

IPA Survey Findings

Under the leadership of IPA's Treasurer, Dr. Benjamin Tallman and IPA's Membership Committee Chair, Dr. Jennifer Kauder, two surveys were developed and administered to psychologists across the state of Iowa: a survey of IPA members and a survey of non-IPA members. These surveys were used as part of an environmental scan of the organization and were designed to gather more specific information about perceptions of IPA, while also better understanding the demographics and needs of psychologists across Iowa. The surveys were administered between April and May of 2016 and the data was presented at the strategic planning meeting in June of 2016. The member survey was administered at IPA's spring conference. Those who were not in attendance received a link to the survey (on SurveyMonkey™) via the IPA listserv. The member survey was designed with a three-fold purpose: (1) to assess preferences for various services and benefits currently offered by the organization, (2) to determine interest in being an active participant of the association, and (3) to examine the perceived value individuals have for IPA as a professional organization. We also inquired about specific areas for IPA to focus on in upcoming years.

Demographics

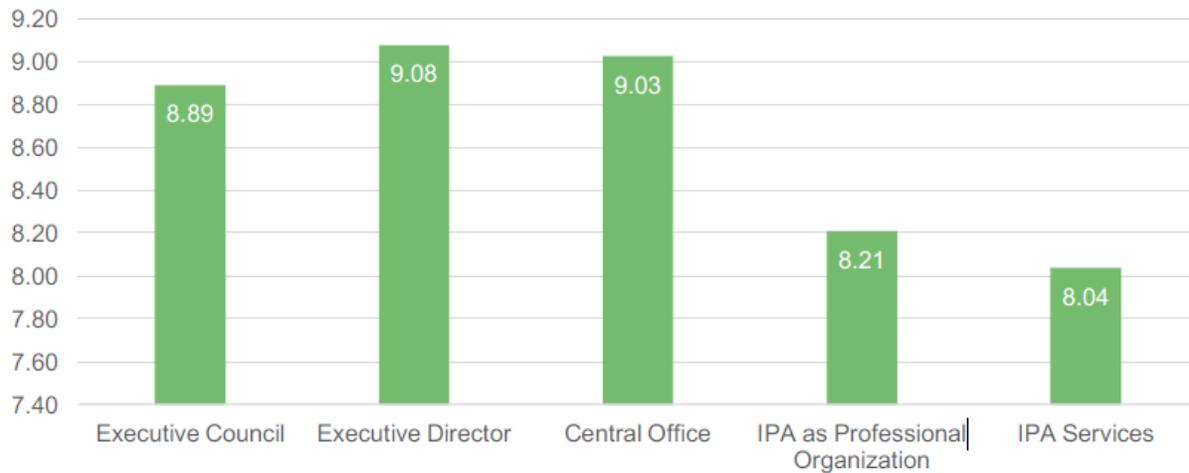
Eighty-six IPA members completed the survey, which represented a 38% response rate. Seventy-seven respondents were licensed psychologists with a mean age of 50-years-old ($SD = 14$). Sixty percent of the sample was female and the majority of the sample was Caucasian (88%). Roughly 40% of the sample intends to retire in fewer than 10 years, which is particularly concerning given that Iowa ranks 47th in the country in the number of psychologists per capita. This anticipated rate of retirement represents a significant workforce shortage. Fifty-three percent of respondents are in independent private practice and an additional 12% work in community mental health centers. The remaining survey respondents were evenly spread across a variety of other practice settings. Survey results suggest that IPA is primarily a professional home for independent practitioners. The majority of respondents indicated that they are also members of the American Psychological Association (72%). Lastly, member income was assessed. Results suggest that 22% of the sample earn roughly \$81,000 to \$100,000, followed by \$100,000 to \$120,000 (16%), \$120,000 to \$140,000 (15%), and \$61,000 to \$80,000 (13%). Seven percent of the sample reported making \$140,000 or more.

Satisfaction Data & Value of Services

Several questions focused on the degree to which members are satisfied with IPA services, elected leadership, the operation of the Central Office, and the Executive Director. Members were also asked to rate how valuable they perceive IPA as a professional organization. Respondents rated their level of satisfaction on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (low value/satisfaction) to 10 (high value/satisfaction). The mean response for each of these items was around 9 ($SD = 1.8$) and satisfaction was highest for the Executive Director, Central Office, and the Executive Council. Mean satisfaction scores were slightly lower for IPA as a professional organization ($M = 8.2$; $SD = 1.8$) and IPA services ($M = 8.04$; $SD = 1.8$). These findings suggest there may be some room for improvement in the quality of the services that IPA provides, as

well as how IPA is perceived as a professional organization. Graph 1 below shows mean responses for each of the items.

Graph 1: IPA member satisfaction



Members were then asked to rate specific services offered by the organization. Conferences and continuing education opportunities were rated as the most valuable service offered by IPA (85%), followed by networking opportunities (69%). Respondents appeared to see the value of the psychology training program (36%) and the ability to have ethics consults (35%). Access to the attorney pool (11%) was seen as the fifth most valuable service of the organization, but this is also not a frequent service used by IPA members.

The survey also examined the degree to which members value and make use of the different sources of information offered through electronic media; specifically, the listserv, IPA website, and *PSYowa* blog. Survey findings indicate that the most valued aspect of these electronic media is the ability to share and receive information about professional issues and resources (78%), followed by information about IPA initiatives (52%), referral information for clients (44%), professional consultations (34%), and the subscription to *The Iowa Psychologist* newsletter (30%). It appears that few members know that IPA has a blog published by the Public Education Committee.

Members were also asked to rate areas of advocacy they found most valuable. Results indicate that the efforts of the IPA state advocacy team were valued most (80%), followed by the monitoring of legislation and regulatory changes impacting our profession (67%) and the efforts of the federal advocacy team (60%). Less valuable advocacy services include access to the bill tracker (13%) and to the list of upcoming legislative forums (11%). In retrospect, it may have been helpful to have members rate specific items in the state and federal advocacy agendas they find most valuable.

Respondents were then asked to rate their interest in various leadership opportunities within the

organization. The ability to serve on various committees was rated as the most valuable leadership opportunity (53%), followed by providing or receiving mentoring opportunities (35%). Findings suggest that members did not perceive the ability to form a committee as very valuable (11%). In the future, it might be helpful to explore how developing and enhancing committee participation may benefit members.

Next, members ranked the professional resources that they found most valuable. Respondents noted that access to the mandatory reporter training video is the most valuable professional resource provided by IPA (41%), followed by the members-only portion of the IPA website, where there are details on practice tools (31%). Inclusion in the online directory (29%) and having the opportunity to list individual members' websites on IPA's site (28%) were equally valued. Less interest was shown for the online job listings (21%).

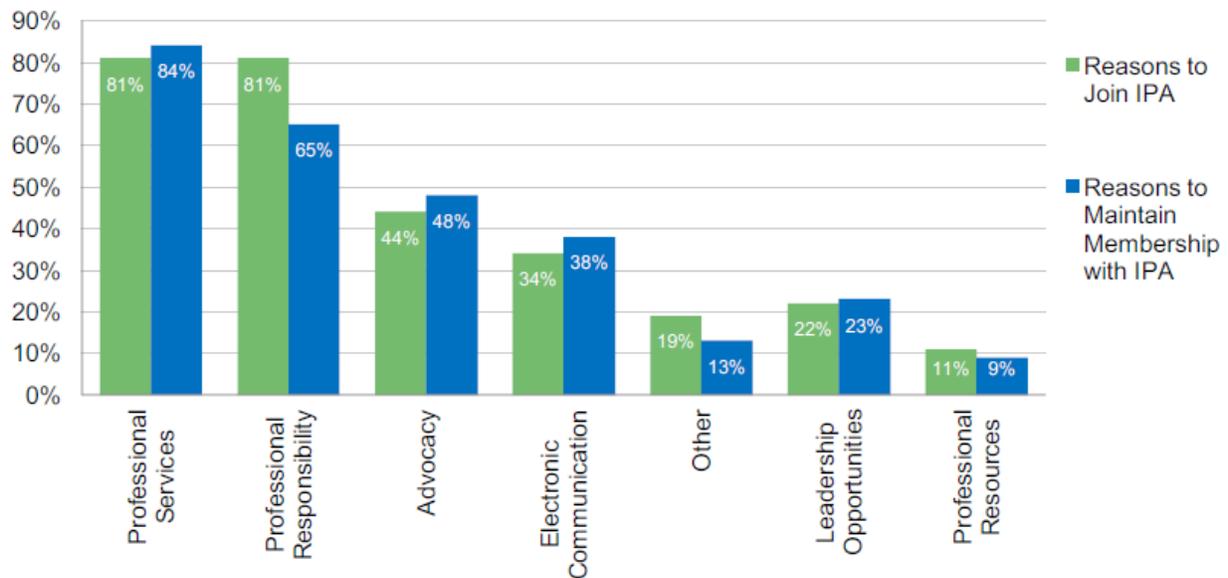
Finally, members were asked about the value of the business partnerships that IPA has established with various vendors. The percentage of respondents endorsing these items as valuable was minimal (3% or less). A subsequent question revealed that members feel neutral about whether the organization pursues these business arrangements. Furthermore, most respondents indicated that they are unlikely to use these business partnerships in the future. The Executive Council has pursued these partnerships as a potential source of revenue for our organization while offering discounted services to our members. However, thus far it does not appear that this has been a valued endeavor.

Under the "other" category, a number of members wrote in additional services or benefits that they perceived as valuable. Additional areas valued by individual members included: the ability to develop personal relationships with psychologists in the state; professional development opportunities for Early Career Psychologists; participation of student members; Amy Campbell's representation of IPA to the legislature; and information about the privatization of Medicaid.

Reasons for Joining, Maintaining, or Ending IPA Membership

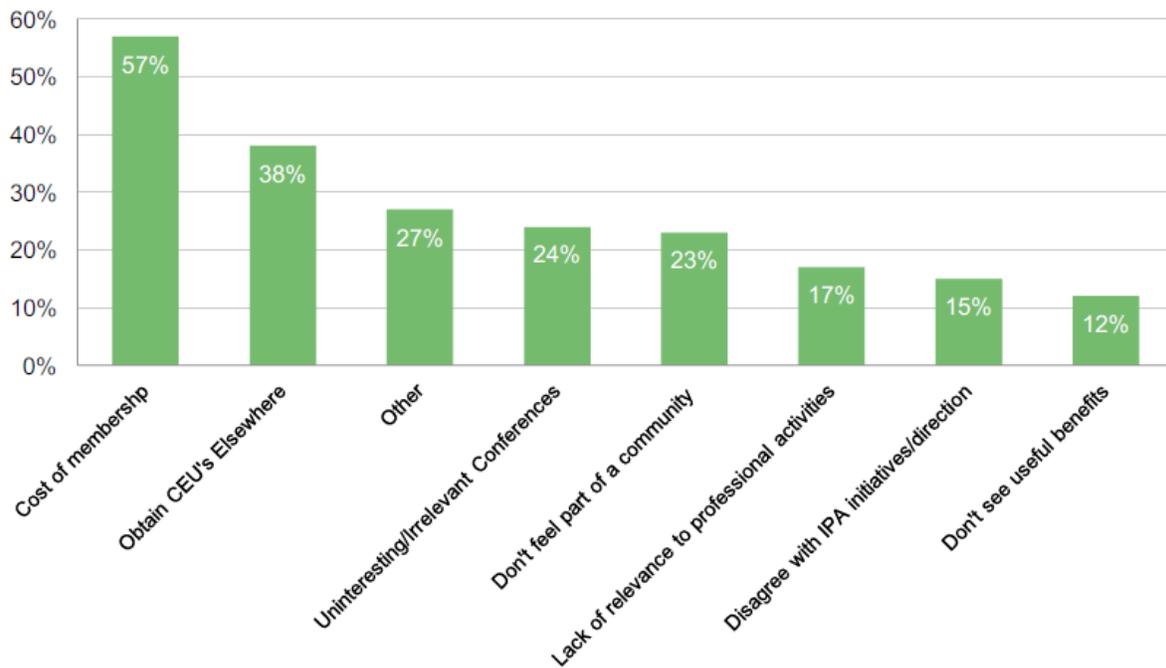
Members were asked about the top three reasons for joining, as well as maintaining, IPA membership. As shown in Graph 2 (below), the majority of individuals join IPA for the professional services it offers (e.g., continuing education, consultation) and because of a sense of professional responsibility. While individuals remain in IPA for these same reasons, respondents cited professional services as a primary reason for maintaining their membership. Moreover, it appears that members do not necessarily join IPA for the advocacy efforts or the value of our electronic communications; however, both appear to be reasons members maintain their IPA membership.

Graph 2: Reasons for Joining and Maintaining IPA Membership



When asked about top reservations for continuing membership with IPA, the most common reservation was membership cost (57%), followed by the ability to obtain CEU's elsewhere (38%). There were several additional reservations cited under the "other" category; the most common themes were lack of networking opportunities and feeling disconnected from other members (i.e., not feeling a part of a community). Moreover, approximately one-fourth of the respondents indicated that IPA conferences are not very relevant or interesting (24%) and approximately a fifth indicated that IPA activities are irrelevant to their area of practice (17%). Graph 3 below shows the distribution of scores for areas endorsed as the most common reservations for maintaining IPA membership.

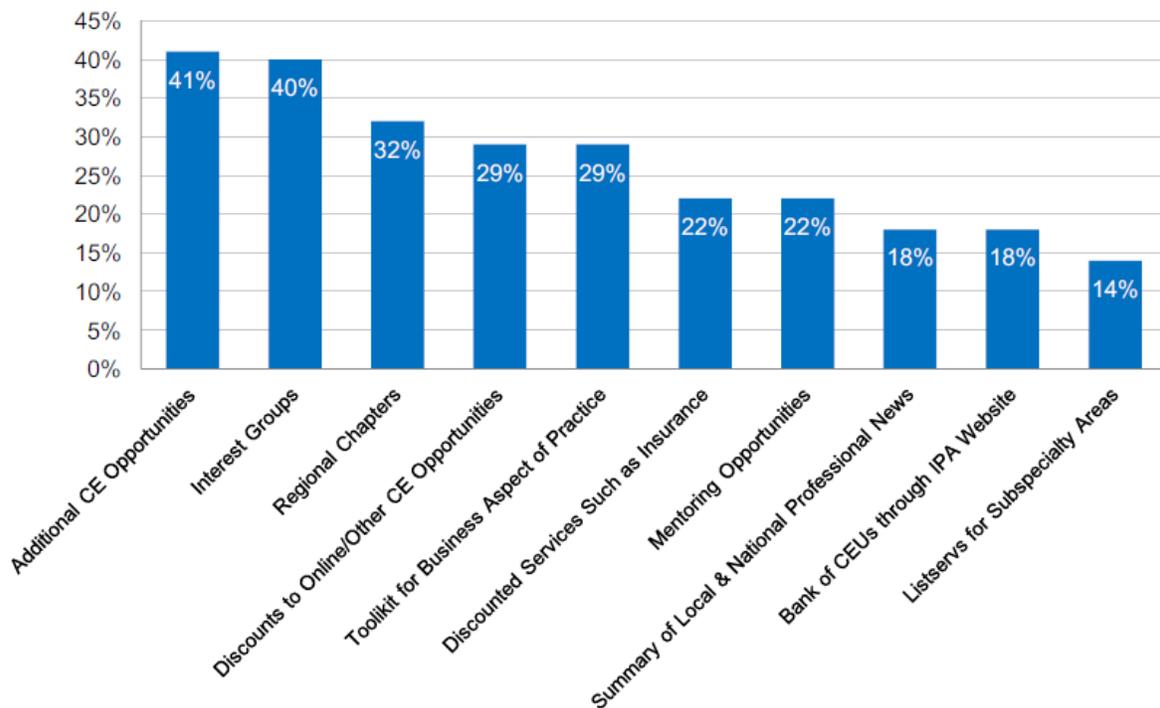
Graph 3: Reservations for Maintaining IPA Membership



Future Directions and Perception of IPA

In order to assess future member needs, we asked respondents if there were benefits or services offered by other state psychological associations or professional organizations that they would like to see offered by IPA. Approximately half of the respondents expressed an interest in additional continuing education opportunities (e.g., webinars, salons) and interest groups related to their practice or research areas (e.g., neuropsychology, child/adolescent psychology, forensic psychology, LGBTQ or other issues of diversity, disability, psychopharmacology, etc.). Approximately a third of respondents expressed an interest in regional chapters of IPA for smaller gatherings/networking opportunities; discounts to online or other CE opportunities; and a toolkit that outlines good practice guidelines in reference to the business aspect of private practice. Graph 4 shows the percentage of respondents that expressed interest for each of the services listed in this question. Overall, results suggest that respondents rated more favorably those services that allowed for greater professional development, learning opportunities, and connection with individuals who share similar practice or research areas.

Graph 4: Needs or Services of IPA Membership Offered by Other Organizations



In addition to the specific services or benefits that were listed above, an open-ended question asked members to list additional topics or issues that they would like to see addressed as part of continuing education and/or advocacy. Common themes are listed below in no particular order:

- Multicultural issues.
- Pre-doctoral internships, licensure, and early career psychology issues.
- Strengthening connections with psychologists and other disciplines.
- Evidenced-based practices and the dissemination of empirically supported treatments.
- Business side of psychology.
- Working with insurance companies and addressing reimbursement issues.
- Issues associated to Medicare and the Affordable Care Act.
- Agricultural psychology and working in rural areas.

Alternatively, members were asked if there are issues that they believe IPA spends too much time on. The majority of respondents indicated that they don't believe so, with the exception of the following areas: prescription privileges (16%) and psychoanalytic approaches (5%). The latter finding may be the result of having two back-to-back psychoanalytic speakers for recent IPA conferences.

The survey also examined member perceptions of IPA. Overall, members indicated a willingness to encourage non-IPA colleagues to join the organization. Respondents also believe that members perceive the organization in a positive manner. However, members provided less satisfactory opinions about how others (psychologists and other mental health professionals) perceive IPA.

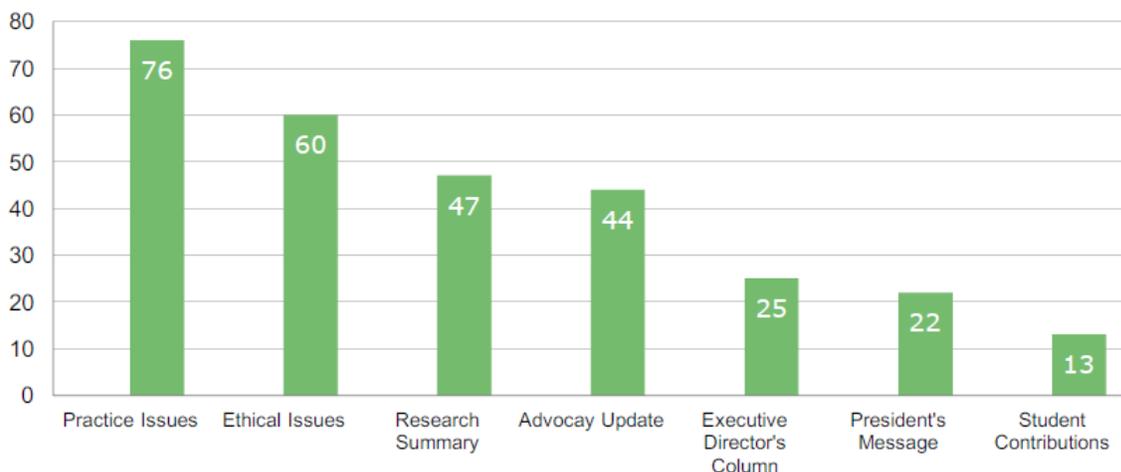
Finally, members were asked whether they were satisfied with the sense of community that IPA has built amongst its members. Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (Completely Disagree) to 10 (Completely Agree). Responses to this question were only moderately favorable ($M=7.0$, $SD=2.0$). When compared to the other satisfaction ratings (noted above), where most means ranged between 8 and 10, this may represent an area of more dissatisfaction to our members.

Electronic Communication

A section of this survey was dedicated to gaining a deeper understanding of how IPA members use the various electronic communication outlets (i.e., listserv, website, blog, newsletter) so we can assess the best ways to reach members and disseminate information. The *PSYowa* blog is the newest of IPA's electronic communications. It was developed and is maintained by the Public Education Committee. Members were asked how often they read blog posts. Results indicated that 45% of responders have never read it; 25% have read it once or twice this year; and, only 17% have read most publications.

Members were also asked whether they read the IPA newsletter, *The Iowa Psychologist*. Sixty-five percent of respondents indicated that they do read this quarterly publication. When asked about topics of interest, the majority of respondents indicated that they would like to read TIP articles focused on practice issues (76%) and ethical issues (60%). Additional areas of interest are noted in Graph 5 below.

Graph 5: Topics that IPA Members Want to See in TIP

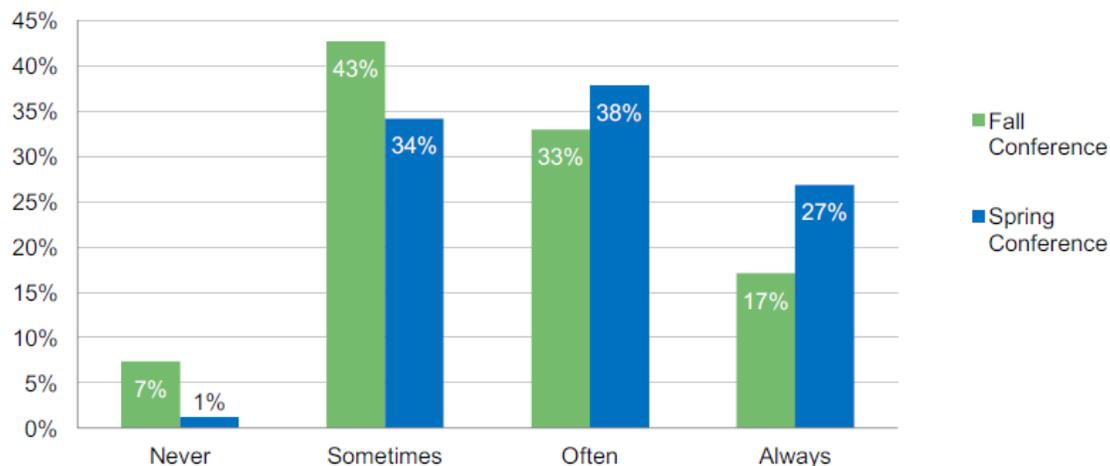


Similarly, members were asked how frequently they have used of the IPA website over the past year. Results indicate that 50% of members surveyed visit the website 4-5 times per year; 18% visit it 1-2 times per year; 26% use it monthly; and 6% use it on a weekly basis. Respondents then rated the utility of the website using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (Not Useful) to 10 (Very Useful). The mean response was 6.1 (SD=2), which suggests that IPA members do not find the website particularly helpful. An open-ended question provided an opportunity for members to suggest potential changes to improve the website. Respondents suggested a number of changes including updating the appearance/design, creating a mobile-friendly layout, updating the information on the website (including links to relevant codes/regulations and ensuring current links are active), providing information regarding conferences and workshops, including access to professional resources (e.g., articles, links to practice topics, book recommendations for clients), allowing more interaction with the website, and improving the organization and ability to navigate the website in general.

Conferences

Survey responses suggest that conferences are the service that IPA members value most. Several questions were posed to help identify how to improve the quality of trainings IPA offers. First, members were asked how often they attend the spring and fall conferences. Results showed that members more consistently attend the spring conference (see Graph 6 below).

Graph 6: IPA Conference Attendance



IPA recently experimented with changing the days on which conferences are held at the request of some members who had expressed a desire to keep their weekends open. In order to further assess member preferences, survey respondents were asked to share which days of the week they are more likely to attend conferences. Friday was the most preferred conference day (78%),

followed by Thursday (36%) and Saturday (30%). This finding supports the positive feedback that was received after the Spring 2016 conference, which was hosted on Thursday and Friday.

Members were also asked to list three topics that they would like to see at upcoming IPA conferences. Respondents frequently mentioned the following topics: specific treatment interventions and/or evidenced based treatment approaches; application of interventions with specific populations/disorders; assessment/evaluation; professional or therapist development; integrated healthcare/medical issues; diversity/multicultural issues; professional/business issues; ethics; and prescription privileges/pharmacology.

Finally, members were asked to rate three preferred content areas or services that they would like to see at an upcoming IPA conference. Survey responses suggested that members are most interested in conferences that are relevant to their specific professional role, as well as trainings that focus on clinical practice. Respondents also indicated interest in evidenced-based presentations; nationally recognized speakers; and the opportunity to network and socialize. There was little interest in the opportunity to present one's own research. However, given that there are few academic members in our association, this may be a result of the composition of IPA membership. Therefore, the latter finding should only be interpreted in the context of the current member demographics.

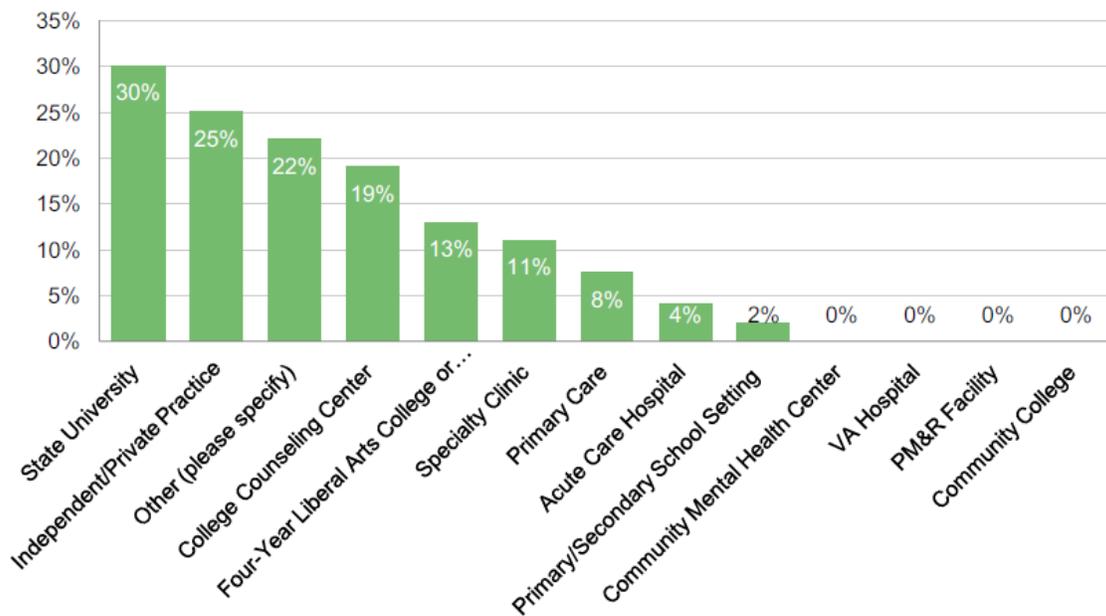
Non-Member Survey

The non-member survey was sent via SurveyMonkey™ to approximately 145 psychologists across Iowa who are not currently members of the organization. The survey a more succinct version of the IPA member survey; it was shortened in order to increase the likelihood of responses. The purpose of surveying non-members was to (1) assess their perceptions of IPA, (2) identify the types of services and benefits they desire from IPA, and (3) determine the likelihood that they would join IPA in the future.

Demographics

Fifty-three psychologists completed the non-member survey, which represents a roughly 38% response rate (consistent with the IPA member survey). Approximately 55% of those who responded were previous members of IPA, while 45% have never been a member of the organization. The majority of respondents were female (61.5%) and Caucasian/European American (88%). Half of the respondents were between ages 25-44 and reported that they have been employed as a psychologist for no more than 15 years. Forty-four percent plan to retire in over 20 years, while 31% intend to retire in 10 years or less. They reported working across a range of employment settings, with almost one-third employed in academic settings (a group that was active in IPA in the past). Salary information was not assessed for non-members.

Graph 8: Non-members primary work setting



Knowledge of IPA & Willingness to Participate

Non-members were first asked how familiar they are with the Iowa Psychological Association. Approximately half of the respondents indicated having little to no familiarity with the association (49%). Thirty-nine percent reported that they were very familiar with IPA, while 12% were extremely familiar with the organization.

A number of questions targeted the degree to which non-members were willing to participate in our organization. First, past members were asked to select reasons for not renewing their membership. The main reason cited for non-renewal was the cost of membership (43%), followed by a lack of relevance to their professional activities (23%). When provided with an open-ended response format, some respondents shared that they felt a lack of connection with other members (due to physical distance/residing in rural areas, certain members dominating discussions at conferences, or lack of members specializing in areas relevant to the individual's practice); conference topics were seen as too broad for those who have specialty research/clinical interests; conferences were not relevant to their professional practice; and the cost associated with conferences (especially for those members who lived far away and/or do not see many clients) was not worth the effort. Thirteen percent of non-members said they were members of other organizations that were more relevant to their professional practice and 9% said they disagree with IPA initiatives.

Non-members were also asked to identify up to three barriers to joining (or re-joining) IPA. Results indicated that the biggest barrier is the cost of membership (70%). In responding to the open-ended portion of this question, many non-members cited the cost of seeking CEU's that are relevant to their professional activities. They also mentioned that membership fees to professional organizations that address their specialty areas make it difficult to spend additional money on membership in IPA. The next most commonly cited barrier was not seeing useful benefits from IPA membership (38%).

Joining IPA and Desired Benefits

When asked how much they would be willing to pay for an IPA membership, none of the survey respondents indicated that they would pay more than \$200 in annual dues. The majority of respondents were willing to pay \$50-\$100 per year (50%). Thirty-three percent of respondents were willing to pay \$100-150, while 17% indicated a willingness to pay \$150-200.

Non-members were asked to rate which of the current IPA benefits and services they find most valuable based on their professional needs. These benefits and services were broken down into five categories. The first category was professional services. Conferences/continuing education was seen as the most valuable service (72%), followed by ethics consults (45%), networking opportunities (32%), access to an attorney pool (25%), and the post-doctoral training program (11%).

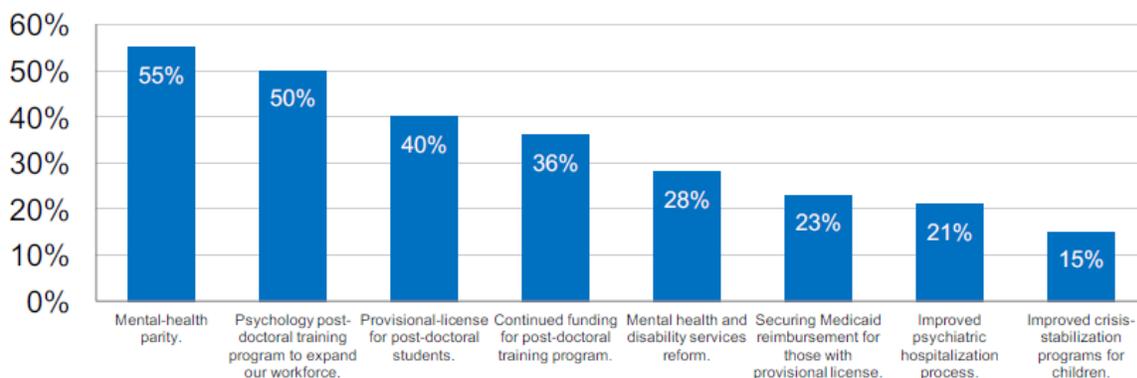
The second category of benefits included the resources offered by IPA electronic communications (i.e., website, listserve, blog.) Sharing and receiving relevant professional

information was seen as the most important service within this category (51%). Thirty-four percent indicated that they would like information about IPA initiatives, 30% would like access to referral sources, 21% want access to professional consults, 19% would like being listed in the IPA website directory, and 13% would like the opportunity to publish in our newsletter. No one endorsed a desire to use the business partnerships.

The third category asked specifically about services that psychologists in academia and/or research settings would value in an IPA membership. Twenty-six percent of respondents said that they would like to see mentoring opportunities for psychology students; 25% would like to see networking opportunities with faculty from across Iowa; 13% would like assistance with recruitment of research participants; 11% would like an opportunity for publication in our quarterly newsletter, as well as an opportunity to hold a leadership position in the organization; 9% indicated a desire for graduate and undergraduate students to present their work; and 6% said they would like to see leadership positions available to their students.

The fourth category asked about those benefits and services offered through advocacy. Respondents said the most important service IPA provides is the promotion of the Iowa state legislative agenda, as well as the monitoring of legislative and regulatory changes in our profession (32%). Respondents equally ranked the promotion of federal legislation (28%) and the ability for members to help define the state legislative agenda (28%). Finally, having access to the legislative tracker and to the upcoming list of legislative forums were both seen as less interesting to non-members (9%). One survey item explained that IPA (1) monitors for legislative and regulatory changes that will affect psychologists and the populations we serve, and (2) protects issues of scope of practice and parity at the state and federal levels. We asked non-members if they were aware of IPA's success in advocating for a list of issues. Graph 9 below shows non-members responses to this question.

Graph 9: Awareness of IPA's advocacy efforts



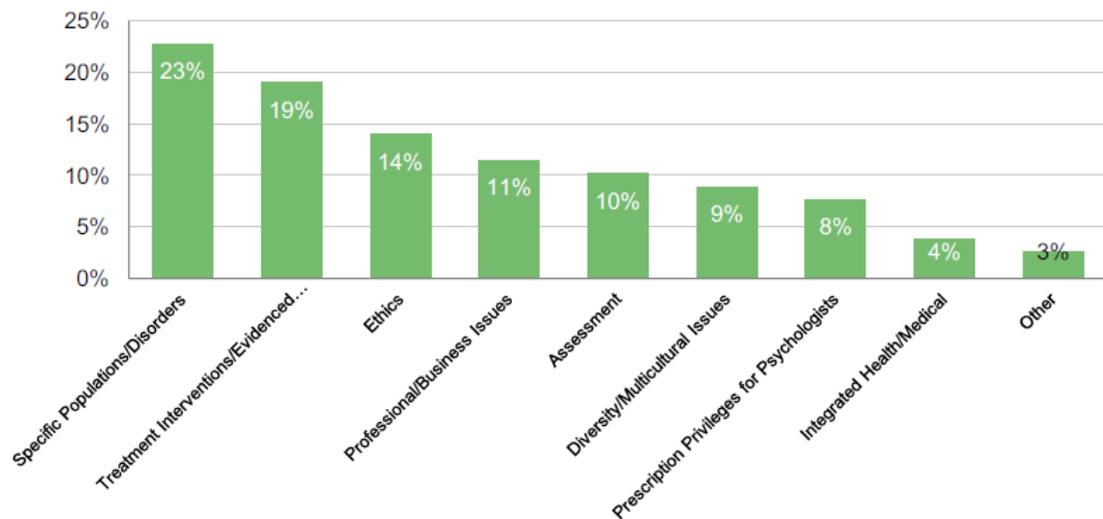
The fifth, and final, category inquired about potential benefits associated with leadership in the organization. Twenty-three percent of non-members said that they would like the opportunity to serve on various committees; 22% said they would like to mentor others; 11% indicated that

they would like to be mentored; 9% said they would like the ability to hold a position on Executive Council; and 2% said they would like to start a new committee for the organization.

Conferences

Non-members were asked to list five topics that they would like to see at upcoming IPA conferences. Survey respondents shared a wide range of potential topics. Graph 10 (below) shows the most frequently listed topics.

Graph 10: Desired Topics for IPA Conferences



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*Author note: This article is adapted from a section of the upcoming 2017-2020 IPA Strategic Plan.