Exploring Inclusion Through Administrative Data: Challenges & Opportunities

Kathleen Hebbeler, Margaret Gillis, Nicholas Ortiz, Kathryn Morrison, Rachel Acereto, Cliff Li, Sheila Self

Division for Early Childhood's 36th Annual International Conference
January 2021

Study Overview

- Despite a focus on increasing inclusion in California,
  - Only 3% of preschoolers receiving subsidized care have disabilities.
  - State is below the national average for the percentage of preschoolers with disabilities receiving services in inclusive settings.
- Study aim: Identify strategies for increasing facilitators and decreasing barriers to inclusion
- Methods: Administrative data analysis, interviews with key informants, and community case studies

Key Databases in California

| Database Name	Relevance to the Present Study
Child Development Management Information System (CDMIS)	Contains child-level federal reporting data on children in subsidized care, including whether the child has a disability
California Longitudinal Pupil Data System (CALPDS)	Contains child-level federal reporting data on children ages 3-21 receiving IDEA services, including data on inclusion
Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP)	Contains assessment data for all children in state preschool or receiving IDEA services
California Provider Accounting and Information System (CPARIS)	Contains program-level data on children enrolled at each reimbursement rate, including rates that are higher for children with disabilities

Challenges | Opportunities

Challenges
- Lack of common program and child identifiers across databases
- Little incentive to report IEP status in some databases, leading to possible underreporting of children with disabilities
- Inconsistent understanding of federal inclusion data among local special education and early care and education providers
- Limited verification of data quality

Opportunities
- Lay the groundwork for future data integration
- Raise awareness of data available on the inclusion of children with disabilities
- Commitment from state leaders to promoting inclusion
- Visibility of the data deepens understanding of current data and data quality issues
- Pinpoint areas of improvement in data collection

Key Findings from Administrative Data Analysis in Year 1

CA Counties Vary in Percentage of Preschooler Receiving Child Care Subsidies Who Have Disabilities

Data source: CDMIS, Oct 2019
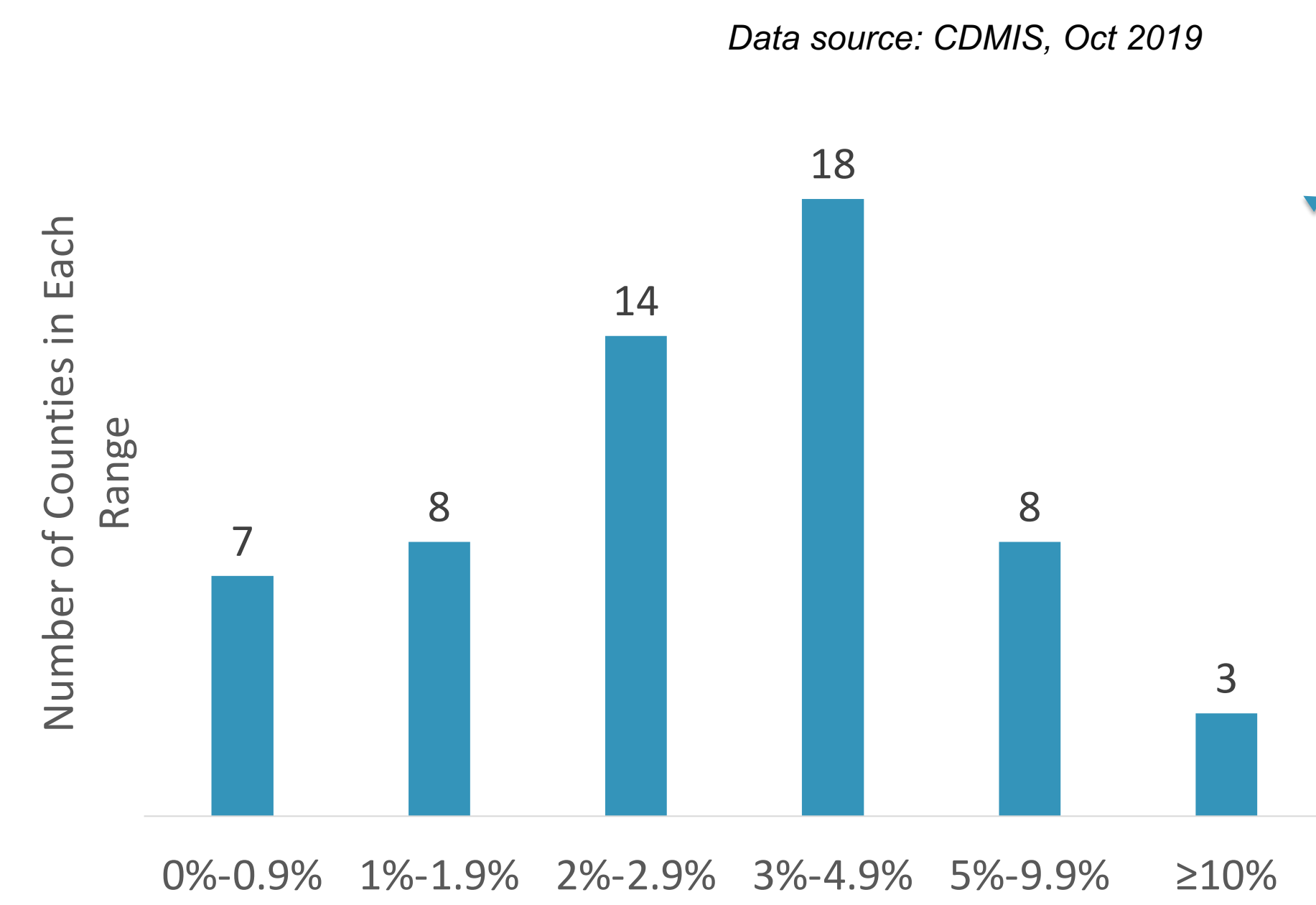
Counties with the highest percentages of children with disabilities receiving subsidies are typically not the same counties with high percentages of preschoolers with disabilities receiving services in inclusive settings (r = .28)

CA Counties Vary in Percentage of Preschoolers with Disabilities Attending Regular Early Childhood Programs and Receiving the Majority of Their Special Education Services in That Location

Data source: CALPADS, Oct 2019
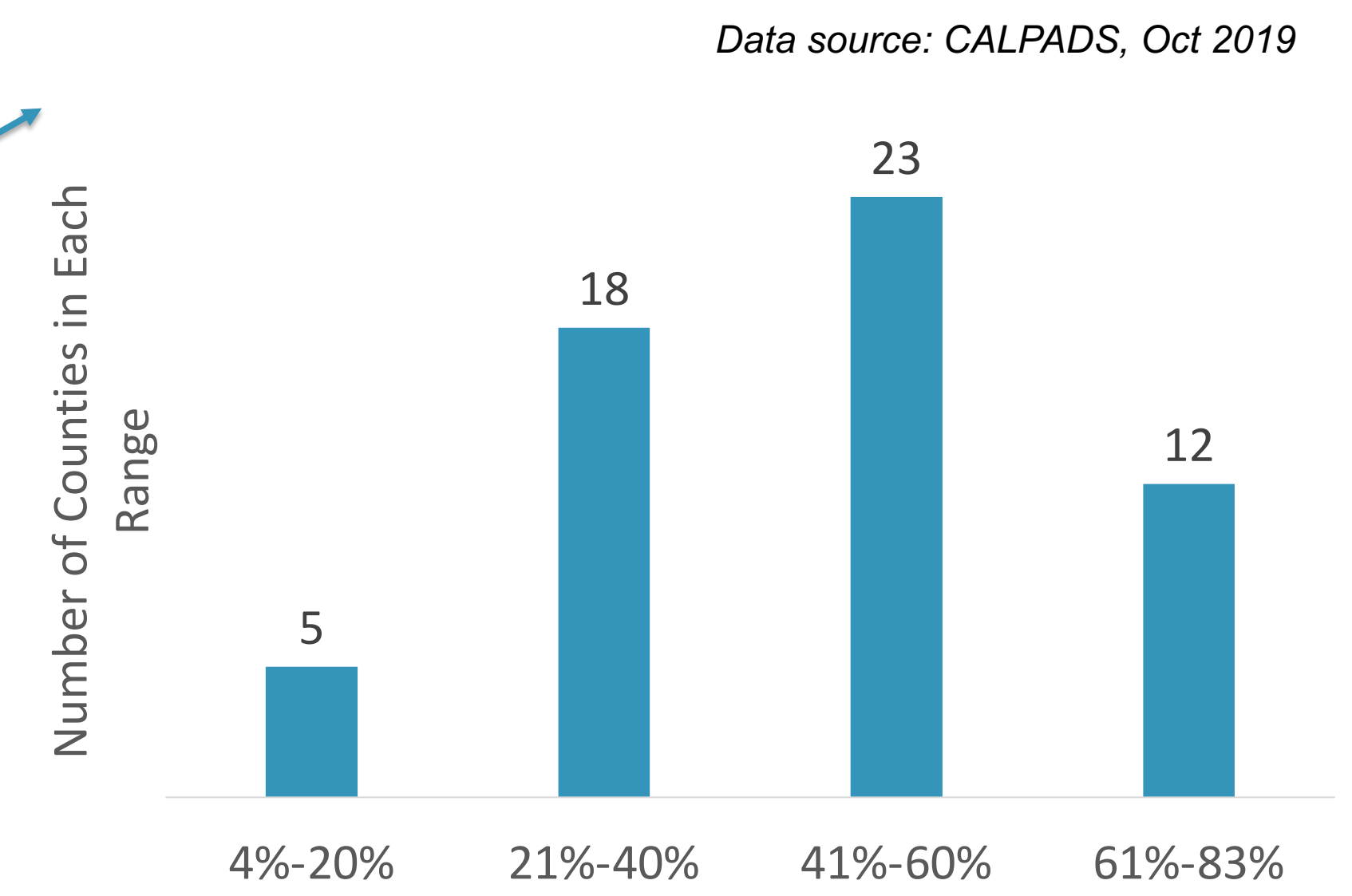
Highlights from CDMIS Demographic Data

- Compared to preschoolers without disabilities in subsidized early learning and care, those with disabilities are more likely to be:
  - male
  - Hispanic
  - speaking Spanish as a primary language
  - enrolled in part-time care
  - attending a program participating in the state's Quality Rating and Improvement System
- Enrollment in subsidized early learning and care has declined; however, the percentage of children with disabilities has increased (2015–2019).

Next Steps

- Interview key informants
- Conduct community case studies
- Cross-reference data about preschoolers with disabilities in other databases such as CPARIS and DRDP

For more information, contact: margaret.gillis@sri.com