Incubators for Student Leader Identity Emergence

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Abstract

Too often student services has become a provider of discrete assistance in which one-way information transactions take place between the staff/student paraprofessionals providers and the students receiving the services. Students attend academic advising appointments, listen during tutorial or small groups study meetings, and read computer screens of information during career exploration sessions. Transactions seldom lead to transformations of engagement, identity, and deep learning for the students who provide or receive the service. Student leaders involved in student services, Students as Partners partnerships, student organizations, and athletics experience unanticipated personal and professional growth. Case studies from Australia, Belgium, Indonesia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States display global connections among common themes of co-curricular learning events from such rich environments. This chapter provides a conceptual model for an ecosystem of leader identity emergence that can be effective in a variety of student activity venues and recommendations to be more intentional in fostering growth.

Introduction

Leadership development courses and degree programs have proliferated in recent years. This is fueled by student perceptions that formal education in leadership

provides valuable social capital for them in a highly competitive job market. Institutions recognized financial opportunities for offering leadership curriculum that enrolled students in additional credit hours of instruction. However, it is difficult to accommodate an ever-increasing load of credit-bearing courses in college degree programs with a fixed number of maximum credits, loan debt load of students enrolling in an ever-increasing number of courses, and desire to graduate more quickly.

An alternative to the formal course enrollment in leader curriculum is harnessing co-curricular, extra-curricular, and part-time job experiences to provide a rich learning situation for leadership education to take place and leader identity to emerge. This chapter first examines the major student development models of leader identity: *Student Involvement Theory* (Astin, 1984, 1993), *Leader Identity Development Theory* (Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005), and *Network Leadership Development Theory* (Meuser, Gardner, Dinh, Hu, Liden, & Lord, 2016).

After an overview of these major theories, student activities, involvement in Students as Partners, and part-time jobs are explored that discuss how they serve as fertile grounds for leader identity evolution. These venues included: academic tutoring, student organisations, organized sports, extended orientation courses, identity-based organisations, Students as Partners activities, and academic peer review groups.

Based on these leader identity theories and studies of student involvement, a new model for leader identity emergence is offered that provides an interactive ecosystem which fosters student development. The chapter concludes with practical actions that coaches, club sponsors, college administrators, and staff can make an

intentional process for students, constructing their leader identity and applying it to future occupations and community service.

Literature Review of Student Identity Emergence Models

Three major models have been frequently cited in the professional literature for explaining the process of change within students during their postsecondary learning experience. *Student Involvement Theory* (Astin, 1984, 1993) provides a broad-based model based on hundreds of thousands of U.S. students over a quarter-century. The model identified a wide variety of outcomes including leadership development. Two other models are focused on leader identity emergence. Komives and her colleagues identified a six-stage model that college students cycle through to higher levels of leader identity emergence (Komives et al., 2005). Meuser et al. (2016) extended the Komives et al. (2005) model to a more sophisticated level by developing the *Network Leadership Development Theory* which identified critical leader roles of group members who provided nuanced leader contributions to overall progress in accomplishing desired goals and tasks. The first theory examined in this literature review is *Student Involvement Theory*.

Student Involvement Theory

Alexander Astin and his research colleagues (Astin, 1984, 1993) identified one of the most widely cited theories for understanding how students change in response to postsecondary/tertiary experiences. The impact of the college environment is revealed through a model of nearly 200 variables: students' inputs (demographics, academic preparation prior experiences, and more), college status (subdivided into bridge between secondary school and college entry and intermediate variables during the

college experience), and outcomes after conclusion of their college experience (attitudes, job skills, and knowledge). This model is often called *Involvement Theory* and the *Inputs-Environment-Outcomes (IEO)* model (Astin, 1984).

Bridge involvement variables impacted students between their initial input variables and the college environment. Examples include selection of residence location, choice of academic major, experiences gained through new student orientation, and campus job training programs. Variables experienced or decisions made during this critical time impact the ensuing college experience. Intermediate involvement occurred during their time at college. Examples include involvement with academic content, faculty members, extracurricular activities, work, and student peers (Astin, 1984, 1993). A consistent finding of the ongoing research study was the student peer group was the top influence upon a college student. College impact was a function of the quality of student experiences and number or quantity of them. Recognition of leader identity by a student was one of the outcome variables identified. Following this general student development model, a more detailed understanding of leader identity formation is provided below.

Leader Identity Development Theory

Leader Identity Development (LID) Theory focused on how students internally perceived themselves as a leader in a positional role or informally within a group (Komives et al., 2005). Leader skills and leader identity are clearly divided. For example, often the professional literature regarding peer study group leaders mentions acquisition of small group management skills instead of emergence of a new identity as a leader (Arendale, 2019). According to Komives et al. (2005), leader identity is not

taught, rather it emerges from interaction with others. Four influences were catalysts for leader identity emergence: (a) feedback from respected adults, (b) interaction with student peers, (c) meaningful involvement in a job or school project, and (d) reflective thinking by the student of their interactions with others and the work itself (Komives et al., p. 596, 2005).

A six-stage LID model was created by Komives, Dugan, Owen, Slack, and Wagner (2006) based on qualitative research with college students. The student moves from dependence, to independence, and finally interdependence through interaction with others. Identity emerges as a person changes their view of self, not through formal classes. The six-stages are a continuum of leader identity for self. Stages one and two occur during childhood and adolescence. Stage one, *Awareness*, recognizes authority figures (examples: family members, school teachers, and other community members) to which a child is dependent. Stage two, *Exploration/Engagement*, occurs often during middle or high school. The young person interacts with local authority members (examples: others in school, athletic events, and local organisations). The person may be elected, selected, or recognized for formal or informal leader roles (examples: employee, athlete team leader, elected school club president, active class discussion or project participant, or mentor younger family members). Stages three through six often appear after secondary school. In stage three, *Leader Identified*, leader identity appears as a consequence of formal appointment to a positional group leader in a hierarchical position. Power is held by this person without shared leadership responsibility for the group (examples: club president, employee supervisor, or teaching assistant). With stage four, *Leadership Differentiated*, the leader seeks to influence instead of

commanding others. Power is shifted to the group so that others help direct efforts. Stage five, *Generativity*, occurs when the leader not only shares power, but is active in developing leadership capability and agency by group members. The next generation of leaders are cultivated within the group so many achieve their leader identity. The final stage, *Integration/Synthesis*, occurs when the leader of the group cultivates connections with other groups for mutual goal achievement (examples: alliance with other college resources, student clubs, or external advocacy organisations). The group leader seeks to only influence and promotes others into formal or informal leader positions (Komives et al., 2006). Komives and her colleagues remind others the journey is not one of a strict hierarchy of one-way movement, but often students cycle back-and-forth among stages as they progress in their changing leader identity. Some criticism of their model was that it appeared to focus more on the visible leaders within the group and not the important and indispensable roles displayed by the other group members. The final of three theories sought to provide a nuanced recognition of leader identity by a wide range of group members.

Network Leadership Development Theory

A corollary theory is *Network Leadership Development Theory (NLD)* (Meuser et al., 2016). NLDT states life and work is a complex interactive dynamic environment requiring group members achieve leader identity to solve complex problems. Both LID and NLDT are relational network leadership theories. However, NLD flattens the perceived hierarchical elements of LID by stating group members must function at the upper levels of the leader identity scale. Elected or appointed leaders are encouraged to expend equal energy for task accomplishment along with helping network members to

achieve their own leader identity so as a team they can solve problems. Based on the NLT theory, hierarchy is a barrier for increased productivity. Network members can be just as valuable through less visible leader behaviors such as fostering deeper group conversations, gentle nudges towards project goal achievement without formal appointment as a leader, or talking often. When the situation requires them to assume a more visible role within the group, these network leaders are prepared to respond.

Summary

The ecosystem for understanding leader identity emergence has become more sophisticated since Astin in 1984. Moving from Astin's general model of student leader identity development, the mechanisms for fostering its emergence now include Komives et al. (2005) and Meuser et al. (2016) who expand the scope of leader development to all members of a group. In the next section, specific venues for leader identity emergence are identified.

Literature Review Regarding Venues for Leader Identity Emergence

Increasingly, student experiences in organizations, athletic teams, and campus part-time jobs have been studied through the lens of the previous three leadership theories. These student venues include: academic tutoring, student organisations, organized sports, extended orientation courses, identity-based organisations, academic peer study groups, and Students as Partners. They include examples from Australia, Belgium, Indonesia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Academic Tutoring Programs

Crandall (2017) utilized the lens of the LID model (Komives et al., 2005) to examine personal and professional growth among academic tutors through a qualitative

study of eight college students at a two-year institution in the U.S. Four themes emerged from her research: "…working in a family environment, working with diverse others, leadership empowerment, and tutors as leaders" (p. iii). A previously uncited variable fostering leader identity development, higher levels of tutor training, was discovered as helping to propel experienced tutors to the higher range of the six-stage model by Komives et al. (2005). This study found content and pedagogy in advanced tutor training curriculum promoted higher levels of identity formation. The source of the curriculum standards and outlines were from the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) and specifically their certification program for academic tutors (CRLA, 2020). CRLA had three levels of certification for tutoring programs. Certification was attached to the tutor training program and did not certify individual academic tutors. The campus program made that determination. Crandall's study confirmed findings from Sutherland and Gilbert (2013) regarding identity emergence of academic tutors.

Crandall theorized several catalysts fostered leader identity emergence. An important component of higher levels of the CRLA tutor training was reflective writing of their work experiences and role-playing during training exercises. Focusing upon themselves and noting changes in self-perceptions may have been a catalyst for the tutor identity emergence. Another catalyst could have been recognition of their efficacy as a tutor and development of an identity as a consequence. Development occurred as the tutors grew in confidence that resulted from success in dealing with new challenges with students in tutoring situations. The tutors received positive feedback not only from the tutees, but also other tutors who provided a supportive network of peers of their increased competency. Supportive mentoring relationships are formed when a

respected tutor provides positive feedback regarding job performance of the novice tutor. Mentoring has been found to enable others to see themselves as more capable, empowered, and as a person worthy of a leader identity (Pascarella & Terennizzi, 1991, 2005). A common training assignment for new tutors was observing experienced tutors and then a subsequent conversation to discuss choices made and possibilities for improvement. Role-playing during tutor training workshops allowed them to practice their leader roles and receive positive feedback which in turn supported growth of a competent leader identity (Priest & Clegorne, 2015; Vatan & Temel, 2016).

Student Organizations

Fediansyah and Meutia (2017) examined the potential catalyst of a leadership class offered during secondary school for fostering leader identity development. They conducted a qualitative study of 15 high school students enrolled in three Sukma Bangsa Schools located in Indonesia. Based on analysis by these researchers, it was the first study of leader identity emergence among high school students. The course name was Organisasi Siswa Intra Sekolah (OSIS). While mandated by the Indonesian government in all public junior and senior high schools to develop future leaders for service at the local and national level, its curriculum was determined by the local secondary school district. Membership was voluntary in the program. Students reported their motivation for the class due to desiring to acquire more skills while others reported pressure from parents and other adults to participate.

OSIS was filled with a variety of elected and appointed leader positions. While an important priority of OSIS was development of leadership skills useful for community agencies and national service, Ferdiansyah and Meutia examined if the young people

achieved various levels of the LID Model of Komives et al. (2005) and the causes of movement among the six levels. The study identified OSIS students moved along the six-stages of the LID model with most clustered at levels three and four. These students sometimes had difficulty recognizing leader identity emergence due to conflicting opinions by parents, teachers, and other local adult members. Part of this difficulty may rest with the stage of development of these high schoolers in comparison with Komives students who were exclusively postsecondary (Patton, Renn, Guido, & Quaye, 2016). It appeared OSIS students sought external validation for their internal change of leader identity emergence. This study suggested the OSIS experience could have been enriched by the students selecting other organizations with which to join and exercise their new leader identity. According to Fediansyah and Meutia, a key catalyst of identity formation was student reflections of the OSIS course and how they applied their new skills and identity.

Organized Sports

Kaya (2017) identified the role organized sports had in fostering leader identity emergence, especially for recent immigrants to the U.S. His qualitative study was based on in-depth individual interviews with 15 newcomers in North Carolina. Sports competition had less barriers for recent immigrants since players valued competitiveness and scoring performance and was not heavily dependent upon verbal or written fluency in English which was the second, third, fourth, or more language proficiency of these student athletes. These students expressed that their leader identity flourished through their own efforts and was not dependent upon the official designation of being a leader by the adults who supervised the athletic practices, game preparation,

and actual game performance. Kaya found sports-related leader identity carried over into their personal lives where they took more leader roles within their communities, families, and friends. Sports also presented a venue to develop cultural and social skills. Kaya found these young people displayed growth along the continuum line of leader identity development identified by Komives et al. (2005). Danish, Forneris, Hodge, and Heke (2004) found unique conditions presented through athletic competition foster leader identity emergence: pressure, problem solver, goal setting, dealing with victory and defeat, working in a small group, and communication under stressful situations.

Fransen, Vanbeselaere, De Cuyper, Vande Broek, and Boen (2014) conducted an extensive study of nearly 4,500 athletes and coaches in nine sports located in Belgium. Their study illustrated opportunities for leader identity emergence since only one of four major leader roles within a team is appointed by the coach. While most literature on leadership in sports has previously focused on the coach and the appointed team captain, participants in this research revealed other leader identities occur off the athletic field and during the game: motivational leader, social leader, and external leader. These other identities emerged through interactions among the players on and off the field. Measuring winning percentages and achievement of tournament victories was higher among teams with shared informal leadership among half a dozen players. This concept was consistent with network leadership built upon many members of a team emerging with their own leader identities to support team success rather than attempting to gain appointment as a formal leader. This finding supports the reason for the usefulness of organized sports for fostering leader identity emergence of many team

members and the reason for economic and policy support of competitive athletics as essential co-curricular education.

Extended Orientation Courses

Linscott (2020) conducted a qualitative study of extended orientation (EO) course leaders at Ohio University (Athens, OH, U.S.) to examine the emergence of leader identity as a result of their interactions with students. While much has been written concerning EO program participants regarding increased student persistence towards graduation, little has been learned about changes among the EO leaders. Three major themes emerged: sense of institutional belonging, development of leadership capabilities and leader identity, and overall co-curricular learning experience. Linscott used the LID model (Komives et al., 2005) and found the data revealed leader identity emergence.

While most EO leaders began with an understanding of positional leader identity (level 3, LID) due to their formal appointment as EO group leaders, they emerged to higher LID levels. Rather than relying on power granted to them as the official leader, most instead moved to a collaborative model of leadership in which power and influence was transferred to the EO participants with cultivation of their own LID levels. A unique feature of the LID development was fluidity of movement among the different levels, sometimes higher and sometimes lower. This explains why the EO leaders sometimes perceived themselves as leaders and other times they did not. Common phrases repeated among the EO leaders were of relationship development and shared leadership. Angie, one of the EO leaders shared her discovery, and noted the "…importance of being a flexible and inclusive leader who is mindful of individual

differences” (p. 187). A few OE leaders reported the influence of their role in helping solidify interests in future careers such as childhood education and medicine. This aligns with vocational identity development that postulates that students pursue careers due to positive experiences and supportive feedback in occupational involvement. This emphasizes again a theme from this research study that serving as an EO leader is a co-curricular learning opportunity with long-term impact on future choices and self-perceptions of identity.

Identity-based Organizations

Renn and Bilodeau (2005) investigated concurrent emergence of personal identity and leader identity among student leaders in the U.S. While their focus was among lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) student leaders, their research provides insights for a larger context within other identity-based student groups such as Greek organisations (fraternities, sororities), racial organisations (Black, Asian), and others. Renn and Bilodeau studied college students at three institutions located in the central U.S. The leader identity development model by Komives et al. (2005) was validated by the LGBT students.

The researchers identified identity-based activism was a catalyst for personal development and leadership activism. Since the LGBT community has been historically marginalized by some within U.S. society, the researchers found the leaders were often focused on building consensus of the group towards action instead of serving as a solitary leader for the group to follow. This finding was consistent with research for other identity-based student groups.

Implications of the research by Renn and Bilodeau (2005) included: (1) deeper understanding of the meaning of being a queer leader, (2) including identity development as a part of leadership education programs, and (3) providing an option for students enrolled in leadership education programs to be placed in a cultural context section of the course focused on a particular identity (racial, sexual orientation, vocation) to encourage both personal and professional growth as well as historic challenges and opportunities for leadership.

Academic Peer Study Groups

Arendale (2019) maintains an annotated bibliography of 1,550 publications related to postsecondary academic peer-led study groups that includes *Emerging Scholars Program* (ESP), *Peer-led Team Learning* (PLTL), *Structured Learning Assistance* (SLA), and *Supplemental Instruction/Peer Assisted Study Sessions* (SI/PAS). Of these publications, 78 reported development of leadership skills and a few emergence of leader identity for facilitators of the groups. Two-thirds were from SI/PASS programs and the remainder were from PLTL. Arranged in frequency order, the studies were from the U.S., Australia, United Kingdom, Sweden, Canada, Ireland, and South Africa. Of those 78 studies, outcomes included: leadership skills (39 studies), leadership roles (7 studies), leadership development (6 studies), leader identity emergence (4 studies), and a few other topics. Skalicky, and Caney (2010) investigated a PASS program in Australia regarding leadership of study group leaders at the University of Tasmania in Australia. Twelve development themes emerged: organization, facilitation, support, attitude, relationships, role model, collaboration, communication, responsibility, decision making, pedagogy, and session management.

Students displayed growth as they moved from the initial role as PASS leader to the more demanding role of PASS mentor.

In a study by Arendale, Hane, and Fredrickson (2020) focused on the *Peer Assisted Learning Program* developed at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities (Arendale, 2014), ninety percent of the PAL facilitators described growth in leadership skills which could also be identified as group management skills. Half of the facilitators expressed for the first time emergence of a leader identity. For many, perceiving themselves and being recognized by study group participants as a leader was a revelation. From this theme of leader identity emergence, four sub-themes were identified: (a) positional leader identity; (b) leader identity evoked conflicting emotions of awe, confidence, and fear; (c) identity emergence was dependent upon subject mastery and peer relationships; and (d) serving as sole positional leader of the study group evoked leader identity. Findings from the study suggested half the facilitators self-identified as a leader due to experience within PAL and reflection about themselves. This new identity emerged from: (a) job duties as facilitator; (b) feedback from the participating students, fellow facilitators, and the program administrator; (c) recognition as a subject matter expert; and (d) numerous written self-reflections of themselves during the initial PAL training and throughout the academic term.

Students as Partners (SaP)

Students as Partners (SaP) is a conceptual model first popularized in the United Kingdom to engage college students as equal partners in the learning process. While SaP is a broader and more sophisticated collection of student involvement roles than those previously described in this chapter, SaP roles share similar outcomes and

processes for students to develop new identities, learn new personal and professional skills, and exercise power delegated to them by staff and course faculty members. Examples of student roles include curriculum development and assessment design. Course redesign is an emerging activity in the U.S. to deal with first-year student retention problems, but it generally involves only course faculty and student services staff but seldom, if ever, empowers students to be equal partners with course transformation.

Some of the previous student roles in this chapter such as tutoring, orientation courses, and peer study groups could be imbued with partnership and power to become examples of SaP. This new pedagogical approach to higher education “disrupts traditional power structures of learning to offer a shared space where students become co-creators of change (Dianti & Oberhollenzer, 2020, p1). For purposes of this chapter, my overview of this model is confined to curricular co-creation.

The contrasts between higher education in the United States and elsewhere in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom are striking. In the U.S. students and families encounter ever escalating fees with few examples of power sharing and equal partnership with the students, staff, and faculty. Student unions seldom express power with significant classroom and institutional decision making. Too often students are considered passive consumers in their education. In Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom have increased financial support for higher education and correspondedly linked it with equal partnership with the learning environment. Student unions exhibit significant power and decision making. This is the environment which gave rise to SaP where students are engaged as equal partners with

co-creating their learning (Healey, Flint, & Harrington, 2014). Student engagement is a common topic in U.S. higher education. However, the distinction stated by Healey, Flint, and Harrington differentiate SaP, “All partnership is student engagement, but not all student engagement is partnership” (2014, p 7)

The catalyst for leader identity emergence is fueled by power delegated to them through SaP partnership activities. For example, as students receive delegated power over parts of the curriculum and assessment process, they become partners with the staff and faculty. This is an unfamiliar role for students who have often operated within a staff or faculty-centric environment. Students become more comfortable with this new role. Matthews, Dwyer, Hine, and Turner (2018) found SaP students moved beyond the initial role as “co-creators” to become “change agents”. Students perceived themselves as possessing a leader identity (change agent) in a learning ecosystem that had not previously fostered this identity emergence. Kek, Kimmins, Lawrence, Abawi, Lindgren, and Stokes (2017) found in their SaP study students effectively used the delegated power including those that were underrepresented in higher education. The students in the study reported increased understanding of leadership including networked leadership, leadership skills, and confidence in exercising leadership. Healey, Flint, and Harrington (2014) indicated that SaP was powerful for students to develop agency, confidence, and power even if they were from marginalised backgrounds. Those researchers identified many other personal and vocational skills that were manifested as a result of the partnerships. Based on these research studies, it is important for the institution to recruit a diverse group for SaP participation that includes those who are underrepresented and marginalized since they enjoyed positive outcomes similar to the

majority students. SaP is an effective approach for narrowing the achievement gap while supporting widening of access to higher education.

Summary

These case studies from around the globe shared several common themes. Leader identity emergence was often a surprise to the student leaders as an unanticipated by-product from involvement. Except with the case of the Indonesian student organization, leadership skill development and leader identity emergence was not a stated goal of the activity. The identity emergence was part of the student development. Common activities that the researchers cited in their case studies that helped to foster change were student partnership, reflective writing, role-plays, and training workshops for performing the task or performing on the athletic field. Based on the collective experiences of these student venues and the three major leader identity theories, the following section explores a unified model for understanding identity emergence.

A New Leader Identity Emergence Model

Based on Astin (1984, 1993), Komives et al. (2005), and Meuser et al. (2016) LID theories, the following provides a more detailed model to explain student leader identity emergence. This model is based on findings from the previous studies that examined LID emergence among specific student populations: academic tutoring programs, academic peer study groups, extended orientation courses, identity-based organizations, organized sports, and student organizations. While the previous LID emergence models provided general guidance for growth of the students, this new model incorporated more specific student involvement variables and included common

activities that were implemented with these different student populations, which resulted in leader identity emergence in their varied contexts. The following is a brief overview of the model and its different elements.

Due to the interactive nature of student growth, it is recommended to view the model as more of an ecosystem rather than a hierarchical model for linear growth where students move among identity stages in response to their involvement in the postsecondary/tertiary learning environment. Huijser, Kek, Abawi, and Lawrence (2019) identified a healthier environment for students to thrive for growth.

> "…an agile ecology for learning allows for the extension of the learning environment well beyond the university walls….seeking, harnessing and leveraging connections within what students bring to the formal learning environments (e.g. creativity) from other parts of the agile ecology for learning and the aim is thus to blur the boundaries between these different systems, both in a spatial and a temporal sense, in such a way that their connections become seamless. Our argument is that the more seamless or porous the ecology becomes, the more students' prior learning and creativity will be sought, harnessed and leveraged (p. 139).

This new ecosystem for leader identity emergence is influenced by Astin's *Input-Environment-Outcomes model* (also named the *Student Involvement Theory* in this chapter) with three major components: *Input Variables*, *College Environment*, and *Outcomes*. As stated earlier, this ecosystem is dynamic with students cycling among the variables as they continue to grow throughout their college experience.

The *Input Variables* column recognized what future college students bring with them to postsecondary/tertiary institutions with their personal variables such as demographics, skills, personalities, and more. Separately, prior roles in leadership place them at different leader identity stages as outline by Komives et al. (2005) or network leadership roles as identified by Meuser et al. (2016). Finally, student prior interest in

leadership roles and their own road of self-discovery of a personal leader identity created a baseline for their reasons and anticipated outcomes of involvement in the job responsibility, organization, or sport.

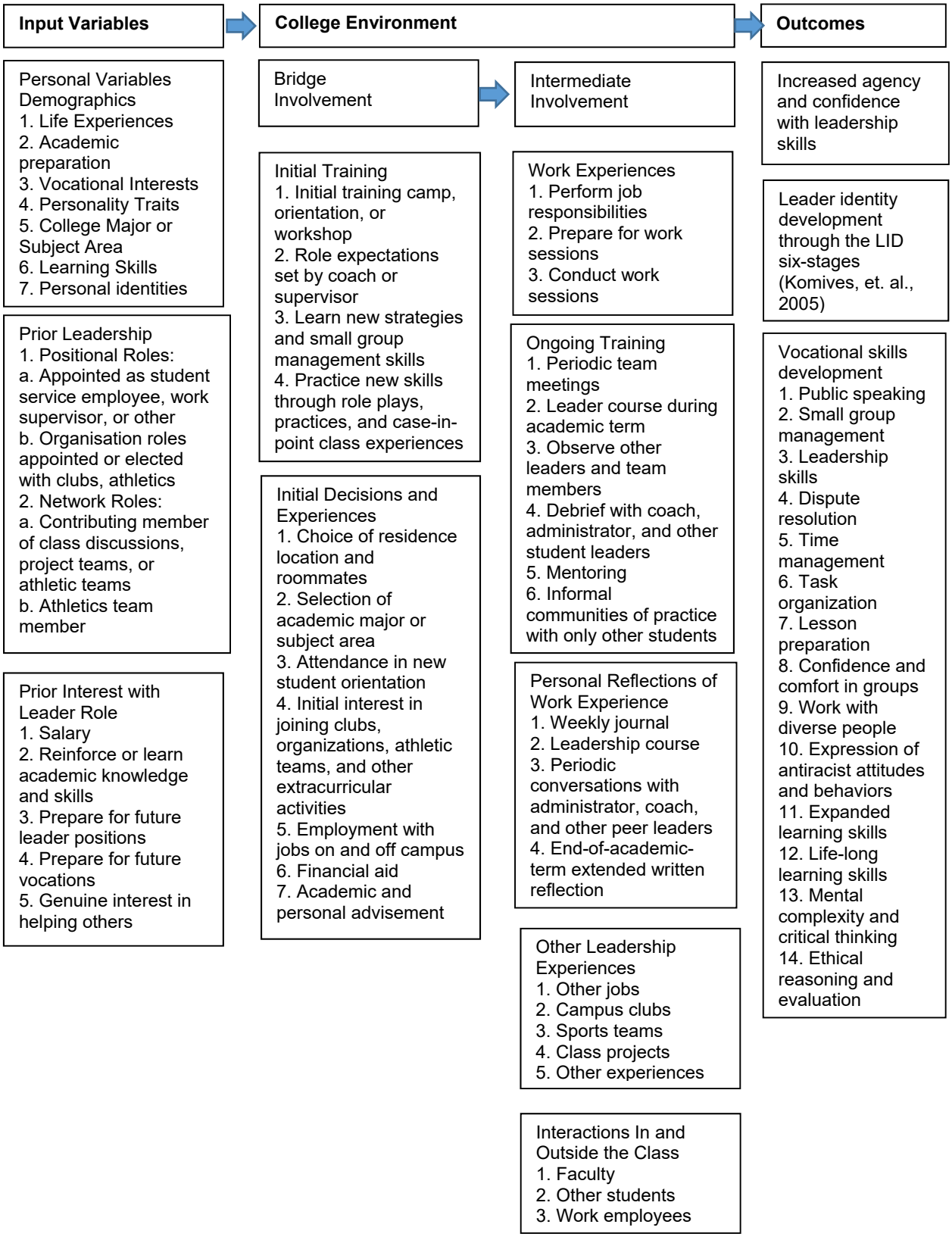
The next major category of variables was the *College Environment*. Within this large overarching category, it was divided into two smaller clusters of variables. The *Bridge Involvement* column identified activities and decisions occurring immediately prior to interacting with the college environment. Initial training camps, orientations, and workshops occur before students began their roles with student paraprofessional jobs, undergraduate teaching assistantships, and participation on sports teams. During these activities, they received basic training for their roles and setting of expectations. These activities often included reflective writing, role-plays, and practices. At the same time of their formal or informal preparation for a particular activity, such as an extended orientation leader, they concurrently made initial decisions and experiencing other activities. Bridge involvement activities and decisions shaped the rest of their college experience, which was defined as *Intermediate Involvement*.

The *Intermediate Involvement* column contained the rest of the college experience. In the case of this model, it represented student experience during their first academic term in their student paraprofessional role or their involvement in an organization or sports team. Time was divided into five categories: (a) the work experience; (b) ongoing training which may include a variety of activities such as team meetings, formal leader course, observe other students at work, mentoring, communities of practices with other students, and debriefing with coach, administrator, or other student leaders; (c) personal written reflections of their work and discussions

with others; (d) leadership experiences the facilitators might experience in other places; and (e) their interactions with faculty members, fellow students, and others in the community.

The final component of this ecosystem consisted of *Outcomes Variables* which are results of their experience during and after the first academic term. Many student leaders report improved comfort and confidence in their role. These students emerge in levels three or higher of the six stages of leader identity (Komives et al., 2005). The final box in the right column contains commonly reported outcomes of leaders from their job or role experiences. Growth is more complicated and at times convoluted than this model represents. As stated earlier, growth is a dynamic process that sometimes operates in reoccurring cycles with seamless transitions.

Figure A: Leader Identity Development Model for Students in College Co-Curricular and Extra-Curricular Activities



Recommendations

This chapter has explored how students can undergo significant personal and professional changes in response to the environment inside and outside the classroom. These experiences are co-curricular incubators of student development outcomes. Formal leadership programs are delivered most often through workshops, academic term courses, and academic minors or majors. While direct instruction in leadership is useful, a co-curricular approach through campus athletics, clubs, organizations, and part-time employment provides a living laboratory to try out leadership approaches, reflect upon them, and develop their own leader identity. Komives, Dugan, Owen, Slack, and Wagner (2011) describe approaching leadership education as a developmental process. Field experiences are needed to practice leadership skills. What follows are our recommendations for enhancing co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences.

Integrate leadership vocabulary into the program. Raise awareness of basic leadership concepts and vocabulary into the initial training program, group discussions, and written reflections. Allow students to make connections between the vocabulary and their lived experience. The club sponsor, coach, or program supervisor could join leadership professional associations, read journals of the field, and make connections with others on campus involved with leadership education. Komives et al. (2011) provide a comprehensive list of these resources. Having this basic vocabulary will help students express themselves through written reflections and group discussions.

Create leadership opportunities. Encourage students to exercise leadership within their athletic team, club, or program beyond normal expectations for their role. This could include delivering initial and advanced training workshops for fellow peers,

organizing social activities to encourage bonding and morale, leading practice activities for similar positions on an athletics club, stretching their own perceptions by accepting advanced leader roles, and other activities. Students as Partners already embeds student leadership roles as they received delegated power to co-create the curriculum.

Intentional use of reflections and focused discussions. Students should complete reflective private journal entries regarding their past week's experiences. Ask them to share perceptions of themselves as a leader. These entries could be shared during meetings with students and staff. Intentional reflection is a powerful catalyst for development (Zacharoppulou, Giles, & Condell, 2015). Haver-Curran and Stewart (2015) found personal reflection preceded a person fostering a new identity as a result of successful behaviors. In New Zealand, Sutherland and Gilbert (2013) suggested in addition to the written reflections, that the tutors maintain an e-portfolio of their curriculum and other learning materials to document their work. Massey, Sulak, and Sriram (2013) believed lack of structured reflective writing diminished leader identity emergence for extended orientation leaders.

Foster creation of informal *Communities of Practice* (CoP). CoP is a group of people that naturally occurs due to a common interest and share knowledge in a horizontal fashion with each other (Wenger, 1998). Often, these networks are invisible to others but serve as a powerful mechanism for knowledge education and mutual identity development (O'Brien & Bates, 2015). It is important that these CoP experiences occur separate from the coaches and staff so that communications among students can flow freely and encourage an atmosphere of innovation outside of official job descriptions and expectations. The tutors created their own private CoP and

communicated with one another outside of formal training workshops and meetings through personal interactions. Arendale, Hane, and Fredrickson (2020) discovered the small group study leaders created their own CoP to support themselves with needed information not provided by the peer program training program. Crandall (2017) cited how an informal CoP was vital for the tutors to provide a supportive network outside of official tutor team meetings and training sessions.

Assess leadership development. Evaluate the leadership skill development and leader identity stage of the student leaders through a survey, end-of-term reflective journal entry, weekly journal entries, focus group session, or included as part of personal interviews with them. This information could be included with annual reports to upper-level administrators to document attainment of these outcomes derived. This broadens impact of the program and may provide additional rationale for stable or increased funding.

In summary, the major implication from this research and a review of the professional literature is the opportunity to expand the vision of campus student employment opportunities (extended orientation, study groups, and tutoring), student organizations, and competitive sports. Repositioning them to a comprehensive co-curricular development experience for both the student participants and leaders recognizes their potential for increasing student personal and professional outcomes.

More Research

More research is needed about leader identity formation. A study could be conducted when leader identity was included as part of the training program for the facilitators and measure the outcomes as a result. Creation of a pre- and post-

assessment could help measure change in their identity. Similar studies could be conducted to measure leader identity development in other academic or student affairs programs such as teaching assistants and residence hall staff. A longitudinal study could follow former student leaders to understand if there was residual influence of the experience with their leader identity in the workplace. Conduct deeper investigation of network leadership theory by recording student group sessions and analyzing the conversation among members. This analysis could identity group members who are overlooked for their valuable contributions, which are masked by traditional studies that focus on impact on the appointed leader only. This deeper level of analysis can identify more participants who have achieved leader identity but due to being quiet are overlooked.

Conclusion

This chapter has identified that student leader role experiences led to self-discovery of a new leader identity and has offered reasons for how and why this occurred. It is a subtle shift from practicing the job role as appointed leader/manager of a group to embracing a leader identity. Student involvement in campus activities represents untapped co-curricular leader experiences that could be more powerful if they were intentional rather than serendipitous, regarding identity emergence. A key catalyst for the emerged identity were reflections about what the group leader was learning about themselves and conversations with fellow leaders, coaches, club sponsors, staff, faculty members, and program administrators. This chapter identifies a new agile ecosystem that fosters this student development regardless of the activity's venue. Leader identity emergence and interpersonal skill development helps students

prepare for a future career and a lifetime of engaged community involvement and citizenship.

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