survey Respondent Demographics cont.



- Metro Vancouver, 33 respondents
- Vancouver Island, 12 respondents
- Interior BC, 5 respondents
- Fraser Valley, 4 respondents
- Northern BC, 2 respondents



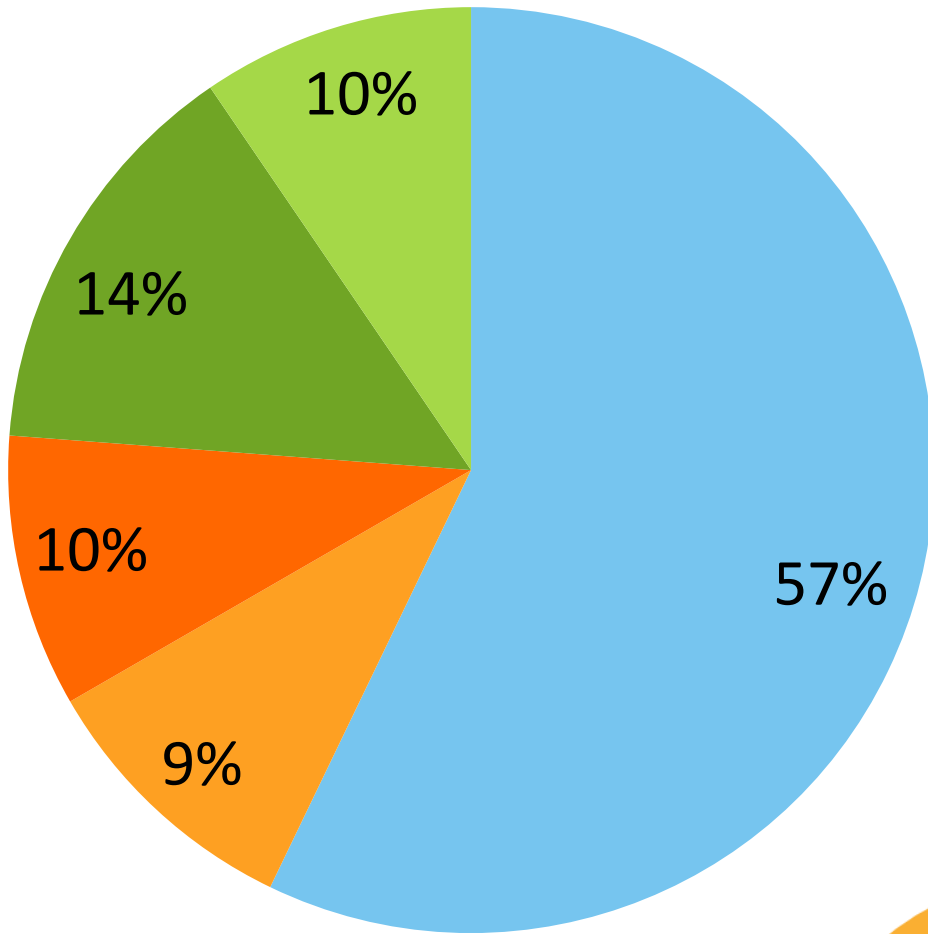
SPO & PSI Dialogues

- 2 teleconference dialogues with SPOs and PSIs outside of Metro Vancouver
- One in-person dialogue with Metro Vancouver SPOs and PSIs
- Staff from **14 SPOs** and **7 PSIs** participated




SPO & PSI Dialogues cont.

- Metro Vancouver, 12 participants
- Vancouver Island, 2 participants
- Interior BC, 2 participants
- Fraser Valley, 3 participants
- Northern BC, 2 participants



Survey of International Students

- 76 international students responded
 - 88% of participants were attending or had attended a PSI in Metro Vancouver
 - 66% were enrolled in or had completed undergraduate studies
 - 29% were enrolled in or had completed graduate studies
 - 63% intend to remain in BC after graduation
- 

Support Service Needs

1. Orientation Support
2. Support with Immigration & Documents
3. Career & Employment Services
4. Social, Cultural, and Emotional support
5. Financial & Material Support
6. Legal & Crisis Support
7. Support for Families



Barriers to Accessibility

- 1. Lack of awareness of available supports**
 - 60% of student survey respondents didn't know where to go for help
 - 35% didn't know they could ask for help with a given issue



Barriers to Accessibility

2. Culture Barriers or Social Stigma

- **21%** of student respondents didn't feel comfortable asking for help
- **10%** experienced language or other cultural barriers
- **5%** were afraid that disclosing issues could affect their immigration status



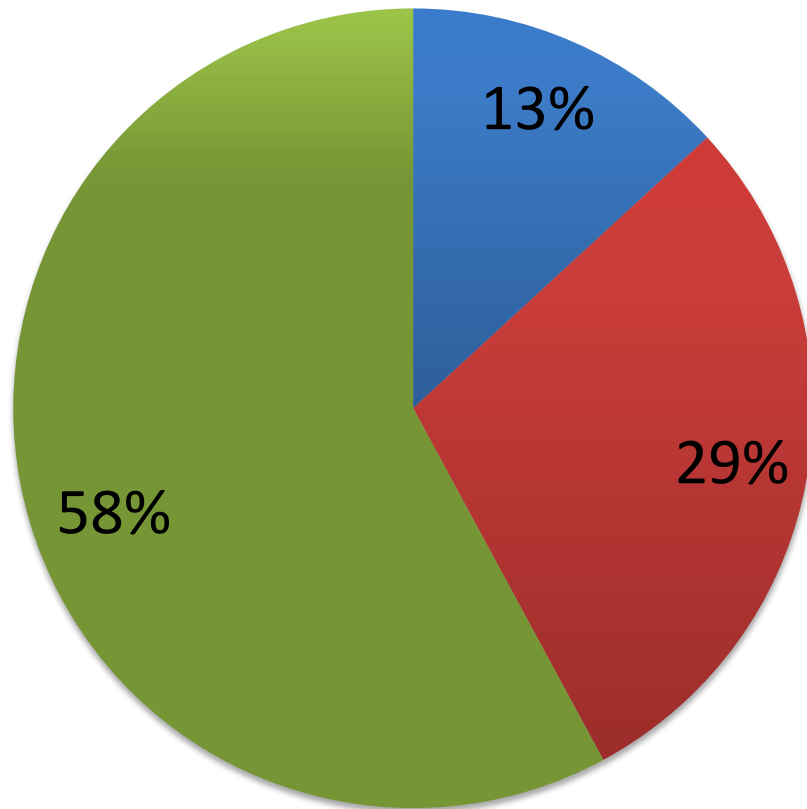
Gaps in Services

- **Financial & Material Aid** for unexpected financial hardship
 - On average, student respondents reported **53% satisfaction with available support**
- **Support Finding Off-Campus Housing**



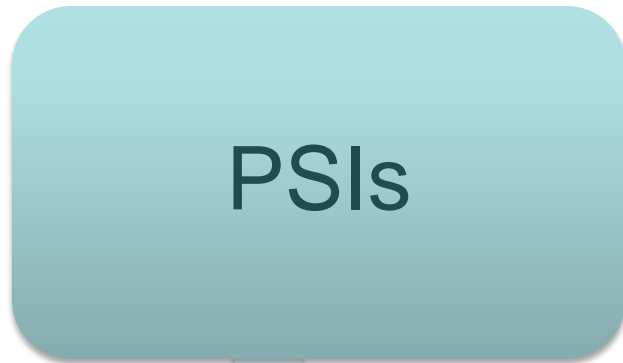
Gaps in Services cont.

Student survey respondent accommodations



- Yes, I have always lived in residence while studying
- I lived in residence during part of my studies
- No, I never lived in residence

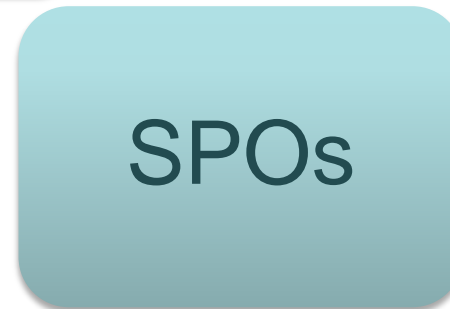
Trends in Support Service Delivery



- Usually primary point of contact
- Greater capacity for service delivery



- Friends, family, online, paid services



- Often through referrals

Complementary SPO Services

- **Post-Graduation Support Services**
 - PSIs offer limited alumni services
- **Support for Families**
 - 70% of SPO staff and 28% PSI staff reported offering support for spouses & dependents



Complementary SPO Services

- Specialized Support
- Multi-lingual Services
- Broader Community Connections
- Geographic convenience
- Off-campus alternatives



Current SPO & PSI Collaborations

- SPO & PSI collaboration varies greatly in different communities
 - Student referrals
 - Cross-promotion of services
 - Sharing information on client needs
 - Coordinating services
 - Partnering to deliver programs or events



Barriers to SPO-PSI Collaboration

1. Lack of awareness of cross-sector services

- SPO staff reported an average of 63% familiarity with cross-sector services
- PSI staff reported an average 34% familiarity with cross-sector services



Barriers to Collaboration

2. Limited organizational capacity

- SPOs may have limited staff, space, and funding to meet growing demands
- Long wait times for PSI services

3. Limited certified immigration consultants on staff at SPOs & PSIs



Recommendations for Coordination & Collaboration

- **83% of SPO & PSI staff expressed an interest in increasing cross-sector collaboration**



Increase Awareness of Support Services

- **Identify local support services providers**
- **Create a binder of resources for staff including:**
 - Addresses and hours of operation
 - A list of services offered



Establish a Liaison Person

- **Identify staff members who can be contacted** for referrals, questions, and ideas for collaboration

“Relationship is a big piece”

–SPO participant



Annual Meetings

- Identify emerging needs
- Coordinate services
- Consider areas for collaboration
- Share organizational capacity



Establish a Pathway for Referrals

- **Coordinate services**, especially for:
 - Pre-arrival advising
 - Post-graduation advising
 - Multilingual support
 - Access to certified immigration consultants
 - Support for spouses and dependents
 - Legal aid and crisis support
 - Time-sensitive support



Collaborate with Key Stakeholders

- Religious institutions
- Cultural community groups
- Secondary schools
- Social services
- International students



Directory

- **In progress:** Directory of settlement services that post-secondary international students are eligible for.



Concluding Remarks

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