



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

“That’s Infectious”:

Leadership Development in African American Male College Students

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Overview

- Background and literature
- Study design
- Findings
- Implications
- Discussion and Application
- Q&A



Background-Leadership Development

Leadership Development

- Need for skills (Sutton & Terrell, 1997)
- Interest for social change (Harper & Quaye, 2007; Dugan et al., 2008)
- Effectiveness of leadership programs (Eich, 2008; Teasley et al., 2007)

Theory

- Social capital (Coleman, 1988)
- Astin's involvement theory (1984)
- Self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977)



Background- Program

Todd A. Bell National Resource Center

- Campus-wide assessment

Leadership Institute

- Group-centered leadership vs. charismatic leadership (Marable, 1998)
- Honesty and integrity (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991)
- Level Five Leadership (Collins, 2011)



Study Design

- Research Questions
 - How does the institute facilitate leadership development?
 - What are the effects of participating in leadership programming?
 - What is the relationship between participation in leadership programming and connectedness?
 - What is the relationship between participation in leadership programming and personal development?



Study Design

- Context
 - Large, Midwestern research university
 - African American males 2.84% of undergraduate population
- Case Studies
 - 11 participants (from pool of 40)
 - Semi-structured interviews



Study Design

- Analysis
 - Creswell (2008)
 - Researchers-
 - Independently generated codes and themes
 - Found consensus on final themes
 - Trustworthiness



Overview of Findings

- Social Engagement
 - Mentoring and being mentored
 - Peer-to-peer interactions
 - Networking
- Professional Development
 - Pre-entry characteristics
 - Self-awareness
 - Legacy planning/ succession
 - Leadership skills



Social Engagement: Mentoring and being mentored

“A powerful tool for developing effective leadership behaviors”
(Solansky, 2010)

“...the age demographic was cool too just cause there were some older people in there that you got to learn from who weren't just all entry level.”

“I saw. . . the second years and third years trying to be . . . a mentor at times to some of the younger students. . . (I)t's always good to see others, . . . who are excelling, so it makes the idea of you doing the same also form.”



Social Engagement: Peer-to-Peer Interactions

Learning platforms, even if not formally designated as mentoring relationships

“The greatest part of being part of the institute is you’re not the only person there that has done something substantial and who has the potential to do things 1,000 more times substantial. . . . And that’s infectious.”

“There’s nothing quite like being in the midst of equally viable leaders as you would consider yourself... [The experience] made me a better leader simply by being in the midst of other leaders but also a better leader in the sense of knowing how to engage with my particular student body and the community of which I was a part.”



Social Engagement: Networking

Builds interpersonal skills and social capital

“Social electricity”

“[It] made me better at communicating with those already in the workforce, and allowed me to expand my network.”



Professional Development: Pre-Entry Characteristics

Social Participation Theory (Selznick, 1992)

- Core vs. Segmental

“I was senior class president. I was captain of my basketball team. ...the drum leader in my marching band. I participated in our link crew program where seniors would mentor freshman and I did that my senior year.”

“[B]ut I found that when I came to the college that I kinda stopped being that kind of leader... and I kind of was just a student. Just trying to find my way... things like the Leadership Institute kind of reignited me to be a leader.”



Professional Development: Self-Awareness/Reflection

Higher-quality leadership programs use reflection as a tool for learning and development (Eich, 2008).

“We did a leadership profile... it let me know what were my strong points, what were my weak points, and so I could focus on those for professional development.”

“I kind of had to re-evaluate myself to figure out what I want from myself, what I want from my peers, and then from my organization.”



Professional Development: Legacy Planning

Shift from personal achievement to long-term success (Collins, 2001)

“It was great being a cofounder of this organization, but at the end of the day I realized that it really didn’t mean much of anything if the organization didn’t exist or persist two or three years after I had graduated.”

“What you lead or who you lead is best representative of how you leave it, how things run when you are gone.”



Professional Development: Leadership Skills

“Students learn leadership by doing it and programs that provide opportunities for student leadership create ripples of positive outcomes for students and society” (Eich, 2008).

“One of the key components of a level five leader... is the integrity piece and the consistency piece.... I know that some of the leaders from the previous institute, they display that integrity and I feel they definitely had it enhanced by participating [in the institute].”



Implications

- For students
 - Increased civic responsibility
 - Gain transferrable skills
 - Increased preparation for leadership positions
- For programs
 - Creating environment for success
 - Practicing leadership
 - Peer interactions
 - Creating opportunities for reflection



Discussion

- Are any of you involved in leadership development programming?
- Are there any things we found that could help your work?



Questions?



Thank you!

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