EXPLORING IDENTITY WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF LEADERSHIP

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

Identity has emerged as a compelling force in understanding leadership. Situated within the identity approach to leadership, this study explored identity within the context of leadership for both assigned (e.g., positional) and emergent (e.g., nonpositional) student leaders. A mixed-methods design across three component studies aided in understanding the identities possessed by student leaders that are most active in their leadership, as well as how these personal, relational, and collective identity levels manifest in their group contexts of student organizations, faith communities, employment, and academic projects. Findings from this study suggest that a distinct set of a leader's identities is active in leadership, that leaders possess a stronger personal identity orientation compared to other identity levels, and three ways in which identity influences leadership. By making connections between identity and leadership, educators and practitioners may strengthen their understanding of how their curriculum and workshops may serve as identity workspaces for leaders. As scholars have posited, identity salience can be understood as the likelihood that a particular identity will be invoked in diverse situations. More dialogue and research are warranted to understand how leaders consciously consider identity within diverse leadership contexts.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my families of origin and choice.

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Anfangen ist leicht, Beharren eine Kunst. – German Proverb

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CONTRIBUTORS AND FUNDING SOURCES

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Identity permeates everything we do as individuals (Bridwell-Bowles, DeVore, & Littlefield, 1998; Chávez & Sanlo, 2013; Donovan, 2006). Chávez and Sanlo (2013) explained that "identity manifests in the way we lead, supervise, make decisions, persuade, form relationships, and negotiate the myriad responsibilities each day" (p. 3). This ever-present component then supports the creditability and coherence of an identity approach to leadership (Haslam, Reicher, & Platow, 2011); however, the notion of identity has received minimal attention among leadership scholars until recently (Ibarra, Wittman, Petriglieri, & Day, 2014).

Previous approaches to leadership spanned traits, skills, style, situational, and contingency perspectives. These approaches were differentiated by emphasizing the leader or a leadership process (Northouse, 2016). Briefly, the trait perspective suggested that individuals have special innate or born characteristics or qualities that determine if they are leaders (Northouse, 2016), while the skills approach placed emphasis on learnable and developable skills and abilities of leaders (Northouse, 2016). With this shift in leadership to a phenomenon that can be learned and developed, the style approach emerged, in which leader behavior is paramount (Northouse, 2016). Situational and contingency approaches were the next wave, suggesting that success is dependent upon leadership exercised in particular situations and the leader-match theory, respectively. A more recent approach accepted in the research community is the

transformational approach. The transformational approach gives more attention to charismatic and affective elements of leadership (Bryman, 1992). Finally, a contemporary approach to leadership has been posited (Winkler, 2010). Underpinning this approach are two theories: the attribution theory of leadership and the psychodynamic theory of leadership. "Both of these contemporary approaches define leadership as being ascribed by followers but not as an objective fact based on traits and behavior" (Winkler, 2010, p. 2). These theories rely on an emotional relation between the followers and the leader. Because each approach has notable limitations (Northouse, 2016), what might the understanding of leader and follower identities additively explain across all previous approaches to leadership? To state the question another way: has identity been a lurking or confounding variable previously missed in leadership scholarship?

Identity is an important aspect to individuals, groups, and society as a whole. "Identity is important typically because it grounds individuals in understanding who they are, what are their major goals and aspirations, and what are their personal strengths and challenges" (Day, 2014, p. 400). Followers, groups, and teams have similar needs in their shared understanding of who they are, what are their goals, and what are their strengths and weaknesses (Tajfel, 1982). Leadership scholars and practitioners must understand the critical elements of personal, relational, social, and collective identity levels (Sedikides & Brewer, 2001) and their influence on leadership. More recent research has continued to build on this need for a leader to understand his or her identity.

For instance, Ruderman and Ernst (2004) stated that it is no longer enough for leaders to understand their capabilities, motivations, styles, and values; to be effective requires them to have knowledge of their social identities.

Accordingly, a perspective has emerged that more clearly links identity processes and leadership (e.g., Carroll & Levy, 2010; Day & Harrison, 2007; Hogg, 2001a; Ibarra et al., 2014; Lord & Brown, 2004; Lord & Hall, 2005; Petriglieri, 2012; Snook, Ibarra, & Ramo, 2010; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003; van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, Cremer, & Hogg, 2004). In their examination of the emerging scholarship at this intersection, Ibarra et al. (2014) brought attention to the themes of the role that leader identities play in a leader's emergence, effectiveness, and development. They proposed three threads of identity theories and asserted them as relevant to the study of leadership (Day, 2014). These three threads are role-based, social identity, and social constructivist theories (Day, 2014), for which the authors provided a summary of three recent theoretical areas in the field. With the solidification of this method of inquiry, this perspective has been suggested as an emergent and now-formalizing approach to leadership scholarship, education, and development (Ibarra et al., 2014).

A review of the scholarly studies on leadership reveals a wide variety of different theoretical approaches to explain the complexities of the leadership process (Northouse, 2016). These approaches (trait, behavior, and transformational) include both qualitative and quantitative methods in a wide variety of contexts. With the addition of the identity approach to leadership, leadership scholars and practitioners may gain new insights and

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confirm long-held beliefs that may prove valuable in their contributions to understanding the social phenomenon of leadership.

In their book *The New Psychology of Leadership,* Haslam et al. (2011) worked to persuade the reader of the creditability and coherence of an identity leadership approach. They contrasted the old psychology of leadership (briefly summarized above), which emphasized what makes leaders special or unique, with a focus on "we-ness" with their followers. Leadership scholars historically spent considerable effort on these distinguishable characteristics or traits shared among influential leaders rather than those shared with their group. This at-times-faulty trend transcends one discipline and includes contributions from management theorists, historians, politicians, and journalists in their desire to understand this social phenomenon.

Regardless, Haslam et al. (2011) continued building a case for an identity approach to leadership by arguing that previous approaches endorsed an individualistic understanding of leadership. These authors and others spent considerable time highlighting the theoretical, political, and definitional issues present in earlier approaches to the field of leadership (Ely, Ibarra, & Kolb, 2011). For instance, the authors highlighted that even Stogdill (1948) and Mann (1959) recognized the highly varied and generally low relationship between the personality and character elements of leadership. Both Stogdill (1948) and Mann (1959) pointed to the role of leadership context and a greater need for empirical measures. Thus, Haslam et al. (2011) suggested in its place the necessity that a new psychology of leadership must contain five criteria.

These criteria are (a) nonindividualistic, (b) context-sensitive, (c) perspective-sensitive, (d) inspirational and transformative, and (e) empirically valid (Haslam et al., 2011).

The two criteria of the identity approach to leadership that have not yet been discussed, context-sensitive and perspective-sensitive, are equally valuable in understanding leadership. As Stogdill (1948) suggested, rather than seeing leaders as capable in all situations, leadership scholars need to understand that the capacity of any leader to exert influence over others is related to the context in which their collective relationship is defined (i.e., organization). This frames the need of context-sensitive scholarship within the examination of an identity approach to leadership. The perspective-sensitive criteria stemmed from the idea that the "one near universal feature of prevailing approaches is that they assume that if one has identified the right person for a particular leadership positon, the suitability will be recognized by all" (Haslam et al., 2011, p. 18). As social psychologists, Haslam et al. (2011) were primarily concerned with the follower's perspective; however, other perspectives, such as fellow leaders, outside onlookers, the public, or others, could be considered within this criterion. Likely, the context suggests which perspective-sensitive criteria be enacted within the research. For instance, for political scientists, the perspective-sensitive approach may be eligible voters rather than world leaders. It becomes ever more important for scholars to name these perspectives and contexts in rich and thick ways.

Because context-sensitive and perspective-sensitive criteria are central to an identity approach to leadership (Haslam et al., 2011), considering existing research on

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college students and the context of their leadership was necessary for the purposes of this study. Despite the complex nature of identity, identities may activate at any given time and are usually tied to the pressures in a given social context (Markus & Wurf, 1987). For example, the identity of a student is activated when attending a class, but can become deactivated and replaced by a leader identity if the person receives an urgent text message from a member of a student organization for which they are president about an issue at an event. For this reason, a brief review of context-sensitive (i.e., college-level student leaders) and perspective-sensitive (i.e., leader's perspective) scholarship is now reviewed to aid framing the present study.

College students are "typically individuals engaged in postsecondary learning experiences" (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2009, p. 5), mainly in formal settings such as colleges, universities, and other such institutions. Additionally, college students also engage in learning outside the institution when they are at work, doing service, studying abroad, or living in community. Because of their accessibility to researchers, there is substantial identity (Evans et al., 2009; Jones, Abes, & Quaye, 2013) and leadership (Komives, Dugan, Owen, Slack, & Wagner, 2006) research on college-aged individuals in the United States (Astin & Astin, 2000; Avolio et al., 2005; Thelin, 2003). While these fields have established histories for scholars, examination at their intersection is relatively new (Chávez & Sanlo, 2013).

As Hancock (2016) asserted in her book, *Intersectionality: An Intellectual History,* numerous scholars have acknowledged the development of "intersectionality

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from an idea into a field of study" (p. 4). Additionally, Berger and Guidroz (2009)

posited that intersectionality has become social literacy; "to be an informed social

theorist or methodologist in many fields of inquiry … one must grapple with the

implications of intersectionality" (p. 7). This growth within academia may have provided

the impetus for leadership scholars to delve more deeply into the identity and leadership

intersection. Much of the earlier scholarship in the area of student leaders and identities

examined social identities independently as discrete units of analysis (Jones & McEwen,

2000). Thus, the intersectional approach could have potentially given rise to the identity

approach to leadership in the first place.

Intersections of identity and leadership are relatively common in the academic

environment, but sometimes they are incorrectly oversimplified. For instance, identity-

based campus spaces serve as sites for peer support and leadership growth (Harper &

Quaye, 2007; Patton, 2010; Sutton & Kimbrough, 2001). These centers tend to

"foreground both marginalized populations (e.g. by race, ethnicity disability or

sexuality) as well as the societal structures and dynamics that produce and perpetuate

marginalization and oppression (e.g. racism, heterosexism and ableism)" (Torres, et al.,

2009, p. 583). Examples of higher education's identity-based spaces range from women,

interfaith, disability, queer, multicultural, or even more specific centers for American

Indian or Asian and Pacific Islander communities, to name a few. The existing student

leadership scholarship and its intersections with identity have tended to parallel these

physical centers (Patton, 2010), including, for instance, women student leaders, lesbian-

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gay-bisexual-transgender-questioning (LGBTQ) student leaders, or African American male student leaders and their experiences.

More recently, however, there have been a growing number of studies with multiple intersecting identities and their interaction with leadership (Bridwell-Bowles, 1998; Espiritu, 1994; Thompson & Tyagi, 1996). Even when bringing multiple social identities together, research approaches have resulted in additive strategies rather than truly integrative ones (Bowleg, 2008) that would mirror more closely the leaders' lived experiences. While not student leadership–related, Bowleg (2008) titled her article addressing methodological challenges with symbols that represent additive and intersectional approaches: "When Black + Lesbian + Woman ≠ Black Lesbian Woman." This intricate scholarship dug into distinguishing characteristics of student leaders as related to other leaders of shared social identities. Even with expanding scholarship, it is difficult to center the intersection of identity within the context of leadership, leading professional associations to call upon the community for further research.

To illustrate, the National Leadership Research Agenda of the Association of Leadership Educators (Andenoro et al., 2013) has recommended that "leadership scholars and educators should more effectively center considerations of social identity in leadership research, education, and practice" (p. 19), noting that "considerations for the unique needs of varying social identity groups related to effective pedagogical approaches and educational interventions are necessary" (p. 19). Even with this call to

scholars, a review of the Association's *Journal of Leadership Education* yields moderate but disjointed work in this area.

Lebrón (2018) looked at strategies for discussing social activism and social identity for the purpose of analyzing power and influence tactics for leadership education, while earlier, Brue and Brue (2017) analyzed leadership role identity and its impact on emergent leadership to improve opportunities for women in leadership. Additionally contributing to this research agenda theme were Collins, Suarez, Beatty, and Rosch (2017), who investigated leadership capacity in their research comparing identity-based leadership immersion programs. Their study compared an all-black male program and black men in a separate racially and gender-diverse session. Early (2017) investigated the role played by race and gender pairings in leadership capacities for resident assistants who were paired with a mentor based on data obtained in a Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership report. Additionally, Preston-Cunningham, Elbert, and Dooley (2017) explored first-year female students' definitions of leadership after participating in a women's learning circle. Bowers, Rosch, and Collier (2016) focused on the gains associated with international and domestic student participation in leadership development; findings suggested that while similarly sized gains emerged, predictive factors differed for student increases in leadership skills. Coincidentally, Tillapaugh and Haber-Curran (2016) interviewed four college men to unpack their leader perceptions of power and influence. Finally, Preston-Cunningham, Boyd, Elbert, Dooley, and Peck-Parrott (2016) provided insight into African American males

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preforming leadership at a predominately white institution. *Journal of Leadership Education* scholarship within this intersectional area is growing, but the foundation for identity process and leadership framework remains underinvestigated for student leadership.

I.1 Significance of the Research

As shared, a review of scholarly studies on leadership has demonstrated different theoretical approaches, with each explaining the complexities of the leadership process (e.g., Bass & Stogdill, 1990; Bryman, 1992; Bryman, Collinson, Grint, Uhl-Bien, & Jackson, 2011; Day & Harrison, 2007; Gardner & Avolio, 1998; Hickman, 2016; Mumford, 2006; Northouse, 2016; Rost, 1991), but none can explain them on their own. This suggests that intersectional approaches are necessary to understand this complicated phenomenon across a multitude of contexts.

Both topics—leadership and identity—acknowledge the importance of context in understanding each phenomenon. The situational or contingency approach, as mentioned above, asserts that situational factors are at the center of any understanding of leadership (Bryman, 1992). Research has suggested that a potentially significant situational factor may be when identities of the group or leader align (Haslam et al., 2001; van Knippenberg, 2011). In addition, the contingency theory also recommends a match between leader styles and situations (Fiedler, 1967). Psychological studies have consistently proved how matches between the leader and follower on relational elements lead to likeability and increased influence by the leader over followers (Hogg, 2001b;

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(van Knippenberg, 2011). This builds the argument for a leader's need to understand how their identity, identity levels, and subsequent influence on the context or situation impact their leadership. On the other hand, identity as a social construct emphasizes that context and interactions with others—including other people, societal norms, and/or expectations evolving from culture—influence how one constructs one's identity (Jones, 1997; McEwen, 2003; Torres, 2003; Weber, 1998). Thus, both topics require specific contextual understandings to describe and explain them in a meaningful way.

The identity context in which leadership is enacted has not received much attention, leading House and Aditya (1997) to state that "it is almost as though leadership scholars . . . have believed that leader-follower relationships exist in a vacuum" (p. 445). Further calls have been made to integrate context into the study of leadership (Lowe & Gardner, 2000) and organizational behavior (Johns, 1991; Rousseau & Fried, 2001). Thus, the present study examined the role that identity plays in the context of leadership.

I.2 Research Questions

Although leadership and identity are well-researched within the fields of sociology, psychology, and leadership studies, little has been examined at their nexus. This study sought to understand leadership and identity in a context shared by both. Specifically, the study focused on the leader's identity and explored significant identities that affect their leadership. The focal research questions for each of the three studies included in this larger study were as follows:

1. What identities do leaders possess? Which identity level(s) is/are most salient in their leadership?

2. Which identity orientation(s) is/are most salient to leaders? Which is/are most influential to leadership?

3. How is a leader's leadership affected by their salient identities?

I.3 Individual Study Purposes and Methodologies

Chapter II, Chapter, III, and Chapter IV discuss individual studies whose collective purpose intended to answer the above research questions. Each section begins with an introduction and overview of the specific research objectives—which may extend beyond the primary research questions above. Then, each individual study section outlines the methodology/methods, findings/results, and subsequent recommendations for both practitioners and scholars. Chapter V summarizes learnings and implications with all three studies considered together. The purposes and specific research objectives for each individual study are summarized below (before presenting the first individual study).

I.3.1 Considering Leaders' Identities, Identity Levels, and Those Active in Leadership

Chapter II begins with the first study entitled *Considering Leaders' Identities, Identity Levels, and Those Active in Leadership*. This individual study addressed these focal research questions: (a) What identities do leaders possess? and (b) Which are most salient in their leadership? Along with these two primary questions, two additional research objectives included the following: (a) Which identity levels (i.e., personal,

relational, social, or collective) are prominent when analyzing the above questions? and

(b) Describe the leadership contexts of participants. These additional objectives are

important because identity levels have implications for leadership development. Plus,

both leadership and identity are sensitive to context, which is important to describe to aid

in transferability for future research and practice.

For this first study, a qualitative paradigm was employed. This paradigm was

most appropriate for the research questions and objectives because open-ended questions

allowed leaders to freely express their identities, as this study was descriptive in nature.

I.3.2 Identity Orientations and Leadership

Identity Orientations and Leadership (Chapter III) is the second individual study

that aided further understanding of the focal research questions. Interest in a particular

topic begins the research process, but familiarity with the subject helps frame the

appropriate research question for a study (Haynes, Sackett, Guyatt, & Tugwell, 2006).

Indeed, Haynes et al. (2006) suggested that it is important to know "where the boundary

between current knowledge and ignorance lies" (p. 1). Building off the insights from the

first study, study two sought to establish relationships with current literature. First, it

contributed to the determination of which identity orientation is most salient to leaders

using a pre-established quantitative instrument. Next, the second individual study sought

to determine if the primary identity level of leaders is related to a leader's most active

identity within their leadership.

Therefore, a descriptive, mixed-methods study was employed using multiple case studies with sequential data collection (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). This methodology was chosen as the pre-established instrument, aided with reliability and validity. The second research question was achieved via a qualitative data analysis process, but it used correlation analysis to test for associations between identity levels (quantitative) and active leader identity (qualitative).

I.3.3 Leaders' Perspectives: Identity in the Context of Leadership

Finally, the last individual study, *Leaders' Perspectives: Identity in the Context of Leadership* (Chapter IV), sought to understand the final focal research question. As suggested by the final study's title, the study worked to understand how a leader's leadership is affected by their salient identities.

To achieve this, the study employed a qualitative paradigm using a phenomenological methodology. Ultimately, the study worked to craft a shared understanding of how identity is experienced by leaders within the context of their own leadership.

I.4 Limitations

As with any research, there are limitations. Limitations as they relate to each individual study are overviewed following an overarching limitation of the research site context. Special attention to these limitations is addressed within the methods section of each study to counter threats to validity, reliability, and bias.

First, the research site is consistent across the three individual studies. Because leadership and identity are both highly contextual, it is important to understand the research site as a limitation. The research site is a large, land-grant, conservative, Research One university in the south United States. The university boasts 62,500 students on campus with over 130 undergraduate degree programs, 170 master's degree programs, and 93 doctoral degrees. This context must be recognized because other educational settings, university types (i.e., public, private), and missions may impact the student experience. For instance, other universities may have a different student leadership paradigm or approach that may affect this type of mixed-methods research.

Two items are of specific concern to the first individual study's research design: ambiguity of language and transferability. With complex, interconnected phenomena like identity and leadership, ambiguities in human language become a limitation. Ambiguities, which are inherent, are often uncovered in analysis of such a research design. For example, Atieno (2009) posited, "the word 'red' could be used in corpus to signify the color red, or a political categorization (e.g. socialism or communism)" (p. 17). When identifiers are single words or word phrases written by participants, the ambiguity causes difficulty in analysis or the sorting process.

The second limitation for the study is transferability. Within the research design and the literature presented, context is key to understanding this intersection (leadership and identity). Thus, aspects related to the research site, geographic location, sample demographics, etc. cause a threat to transferability. There are not any absolute solutions

to provided situations; rather, every person should determine their very own best practices. Therefore, special consideration should be given when applying findings to contexts different from the study's sample.

Study two's first limitation lies with the research design. Within this study, the method employed asked participants to rank-order the most active/important identifier in their leadership. Understanding the distance between one and two in a participant rank-order varied greatly by individual. This begs the question: is the most important/active identifier in leadership a good operational way to conceptualize identity orientation?

Second for study two, one of the main pitfalls of mixed-methods research designs is that when qualitative data are transformed to numbers, the data lose their flexibility and depth, which is one of the main advantages of qualitative research. This occurs because qualitative codes are multidimensional (Bazeley, 2004), while quantitative codes are one-dimensional and fixed, so, basically, changing rich qualitative data to dichotomous variables produces one-dimensional, immutable data (Driscoll, Appiah-Yeboah, Salib, & Rupert, 2007). The conversion of the identifier active in leadership to a category loses this descriptive specificity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Finally for this study, another limitation associated with the mixed-methods design is that statistical measurement limitations of qualitative data when converted to quantifiable qualitative data are very vulnerable to collinearity (Roberts, 2000). As stated above regarding recruitment, the present study included usable data from 165 participants. This research required, at minimum, to collect and analyze 120 qualitative

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data to ensure around 30 participants in each of the four Aspects of Identity (AIQ) IV identity orientations. The recruitment design and instrument selection may have reduced the sample size and, in doing so, may have affected the statistical procedures. This was a serious challenge for this design, as the researcher may not have had enough statistical power to support the research (Driscoll et al., 2007).

Study three employed a phenomenological framework. As with any phenomenological study, the participants in the study need to be carefully selected. This is because the individuals must have all experienced the phenomenon in question so that the researcher, in the end, can forge a shared understanding. Additionally, this methodology also required participants to be able to articulate their thoughts and feelings about the experience being studied. Because identity and leadership are often discussed independently, discussing them within their intersection could have proved challenging. Furthermore, depending on the identity, it may have been sensitive for a participant to discuss.

Results presented in this study—regardless of the sample size—did not produce generalizable data. This was not the intent of this qualitative study.

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CHAPTER II

CONSIDERING LEADERS' IDENTITIES, IDENTITY LEVELS, AND THOSE

ACTIVE IN LEADERSHIP

II.1 Introduction

Identity has emerged as a potent force in understanding leadership (Ibarra et al.,

2014), but until recently, identity was just a minor research issue in the leadership field

(Lord, Brown, & Freiberg, 1999; Lührmann & Eberl, 2007). After a clustered production

of scholarship in the area (Caroll & Levy, 2010; Day & Harrison, 2007; Hogg, 2001a,

2001b; Ibarra et al., 2014; Lord & Brown, 2004; Lord & Hall, 2005; Petriglieri, 2012;

Snook et al., 2010; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003; van Knippenberg et al., 2004),

Haslam et al. (2011) articulated the emergence of an identity approach to leadership.

Distinctly different, but not completely disregarding other approaches, the identity

approach worked to center followers and the identity process within the context of

leadership.

Lührmann and Eberl (2007) held that identity theory provides a suitable

theoretical basis from which to gain deeper understanding into leadership processes.

Basically, individual-focused identity research causes four primary issues that are of

enormous importance for understanding leadership. First, identity is about motivation,

and according to the work of Shamir, House and Arthur (1993), Hogg (2001a), and

Lord, Gatti, and Chui (2016), leaders and followers are motivated to act in ways

consistent with their identities. Another issue is that identity is about authenticity and

conformity. From one perspective, subordinates must obey the expectations of their social surroundings (i.e., groups or individuals) if they want to be perceived as leaders. On the other hand, the beliefs and visions communicated by leaders must reflect something of what the leader really is. The third issue of identity is about power. Analyzing the work of Foucault, Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983) acknowledged that power is not some external force but rather an internalized part of individual identity. With this line of thinking, Deetz (1995) contended that "the modern business of management is often managing the 'insides' . . . of workers rather than their behaviors directly" (p. 87), making power an interconnected element to identity. Finally, the fourth issue is that identity is about relationships. As researchers (Gardner & Avolio, 1998; Komives et al., 2009; Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, & Osteen, 2006) have suggested, leader identity is a direct result of the leader-follower relationship. Thus, identity theory draws leadership scholars' attention to the point that leadership is relational (Chemers, 2014; Grint, 2000). It "is not something the leader possesses" (Hollander, 1993, p. 29), but rather a social phenomenon. These four issues focus on the need for leadership scholars to thoroughly explore, in an empirical way, the role of identity within the context of leadership.

Several approaches to leadership have emphasized the importance of context, inciting Hollander and Julian (1969) to posit that leadership is highly contextualized, involving complex interactions among leaders, followers, and situations. Leadership is a process of reality construction (Smircich & Morgan 1982) that takes place within a

specific context. This, then, provides a foundation to understand identity and identity processes within the leadership context.

Psychologists and sociologists echo the importance of context in understanding identity. Côté (1996) wrote that constructing a contextual approach to understanding identity is the biggest challenge now facing identity researchers. Many identity researchers have attempted to find a way to address this issue (Adams & Marshall, 1996; Bosma & Kunnen, 2001), but it remains important to ensure that identity research is grounded in context. Only within a context can identity processes be evaluated. Because identity salience is also contextual (Spears, 2011), it is important that context of leadership is explored separately as a distinct context.

II.1.1 Conceptual Framework

Most identity researchers share an understanding of identity processes as three selves. The "individual self-comprises unique attributes, the relational self-comprises partner-shared attributes, and the collective self-comprise ingroup-shared attributes" (Sedikides, Gaertner, & O'Mara, 2011). By utilizing identity levels as a conceptual framework, the identities of leaders, as well as those identities active in themselves, can be better understood.

Well-established aspects of identity typically focus on one or more different "levels" at which identity may be defined: individual, relational, and collective senses of self (Sedikides & Brewer 2001). The distinction among these levels can be conceptualized, in part, as a distinction among different identity contents, but they can

also refer to different kinds of processes by which identities are formed, maintained, or changed over time (Schwartz, Luyckx, & Vignoles, 2011). Each of the three levels is summarized below to provide the conceptual framework for this study.

Individual or personal identity denotes aspects of self-definition (Schwartz et al., 2011). Marcia (1966) and Waterman (1999) suggested that this level includes goals, values, beliefs, and religious/spiritual beliefs (MacDonald, 2009), standards for behavior and decision making, and self-esteem/self-evaluation (Atkins, Hart, & Donnelly, 2005).

The relational identity level is one's role in comparison to other people, which umbrellas identity concepts such as child, spouse, parent, coworker, supervisor, customer, etc. In contrast to personal identity, relational identities are defined and located within an interpersonal space (Bamberg, 2004; Chen, Boucher, & Tapias, 2006). A common theme in these perspectives is the idea that identities cannot be established by individuals on their own due to a role or obligation (Schwartz et al., 2011).

Finally, collective identity "refers to people's identification with the groups and social categories with which they belong and the meanings that they give these social categories and groups, and the feelings, beliefs, and attitudes that result in identifying with them" (Schwartz et al., 2011, p. 3). Collective identity refers to membership in any form of social group, including ethnicity (Taylor, 1997), nationality (Schildkraut, 2005, 2007), religion (Cohen, Hall, Koenig, & Meador, 2005), and gender (Bussey & Bandura, 1999).

Understanding levels of identity matters to leadership. For instance, Johnson, Venus, Lanaj, Mao, and Chang (2012) reported finding that collective identity is positively related to transformational leadership behaviors. Further, research in the area of leadership development suggests that successful leaders move beyond developing a personal identity to also developing a strong sense of collective identity (Ibarra et al., 2014). This has been confirmed by Lord and Hall (2005) and Day and Harrison (2007), who echoed that novice leaders emphasize individual identities, whereas more experienced leaders emphasize a more collective identity.

Haslam et al. (2017) coined the 5R leadership development program. This five-stage process for leadership development relates to understanding identity processes of affiliation and influence. In the end, a leader with an integrated individual, relational, and collective set of identities within an overall leader identity may be able to draw from any of these identities depending on the given leadership challenge.

II.1.2 Purpose and Objectives

The aim of this study was twofold: first, to understand what identities leaders possess, and second, to identify which identities are most salient in leaders' context of leadership. Along with the two primary questions, two further research objectives included the following: (a) Which identity levels (i.e., personal, relational, or collective) are prominent when analyzing the above questions? and (b) Describe the leadership contexts of participants.

The open analysis of identity enables respondents to share, in an unrestricted way (e.g., open-ended questions), identities salient or important to leaders rather than a researcher-imposed identity framework. "Identity salience is conceptualized (and operationalized) as the likelihood that the identity will be invoked in diverse situations" (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995, p. 257). Identities salient to leaders within a context-sensitive and perspective-sensitive (Haslam et al., 2011) manner are important tenants within an identity approach to leadership. Such an open method of determining salient identities in college-student leaders has not been studied in recent years, revealing a gap needing to be addressed within contemporary literature.

Additionally, this study sought to enhance understanding of the leadership phenomenon by understanding which identities matter most to student leaders' leadership. Leadership is a unique context. Therefore, understanding a leader's salient identities is important because these self-views have an increasingly important role as a metastructure that guides goal formation, knowledge access, actions, and interpretations of social reactions (Lord & Hall, 2005). This is where the provided identifiers were considered within identity levels (i.e., personal, relational, and collective)—all of which are significant to understanding leadership.

II.2 Methodology

The core population of this study was student leaders at Texas A&M University (TAMU), which is a large, Research One, land-grant university in the south United States. The institution enrolls over 60,000 students annually and is considered a

predominately white institution. TAMU also has a reputation for student leadership and engagement (http://www.tamu.edu).

Conducted as part of a larger study, this research employed a constructivist approach. The ontological position of constructivism is relativism. "Relativism is the view that reality is subjective and differs from person to person" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 110). Thus, this constructivist approach believes that "reality is socially constructed" (Mertens, 2005, p. 12). This is because I, as the researcher, tend to rely upon the "participants' views of the situation being studied" (Creswell, 2003, p. 8) and recognize the impact made on the research by their own background and experiences.

As Halberstam (1998) asserted, "there are selves behind the projects" (p. 63). For this reason, it is important for the researcher to acknowledge where he or she is situated within the research (Denzin, 1986, p. 12). For me, identity has been central in my own leadership. As a white, queer, cisgender male, most of my leadership development experiences have been with others with similar identities to my own, with only my queer identity as the exception. This identity made me question early on my own fit into the leadership paradigms I was learning. At present, my identity and its bound connection to my leadership are inseparable. For this reason, my own experience fuels my interest in this line of scholarly inquiry.

The constructivist approach is common to both leadership and identity research, as constructivism encompasses two seemingly divergent views of learning: personal, where meaning is made by the individual, and social, where knowledge is constructed

when the individual interacts socially (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). This constructivist approach informed the design of the present study.

II.2.1 Sampling

Participants represented a criterion-type purposive sample, as all were required to meet an indicated criterion (Patton, 2015). The target population was leaders, regardless of being in a positional or nonpositional role. Intentional effort was made to detail the recruitment and sampling method to aid replicability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

For positional leaders, the accessible population was undergraduate, graduate, and professional students at TAMU who were currently holding or had recently held an officer position in one or more of the 1,076 recognized student organizations on campus. The organizations spanned 31 university-defined administrative categories including but not limited to academics, campus service, cultural/international, global services, honor, recreation, professional/career, social and political issues, spirit and tradition, and student government (Texas A&M University). Using a roster method (Marsden, 1990), 6,052 students who were currently holding or had recently held officer positions within these organizations were invited to participate in this study via email. Email addresses were obtained from the public-facing rosters of the university's student organization recognition database. The roster contained positional leaders whose officer titles included chief student leader, president, treasurer, vice president, general officer, information technology (IT) officer, social chair, and others. As mentioned, participants were invited via email utilizing the Dillman Tailored Design Method (Dillman, Smyth,

& Christian, 2009). The Dillman et al. (2009) approach relies on personalized, repeated contact to boost response rate. I personalized study recruitment emails by (a) using messages sent to each person by name (e.g., "Dear James Baldwin"), (b) tailoring each email subject and body with reference to the student organization name, and (c) referencing the officer position title of the participant. The survey recruitment email also explained how responses would benefit leadership research (see Appendix A). For repeated contact, participants received (a) an email with a personalized survey link and (b) up to three reminder emails with personalized links to partial respondents and nonrespondents over a three-week period.

To recruit nonpositional leaders, a nomination process was utilized. A solicitation email was sent to 197 university faculty and staff members from over 19 units (see Appendix B). Nominators in professional positions were invited to nominate undergraduate, graduate, and professional students whom they considered leaders. A total of 242 student leader nominations were made by faculty and staff. Once nominated, an individualized recruitment email was sent. The recruitment email was personalized to the participant using their name and referencing the nominator's name (Dillman et al., 2009). Two follow-ups using personalized links were sent if nominations were received prior to the final research meeting during the study's recruitment period.

II.2.2 Participants

Between both recruitment pathways, a total of 1,796 students responded, of whom 611 stated "yes" to their desire to attend a 30-minute research study meeting on

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the TAMU campus. When "yes" was selected, participants were then hyperlinked to an online sign-up system where they chose one of 18 research meetings, which were varied by day and time. The system automated a reminder email to participants 24 hours prior to the research meeting. Each research meeting was capped at 30 participants and ranged in attendance from 3 to 24.

Recruitment methods yielded a sample of 166 undergraduate, graduate, or professional students representing current leaders.

II.2.3 Procedure

At the research meeting, a single protocol director utilized a script (Appendix E) to facilitate the achievement of three primary objectives of the meeting. The use of a single protocol director and script aided dependability (Creswell, 2014), ensuring transparency and consistency in the participant experience and instruction. The primary objectives of the research meeting included (a) obtaining informed consent (see Appendix D), (b) completing an Identity Wheel Activity (Appendix F), and (c) completing an online demographic questionnaire. For the purposes of this study, the focus of this research is findings associated with the Identity Wheel Activity.

After obtaining informed consent, participants were guided through an established Identity Wheel Activity paper worksheet. The worksheet's previous use to elicit sharing of salient identities by practitioners (Adams & Bell, 2016) aided trustworthiness by using good practice (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The activity was selected to elicit social constructions from participants around the research topics of

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identity and leadership. The worksheet served as a product of meaning-making or sense-making (Weick, 1995) of social constructions for identity and leadership.

Sense-making, broadly defined, is activities and actions that "people [use to] make retrospective sense of the situations in which they find themselves" (Weick, 1995, p. 15), as various mechanisms exist for making sense of ambiguous concepts. Participants were first asked, "In each circle below, list the ways in which you identify." Participants were also invited to add circles as needed. Next, after all participants at a research meeting completed this step, they were asked to star identities active in their leadership. The verb *active* was further explained to participants, but beforehand they were asked to be reflective before starring identifiers on their wheel as active, salient, or important to their leadership. Participants were also given the option of not starring any identity. Next, participants were asked to rank-order the starred identities in order from most important or active in their leadership to least important or active in their leadership.

Finally, three reflection questions were posed to understand their leadership context. These questions included naming the leadership context, naming the primary context they considered when they connected their identity to their leadership, and providing a layperson's description of the organization, group, or context of their leadership.

II.2.4 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using deductive, directed content analysis. Content analysis "is a research method that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text" (Weber, 1990, p. 9). Content analysis can be both a qualitative or quantitative research technique. The difference depends upon the procedure of analysis rather than the character of the data available (Selltiz, Jahoda, Deutsch, & Cook, 1959). The words listed to describe the participant's Identity Wheel Activity were analyzed (deductive), along with their connections to the conceptual framework of identity levels (directed). Before the directed content analysis, frequencies were reported, along with the identifiers. The intent here was not to collapse identifiers completely, but to put similar associations together. For instance, misspellings by participants were combined with the properly spelled identifier. Additionally, the identifier of *student* was expressed as *student, students,* and *university student.* These were collapsed into one identifier for frequency reporting. Distinct identifiers like *female* and *woman* were kept independent. Variations were also listed, along with the more frequent identifier. For instance, *Aggie* and *Aggies* were collapsed together. Other identifiers such as *woman* and *female* were kept distinct. This was intentional by the researcher so as not to confound potential differences between participant understandings of sex and gender. Then, directed content analysis was conducted.

Trustworthiness was established via triangulation with the literature (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and auditability with the use of NVivo for the development of an audit trail

(see Appendix J). Content analysis also requires deciphering skills and pattern recognition to ensure that variations can be "rigidly and consistently applied so that other researchers or readers, looking at the same messages, would obtain the same or comparable results" (Berg, 2001, p. 241). For this study, I incorporated a peer debriefing technique to review the assigned identities to their respective identity level within the conceptual framework (Creswell, 2014).

Finally, Miles and Huberman (1994) suggested three approaches for qualitative data analysis via content analysis: interpretative or constructivist, social anthropological, and collaborative social research. The constructivist research approach outlined above aligns well with this method. This content analysis approach provides a means for discovering the practical understandings of meanings and actions (Berg, 2004). Researchers with a more general interpretative orientation (dramaturgists, symbolic interactionists, etc.) are likely to organize or reduce data in order to uncover patterns of human activity, action, and meaning.

II.3 Results and Findings

The aim of the present study was twofold: first to understand what identities leaders possess and then to identify which identities are most salient in leaders' contexts of leadership.

Table 1 presents the selected findings from the deductive content analysis of the 1,711 identifiers provided by participants. Participants averaged about 10 identifiers ($M = 10.29$) in their reflection on the ways they identify. Identifiers, their frequencies, and,

where applicable, variations in expression by participants are included in this table. This table addresses the first aim of the study.

Table 1

Frequencies of top identifiers and their variations

Identifier	Count	Variations
Leader	59	
Student	52	Students
Friend	46	
Female	40	
Male	39	
Aggie	32	Aggies
Daughter	32	
Sister	29	
Christian	29	Christian (Faith)
Woman	26	Women

Leader was the most predominant identifier among participants, with 59 participants using this identifier. Close behind, *student* was the second most commonly used identifier (n = 52). Third, *friend* was the third most frequent identifier used by participants when listing the ways in which they identify. Of note, *female* and *woman* were kept as independent identifiers and were not collapsed into one category. This was intentional to demonstrate the sense-making process.

Beyond the top 10 identifiers, in terms of their frequency and not necessarily their intensity/salience to individuals, there were 453 identifiers listed only once by study participants. Examples of identifiers with only one count included *hopeful, bold, half-Portuguese, caver, foster, sassy,* and *romantic*.

Table 2 presents the findings from the directed content analysis, which achieved the research objective of how leader identities are described in terms of identity level. The top five identifiers for each identity level are enumerated, with the exception of personal and social identity. For personal, there are six identifiers presented due to a tie. For the social identity level, only three identifiers are listed because they were the only three acknowledged by more than one participant. Considering each identifier as a separate code for analysis resulted in 1,711 units of data. Of these data, 39% ($n = 679$) were personal identities, 19% ($n = 327$) were relational identities, and 41% ($n = 699$) were collective identities.

For the personal identity level, *introvert* ($f = 15$), *caring* ($f = 12$), and *independent* ($f = 11$) were the highest shared identifiers. *Leader* ($f = 59$), *friend* ($f = 46$), and *daughter* ($f = 32$) were determined to be the most frequently used identifiers from the relational identity level. The final identity level was collective. The most common identifiers named by participants were *student*, *female,* and *male,* with frequencies of 52, 40, and 39, respectively.

Table 2
Top identifiers of leaders by identity level

Identity Level	Top Identifiers	*F*
Personal Identity	1. Introvert	15
	2. Caring	12
	3. Independent	11
	4. Researcher	9
	5. Extrovert	8
	5. Honest	8
Relational Identity	1. Leader	59
	2. Friend	46
	3. Daughter	32
	4. Sister	29
	5. Son	17
Collective Identity	1. Student	52
	2. Female	40
	3. Male	39
	4. Aggie	32
	5. Christian	29

The second aim of the present study sought to understand identities salient within

leadership from the leader's perspective. Of the 1,711 identities listed, for the first step

of the worksheet, participants indicated 719 identities, or 42%, as active in their leadership. This averaged about four ($M = 4.33$) identifiers active in participants' leadership. Table 3 presents the top five identities active in participants' leadership.

Hardworking ($f = 15$), *confident* ($f = 9$), *organized* ($f = 9$), *introvert* ($f = 8$), and *caring* ($f = 6$) were the personal identity–level identifiers represented most frequently in participants' reflection of identities active in their leadership. The relational identity level had noticeable differences among the top five frequencies. Within the relational identity level, *leader* ($f = 35$), *friend* ($f = 55$), *mentor* ($f = 9$), *follower* ($f = 5$), and *son* ($f = 4$) were the top five identifiers. Finally, the collective identity level consisted of *student* ($f = 22$), *Aggie* ($f = 22$), *Christian* ($f = 14$), *woman* ($f = 14$), and *female* ($f = 11$) identifiers.

Table 3

Frequencies of active leadership identifiers and by identity level

Identity Level	Top Identifiers	*f*
Personal Identity	1. Hardworking	15
	2. Confident	9
	2. Organized	9
	4. Introvert	8
	5. Caring	6
Relational Identity	1. Leader	35
	2. Friend	25
	3. Mentor	9
	4. Follower	5
	5. Son	4
Collective Identity	1. Student	22
	2. Aggie	17
	3. Christian	14
	4. Woman	14
	5. Female	11

To address the final research objective of describing the context of a leader's leadership, the deductive content analysis revealed five contexts. Overwhelmingly, the primary context of participant connection of identity within their leadership was in student organizations (n = 137). Employment (n = 12) was the second largest leadership context, followed by faith communities (n = 5), academic projects (n = 4), and other

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leadership contexts (n = 7). The other contexts included professional development, being a citizen, and specific professional development experiences.

II.4 Conclusions

There are several conclusions that can be drawn from the study's findings. To begin, there was a contrast between the mean number of identifiers used by leaders to identify (M = 10.29) and those they consider to be active in their leadership (M = 4.33). This difference in the mean suggests that leaders may not be able to hold as many identities as active in the context of leadership as they do in their worldview, or it may suggest that not all identities are as meaningful in a leadership context. As Oyserman and Lee (2008a, 2008b) and Oyserman, Brickman, and Rhodes (2007) posited, identities are orienting—they provide a meaning-making lens and focus one's attention on some but not other features of the immediate context. Thus, the difference in the salience of identity in the leadership context may have implications for the orienting, meaning-making, and focusing of leaders when preforming leadership.

The second conclusion stems from the identities salient to leaders. *Leader* and *student* were the most frequent identifiers used by participants. This is not surprising given the context of the research site, as well as the population frame. This confirms the claim of Hollander and Julian (1969) that leadership is highly contextualized. It is common in higher-education vernacular to address leaders of student organizations as "student leaders." This might bring about a socialization process of these identities becoming internalized in the worldview of this study's participants. Additionally, a

leader identity may be salient for participants who responded to the recruitment emails. Other identifiers that appeared describe dominate demographics of the research site.

While the findings of the most frequent identities are not unexpected, participants did include some identifiers of interest. Some identifiers differed from higher education's commonly used references to identity (i.e., personality or those connected to -isms). For instance, *survivor*, *ravenclaw*, *gun owner*, and *Gen Z* may relate to current events and popular culture. *Survivor*, presumably connected to the Title IX legislation and the #MeToo movement, may have been the impetus for these identifiers being included by study participants. As for *gun owner*, the location of the research site has had open-carry and campus-carry legislation as a contextual influence element, along with recent mass shootings at educational locations around the United States. These identifiers rise to a level of importance such that participants identify with these movements and current popular culture.

Another conclusion arises from the findings of the top identifiers by identity level. Considering the data within the conceptual framework reveals that personal and collective identity levels influence the identity processes of leaders more than social and relational. While frequency may not signify intensity of identity to participants, it can be reasonable to conclude that identity processes associated with these dominant two levels may have greater impact on leaders.

It again must be stated that all participants in the study starred at least one identifier as being active in their leadership, despite the fact that participants were

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explicitly given the opportunity to not star any identifier. This suggests the conclusion that leaders believe that identity plays a role, to some extent, in leadership.

Finally, active identity in leadership reveals a different, but not completely distinct, set of identifiers by identity level. When considering the number of identifiers in each identity level, the primary identity level was personal followed by collective. The relational identity levels were not nearly as frequent. Thus, it can be concluded that leaders emphasize distinguishing-characteristic (i.e., personal) identities within their leadership, along with collective elements that may aid in establishing a shared cohesion with the group. To illustrate, a leader may consider her *woman* identity to be present because she leads her all-female sorority; however, she might emphasize her *hard work* identifier to distinguish herself as operationalizing influence in the group.

II.5 Implications for Research and Practice

Conclusions from this study have direct connection to future research and practice. To organize this discussion, implications for research and practices will be reviewed in order of the six conclusions presented above.

First, the number of active identifiers within leadership leads to recommendations for research and practice. This recommendation also includes the conclusion in which all participants consider at least one identity as active and/or important in their leadership. In terms of research, this underscores previous literature results that leadership is a unique context in which identity might be studied. Participants indicating a difference in the identifiers within various contexts of their lives and

suggesting a narrowed number (in most cases) of them in their leadership gives impetus

for this recommendation. This conclusion offers validation for the situated identities

theory (Alexander & Wiley, 1981). The situated identities theory says that we take on

distinct roles in different settings and that behavior can radically shift in accordance with

the situation and the people present. Not only is this situated identity essential as a basis

for initiating interaction, it is crucial for guiding and anticipating the course of that

interaction (Alexander & Wiley, 1981). Thus, future research might benefit from this

additional contextualization of inquiring about identity within the leadership context. For

practice, this conclusion may provide practitioners with implications for designing

identity-based leadership development opportunities. Rather than connecting a plethora

of identities to a leadership development participant, it could be considered to use a

focusing exercise in which participants narrow their focus to one to four identities active

in leadership. This additional focus, according to this study's participants, may aid in a

more focused dialogue and discussion. Overall, these two conclusions aid in establishing

an identity approach to leadership.

     Next, recommendations stem from which identities are salient for leaders, as well

as the unique ways in which participants identified. For research, a recommendation may

be to update the existing instruments that utilize levels of identity as a theoretical

framework. For instance, the AIQ could align with more of the commonly referenced

personal, social, relational, and collective identity orientations. One of the relational

identity items currently reads, "having close bonds with other people," but a more salient

relational identity for study participants is *leader*. Thus, it is reasonable to recommend that for relational identity, an orientation item may be edited to read, "Being a leader within a group and the relationship I have with those I lead." Plus, as the development of the superficial/special factor in the AIQ-IV suggests (Dollinger, Preston, O'Brien, & DiLalla, 1996), there are identifiers of importance unique to academic and college environments. This special factor and the items contained in it may vary by the context being studied. For higher-education practitioners, this study reveals a difference in how identity is conceptualized within the literature and the identities of participants. For instance, the salience of identity by higher education focuses on collective identity (e.g., race, disability, first-generation status, nationality).

Another recommendation arises from the findings of the top identifiers by identity levels. This study would recommend that practitioners not limit leader identification to solely collective or relational identities alone. This suggests that leaders consider personal identities most prominently in their leadership. Mainly, personal identities are of specific interest. While within the leadership scholarship, these personal identities might have previously been found in trait-based approaches, this study begins to suggest that considering identities by identity levels could offer a new investigative tool in future leadership scholarship.

Overall, the present study contributes to the literature by reaffirming the need to study leadership as a unique context for identity research. Additionally, this study offers researchers and practitioners recommendations related to how leaders identify and their

relationship to identity levels. Finally, this study provides utility in how leadership

education and development may be framed within an identity approach to leadership.

CHAPTER III

IDENTITY ORIENTATIONS AND LEADERSHIP

III.1 Introduction

Identity is one of the most common constructs in social sciences (Brubaker &
Cooper, 2000; Côté, 2006). At its core, identity involves explicitly or implicitly
answering the question "Who are you?" (Schwartz et al., 2011, p. 2). Existing
approaches to identity outline various levels to aid us in how we define ourselves and
those around us. These levels are the individual, relational, and collective identities
(Sedikides & Brewer, 2001). The distinct levels arise not so much in either actual
content, structures of self, or how they are experienced, but rather in how they influence
thinking and behavior, as asserted by Sedikides and Brewer (2001). Sedikides and
Brewer (2001) illustrated this notion when they wrote that when an individual has close
others (relational or social levels), these others receive consideration during cognitive
processing. This consideration is because close others are accessed and expected to be
affected by the outcomes of any planned action (Sedikides & Brewer, 2001). This type
of cognitive consideration may be important to consider within a leadership process.

Self-concept or personal identity can be the knowledge a person has about him-
or herself. This knowledge of the self may cover many different areas, such as
knowledge of the competencies one has and does not have, knowledge of one's attitudes
and values, knowledge of one's likes and dislikes, and knowledge of what one aspires to
become (van Knippenberg, 2011). People tend to have clear conceptions of the self on

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some dimensions and rather vague or more schematic conceptions of the self on other dimensions. The more salient the particular dimension is to someone, the more crystalized, or clear, the self-conception is (Markus, 1977; van Knippenberg et al., 2004). Importantly, the self is not unidimensional, but often represents an intersectionality of identity (Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004). A person's overall self is typically represented as a set of categories, each of which represents a distinct self or identity (Markus & Wurf, 1987; Showers & Zeigler-Hill, 2003; Stets & Burke, 2003).

Next, relational identity "refers to one's roles vis-à-vis other people, encompassing identity contents such as child, spouse, parent, co-worker, supervisor, customer, etc." (Schwartz et al., 2011, p. 3). This level of identity refers not only to these roles but also to the way in which individuals define and interpret the roles (Schwartz et al., 2011). One might also suggest the relational identity of leader fitting in this level of identity (Komives et al., 2006; van Knippenberg et al., 2004). A common theme in the research suggests the differentiation that relational identity cannot be established by individuals on their own; the identity needs to be recognized by a social audience (Marková, 1987; Schwartz et al., 2011; Swann, 2005). Relational identity remains an important identity level within leadership scholarship, as leadership relies on the leader-follower relationship.

Next, while not a level in all literature, social identity is another identity orientation of consideration. Stated otherwise, persons seek to achieve self-definition

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and self-interpretation (i.e., identity) in three fundamental ways: (a) in terms of their unique traits, (b) in terms of dyadic relationships, and (c) in terms of group membership (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Social identity refers to an individual's assimilation into a group or its relative prestige (Cheek, 1989). Social identity was defined by William James (1890) as the recognition one receives from others. Sociologists and psychologists have argued ever since about whether the personal (internal) or social (external) aspects of identity are more important for understanding human behavior (Cheek, 1989). With the understanding of this contention, debate exists around the understanding that social identity–oriented individuals are motivated solely by the interest of social status. For instance, social identities include popular professor, eldest brother, or award-winning coach.

Finally, collective "refers to people's identification with groups or social categories to which they belong" (Schwartz et al., 2011, p. 3). This also includes the meanings they ascribe to these social groups, as well as their attitudes, feelings, and beliefs that result from this identification (Ashmore et al., 2004; De Fina, 2007; Schwartz et al., 2011; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Collective identities can refer to affiliation in any form of social group or category (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), including ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, and even families and workgroups (Schwartz et al., 2011).

Why do identity levels matter? Some of these theories of the social self focus on cross-cultural differences regarding whether the self is typically construed as individuated or interpersonal. However, all recognize that these different self-construals

may also coexist within the same individual, available to be activated at different times or in different contexts. Furthermore, in several identity theories, achieving an extended sense of self has the status of a fundamental human motivation (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Brewer, 1991). In other words, individuals define themselves in terms of their immersion in relationships with others and with larger collectives and derive much of their self-evaluation from such social identities (Breckler & Greenwald, 1986; Greenwald & Breckler, 1985).

If leadership scholars are able to understand the dominant identity orientation of student leaders, this may aid in framing curriculum for emerging leader programs (Dugan & Komives, 2007). As students develop identities, they grapple with the expectations for these groups held by society (Erikson, 1968). Identity development occurs when there is a shift between what an individual thought he or she "knew" and a new possible "truth." Scholars refer to this phenomenon as cognitive dissonance and the resolution of this conflict as identity development (McEwen, 2003).

III.1.1 Purpose and Objectives

There were two primary purposes of the present study: (1) determining which identity orientation (i.e., personal, relational, social, or collective) is most salient to leaders using a pre-established quantitative instrument and (2) determining if the primary identity level of leaders is related to a leader's most active identity within their leadership.

Findings from this study may aid in practitioner or leadership educator interventions for inspiring cognitive dissonance for developing an identity approach to leadership (Haslam et al., 2011).

III.2 Methods

The present mixed-methods study, conducted as part of a larger study whose intent was to examine identity and leadership, explored student leaders' identity orientations (quantitative) and their possible association with a participant's primary active identity within their leadership (qualitative/quantitative). Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) suggested that a mixed-methods study "involves the collection or analysis of both quantitative and/or qualitative data in a single study in which the data are collected concurrently or sequentially, are given a priority, and involve the integration of the data at one or more stages of the research process" (p. 212). The quantitative or qualitative data were prioritized at different points in the research process to address the research objectives. For instance, student leaders' highest-scoring identity orientation using a weighted mean score was utilized for the quantitative component of the study. Student leaders' most active identifier listed on a worksheet was coded into an identity level using a content analysis, and correlation analysis was performed for strength of association. Ultimately, data were transformed into quantitative data to enable analysis in this mixed-methods study.

The site of the study was TAMU, which is a large, Research One, land-grant university in the south United States. The institution enrolls over 60,000 students

annually and is considered a predominately white institution. TAMU also has a

reputation for student leadership and engagement (Texas A&M University). Participants

were student leaders.

III.2.1 Data Collection

As this study was part of a larger study, the quantitative and qualitative

components were derived from the participants who attended a 30-minute research

meeting. The qualitative data were analyzed through a directed content analysis of an

Identity Wheel Activity, while the quantitative data used a pre-established identity

orientation instrument administered as an online survey. Study procedures were

approved by the TAMU Institutional Review Board, and written, informed consent was

provided by 166 participants.

At the research meeting, a single protocol director utilized a script (Appendix E)

to facilitate the achievement of three primary objectives. The primary objectives of the

research meeting included (a) obtaining informed consent (see Appendix D), (b)

completing an Identity Wheel Activity (Appendix F), and (c) completing an online

demographic questionnaire. Using a single protocol director and script aided with

dependability (Creswell, 2014) through consistency in the participant experience and

instruction.

III.2.2 Participants

The target population was student leaders regardless of whether they were in

positional or nonpositional roles during the spring 2018 semester. The accessible

population was undergraduate, graduate, and professional students at TAMU. Positional leaders (Komives, Dugan, Owen, Slack, & Wagner, 2011) were identified by whether they were currently holding or had recently held an officer position within a recognized student organization at TAMU. To be a recognized student organization and to retain official recognition, student organizations must meet certain requirements: have a faculty or staff advisor, file annual request for official recognition, maintain a university bank account, complete officer education, and uphold other stipulations of enrollment status and minimum grade-point averages (Texas A&M University Student Rules, Rule 41, para 1). Using a roster method of recruitment (Marsden, 1990) and with approval from the Institutional Review Board, a series of four recruitment emails were sent over the course of three weeks directly to the university email addresses of 6,052 current or recent officers (e.g., president, vice president, and treasurer) of recognized student organizations. These emails were personalized and repeated, inviting contacts to participate in the study, paralleling recommendations of the Tailored Design Method (Dillman et al., 2009).

Occurring simultaneously with positional leader recruitment, nonpositional student leaders were recruited using a nomination process. A total of 179 professional faculty and staff across 19 departments were invited to submit names and emails of undergraduate, graduate, and professional students for participation whom they considered leaders (Appendix B). A total of 242 additional participants were recruited via the nomination process. A similar personalized and repeated contact method

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(Dillman et al., 2009) was utilized. Potential participants received an email with their name, the nominator's name, and an explanation of the study. Two follow-ups with personalized links were sent if the nomination occurred early enough before the final research meeting during the study's recruitment period.

Thus, between the two recruitment methods, 6,294 emails were sent to potential participants. It is important to acknowledge that some participants were invited via both recruitment methods (i.e., roster and nomination), and students serving in multiple leadership positons in different organizations may have received an email for each organization/positon. Using email addresses as a unique identifier, it was determined that there were 5,033 eligible participants. A total of 1,796 students responded (36% response rate), of which 611 stated "yes" to their desire to attend a 30-minute research study meeting on the TAMU campus. This difference may be attributed to participants who recently graduated and or otherwise no longer attended the university or moved away from the research site. Additionally, some participants cited a heavy test period or heavy organizational commitments causing their inability to participate.

Data collection methods influenced response rates (Murphy-Black, 2000); as this study required participants to attend one of 18 prescheduled, 30-minute, in-person research meetings held over three weeks (varying days and times), this response rate is acceptable (Murphy-Black 2000).

A total of 166 participants partook in the study. One participant did not complete the two forms of data collection method (i.e., Identity Wheel Activity and online survey)

and was excluded. This was acceptable, as the protocol informed participants that unlinked study materials would be excluded from analysis (see Appendix E). The average age of participants was 22 (range of 18 to 46), with 46% ($n = 71$) identifying as men and 54% as women ($n = 94$). In terms of race, 37% ($n = 61$) identified as people of color, including self-reported descriptions of Hispanic, Mexican, southeast Asian, black, African American, and biracial. The remaining 105 participants, or 63%, identified as white. About 16% of the sample identified as LGBTQ, and the remaining 139 participants identified as heterosexual. The majority of participants considered their religion to be Christian ($n = 108$), with a total of 35% identifying as Jewish, Muslim, or another religion ($n = 58$). Five participants identified as a disabled person, with the majority being able-bodied. Finally, 23% ($n = 38$) considered themselves a member of the poor or working class, with 128 considering themselves in the owning and middle class. Participant leadership context revealed five primary contexts. Overwhelmingly, the primary context of participant connection of identity within their leadership was in student organizations (83%, $n = 137$). Employment (7%, $n = 12$) was the second largest leadership context, followed by faith communities (3%, $n = 5$), academic projects (3%, $n = 4$), and other leadership contexts (4%, $n = 7$). The other contexts included their citizenship role and specific professional development experiences.

III.2.3 Instruments

The quantitative component of the study utilized a researcher-developed instrument administered through an online survey system, *Qualtrics*, which combined

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the demographic questionnaire (Appendix H) and the 45-item AIQ-IV (Cheek & Briggs, 2013) (Appendix G). The instrument was obtained from the Measurement Instrument Database for Social Sciences and is considered part of the Creative Commons noncommercial use. The use of the established AIQ-IV instrument aided in construct validity (Creswell, 2014). Validity is a concept that refers to whether or not an instrument measures what it intends to measure (Creswell, 2014). The established instrument intends to "measure aspects of identity associated with personal and social identity" (Cheek, Tropp, Chen, & Underwood, 1994, para. 1). Specifically, aspects of identity include personal, relational, social, and collective identity orientation. Because the intended purpose of the instrument was to determine what identity levels were most prominent in respondents, the use of this instrument for the present study aided with construct validity (Creswell, 2014). A scale's dimensionality or internal structure has implications for reliability, validity, and scale use (Creswell, 2014). A scale's internal structure is relevant to its reliability, reflecting internal consistency by revealing which items are consistent with which other items. Similarly, a scale's internal structure is relevant to validity because the appropriate interpretation of scale scores hinges on the match between its internal structure and the internal structure of its intended construct(s). Thus, a reliability coefficient was conducted on the present study's results of the AIQ-IV by study participants and was compared to previous reliability coefficients.

A review of the instrument's development and the results of a reliability analysis aided with validity and reliability. Within the history of the development of the AIQ, the

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instrument began with items selected from Sampson's (1978) list of identity characteristics that were determined to represent the domains of both personal and social identity (Cheek & Briggs, 1981, 1982). Subsequently, some instrument items were reworded, others were eliminated, and new items were established to improve the reliability and content validity of the measures (Cheek & Briggs 1982; Cheek & Hogan, 1981; Hogan & Cheek, 1983). Psychometric analyses indicated that particular items originally scored in the social identity category (e.g., "Being a part of the many generations of my family") were tending to cluster on a third factor representing collective or communal identity. A third scale for this domain was developed (Cheek, Underwood, & Cutler, 1985) and has now been expanded (Cheek et al., 1994). Neither the collective nor the social scale focuses on intimate relationships with close friends or romantic partners, so a fourth scale for relational identity orientation (e.g., "Being a good friend to those I really care about") was added to the fourth edition of the AIQ (Cheek, Smith, & Tropp, 2002). AIG-IV has demonstrated reliability and validity (Cheek & Briggs, 1982; Cheek & Hogan, 1981; Hogan & Cheek, 1983) for college students (Dollinger et al., 1996); however, the current review of the literature yielded no study that used the AIQ solely with a student leader population. Thus, external validity was achieved (Creswell, 2014).

To further understand the instrument and its organization, Table 4 presents the four identity orientations of interest to the AIQ. Using operational definitions asserted by Sedikides and Brewer (2001) but informed by other scholars, Table 4 also presents the

orientation, definition, and some examples of identities or self-concepts (referred

hereafter interchangeably).

Table 4
Identity orientations and their representation

Identity Orientation	Definition	Examples
Personal Identity	Refers to aspects of self-definition at the level of the individual person, which may include goals, values, and beliefs	trustworthiness, organized, good listener
Relational Identity	Self-concept as it relates to family and relationship roles and responsibilities to others	spouse, parent, leader
Social Identity	Self-concept that reflects assimilation to others or significance to social groups	popular leader, eldest brother
Collective Identity	Refers to people's identification with the groups and social categories with which they belong and the meanings that they give these social categories and groups	race, gender, organization, citizenship

Table 5 displays each identity orientation, which serve as factors of the instrument, and two items contained in each factor. Identity orientations within the instrument are designed to parallel identity levels. Additionally, the table provides examples of two items within each factor from the AIQ-IV. These items were presented to participants in an online survey utilizing a one-to-five Likert scale (e.g., not/slightly/somewhat/very/extremely) with the question of how important each item is to their sense of who they are.

Table 5

AIQ factors and item organization

Identity Level	Number of Items	Examples of Items in Factor
Personal Identity	10	My personal values and moral standards
		My dreams and imagination
Relational Identity	10	My relationship with the people I feel close to
		Being a good friend to those I really care about
Social Identity	7	My popularity with other people
		The ways in which other people react to what I say or do
Collective Identity	8	Being a part of the many generations of my family
		My race or ethnic background

Note. The remaining 10 items of the 45-item instrument are special items and are not scored within the four identity orientations.

Using three methods of self-concept assessment, del Prado et al. (2007) conducted a study testing three theoretical perspectives on cultural universals and differences in the content of self-concepts in individualistic (e.g., Australia, $n = 112$; United States, $n = 178$) and collectivistic (e.g., Mexico, $n = 157$; Philippines, $n = 138$) cultures. Across the four cultural groups, alpha reliabilities for the AIQ-IV ranged from 0.80 to 0.83 for the personal identity scale, 0.82 to 0.91 for the relational identity scale,

0.80 to 0.82 for the social identity scale, and 0.67 to 0.77 for the collective identity scale. According to Bartholomew, Henderson, and Marcia (2000), reliability coefficients between 0.60 and 0.80 are acceptable. The widely accepted social science cut-off is that alpha should be 0.70 or higher for a set of items to be considered acceptable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Moreover, to further confirm, I calculated the reliability index for the five variables of the questionnaire using Cronbach's Alpha, and the results were 0.73 (personal identity), 0.876 (relational identity), 0.81 (social identity), 0.67 (collective identity), and 0.72 (special items), and for all the items of the questionnaire, the reliability index was 0.88. Therefore, Cronbach's Alpha demonstrates that each of the factors independently, as well as the combination of all factors, had acceptable reliability indices (Razmjoo, 2010).

Demographic questions (e.g., age, race, gender, etc.) were gathered in the online instrument. Because of the anticipated smaller sample size due to the data collection design, forced-choice dichotomies were used to avoid the need for a researcher to transform the responses of participants. Demographic question wording was identical to the work of Adams and Bell (2016), which framed demographic group membership as either dominant or subordinated. Open-ended text fields were provided to participants to share specific identifies if desired.

For the qualitative component of the study, participants were facilitated through the Identity Wheel Activity (Appendix F). The worksheet was chosen to elicit sharing of salient identities and has been utilized successfully by higher-education and community

practitioners to accomplish this objective (Adams & Bell, 2016). This previous use aided

trustworthiness using good practice (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The activity was selected

for use in a way to elicit social constructions from participants around the research topics

of identity and leadership.

The worksheet served as a product of their meaning making (Weick, 1995) of

social constructions of identity and leadership. Following the protocol (see Appendix E),

participants were first asked, "In each circle below, list the ways in which you identify."

Participants were also invited to add additional circles as needed. Next, after all

participants at a research meeting completed this step, participants were asked to reflect

on their leadership. Participants were asked to reflect on which identifiers were "active"

in their leadership and star those (if any) considered active, salient, or important to their

leadership. Participants were also given the option of not starring any identities. Next,

participants were asked to rank-order the starred identities in order from the most

important or active in their leadership to the least important or active. Finally, three

reflection questions were posed to understand their leadership context. The present study

focused solely on the highest ranked-order identity. This was the singular identity that

participants responded as being the most active identity in their leadership.

III.2.4 Data Analysis

As stated, there were two primary purposes of the present study: (1) determine

which identity orientation (personal, relational, social, or collective) is most salient to

leaders and (2) determine if the primary identity orientation can be associated with a leader's most salient identity within their leadership.

For the present study's first purpose, data from the quantitative component of the online survey were analyzed. Specifically, participant responses to the AIQ-IV (Cheek & Briggs, 2013) of the study were analyzed using descriptive statistics and t-tests. This was done after items were combined by factor (personal, social, relational, collective, and special) using the organization presented in Table 5. Descriptive statistics were used above to report participant makeup. Descriptive statistics were also employed to report the overall identity orientation of leaders. Means were run on each factor. Weighted means were run on each demographic forced-choice group (i.e., race, religion, etc.) across all items and factors. A t-test was used to explore if differences in group means existed by demographic forced-choice group and identity orientation scores.

To address the second purpose of this study, a directed content analysis was first connected and then combined with the existing quantitative data from the AIQ-IV and was analyzed using t-tests. A total of seven t-tests were run on demographic variables. A Bonferroni correction was utilized to adjust the p-value to reduce Type One error (Field, 2013). Therefore, the t-test significance level was 0.01. As a reminder, the second purpose of the study sought to determine if the primary identity orientation could be associated with a leader's most salient identity within their leadership.

The qualitative component of the study employed a deductive content analysis where data from the open-ended question responses from the Identity Wheel Activity

worksheet were analyzed according to an existing framework (Patton, 2002), in this case, levels of identity (Schwartz et al., 2011). "Content analysis is a technique that enables researchers to study human behavior in an indirect way, through an analysis of their communications" (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009, p. 472). Determining themes based on previous knowledge, theory, and/or experience prior to data analysis is an acceptable procedure used in content analysis studies (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). To ensure consistency of the codes, other scholars were consulted regarding the individual identifiers (codes) within their sorted category (e.g., personal, social, etc.) as a peer debriefing. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2009), there are two methods of interpreting content analysis data: (a) frequencies and the percentage and/or proportion of particular occurrences to total occurrences, as well as the use of codes and themes to help organize the content and (b) arriving at a narrative description of the findings. This study employed both methods. I reviewed the identifier that was rank-ordered as the identifier most active/important in a participant's leadership (if provided). The identifier was sorted into either a personal, social, relational, or collective identity level. A numeric value of one, two, three, or four was assigned to each, respectively. Then, data from the qualitative and quantitative components were merged. This was accomplished first by exporting the participant responses from *Qualtrics* and importing them into the *SPSS*. Then, a new variable entitled "active identity orientation in leadership" was created. Results from the directed content analysis were linked using the pseudonym and

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four-digit code provided by each participant on the worksheet and within the online survey.

Triangulation between the AIQ-IV level orientation and the directed content analysis was utilized to further establish creditability and reliability in the study.

III.3 Results

Addressing the first purpose of the research study, data from the quantitative component of the online survey were analyzed. Specifically, Table 6 reports the descriptive statistics of the AIQ-IV. Across the total sample ($n = 165$), the personal identity mean of the 10 items was 40.62 ($SD = 4.99$), relational identity level yielded a mean of 36.53 ($SD = 5.76$) when the 10 subitems were combined, social identity level resulted in a mean of 22.18 ($SD = 22.18$) for the 7 items, and finally, collective identity had a mean of 24.44 ($SD = 5.78$) for the 8 items.

When adjusting for weight of each identity level for the number of items within the factor, the means of each identity level were 4.06 ($SD = 0.50$) for personal, 3.65 ($SD = 0.58$) for relational, 3.17 ($SD = 0.69$) for social, and 3.06 ($SD = 0.72$) for collective.

Table 6

Descriptive statistics of the AIQ factors for all participants

Identity Level	N	Weighted Mean	SD
Personal Identity	165	4.06	.50
Relational Identity	165	3.65	.58
Social Identity	165	3.17	.76
Collective Identity	165	3.06	.72

Note. Value labels: 1 = not, 2 = slightly, 3 = somewhat, 4 = very, and 5 = extremely important to the sense of who I am

Means for each demographic forced-choice group (i.e., race, religion, etc.) across each factor are presented in Table 7. All dominant groups (i.e., middle/adult, man, etc.) held a lower mean score on personal identity as opposed to the subordinated group. Additionally, participants who identified with a physical, psychological, or developmental disability ($n = 5$) scored higher on all four identity levels then participants who identified as an able person. This was the same for participants who identified as people of color. People of color reported higher mean scores for all four identity levels compared with their white counterparts.

Table 7 reports the weighted mean scores of each demographic group. For simplicity, the narrative reports only the weighted mean score for the highest-ranked identity orientation across all demographic groups. For personal, relational, and social identity orientations, participants who identified as disabled scored the highest mean ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 0.23$; $M = 3.86$, $SD = 0.49$; $M = 3.43$, $SD = 0.67$) when comparing each of the other demographic groupings. For collective identity orientation, participants who identified as people of color reported the highest mean across the demographic groupings ($M = 3.34$; $SD = 0.68$).

Table 7

Demographic variables by identity orientation

		n	Personal		Relational		Social		Collective	
			Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Age	Middle/Adult	11	3.95	0.61	3.62	0.59	3.13	0.81	2.64	0.65
	Young and Elderly	154	4.07	0.49	3.66	0.58	3.17	0.68	3.09	0.72
Class	Owning and Middle Class	128	4.02	0.49	3.66	0.58	3.15	0.67	3.07	0.72
	Poor and Working Class	37	4.20	0.52	3.63	0.55	3.22	0.73	3.00	0.73
Gender	Man	71	3.99	0.50	3.64	0.61	3.29	0.69	2.96	0.82
	Woman	94	4.11	0.49	3.66	0.55	3.08	0.67	3.13	0.64
Disability	Able Person	160	4.05	0.50	3.65	0.58	3.16	0.69	3.05	0.73
	Disabled Person	5	4.32	0.23	3.86	0.49	3.43	0.67	3.18	0.45

Table 7 Continued
Demographic variables by identity orientation

		n	Personal		Relational		Social		Collective	
			Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Race	White	104	3.98	0.49	3.60	0.60	3.12	0.66	2.89	0.70
	Person of Color	61	4.20	0.49	3.74	0.52	3.25	0.72	3.34	0.68
Religion	Christian	107	4.04	0.52	3.65	0.62	3.17	0.68	3.15	0.72
	Jewish, Muslim, and Other	58	4.11	0.43	3.66	0.49	3.17	0.70	2.88	0.70
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	139	4.06	0.50	3.64	0.60	3.17	0.68	3.07	0.73
	Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual	26	4.10	0.50	3.70	0.41	3.19	0.74	2.97	0.71

Notes: Value labels: 1 = not, 2 = slightly, 3 = somewhat, 4 = very, and 5 = extremely important to the sense of who I am

Weighted means for sample identity orientations are as follows: personal identity ($M = 4.06$), relational identity ($M = 3.65$), social identity ($M = 3.17$), and collective identity ($M = 3.06$).

Next, results from the t-tests for statistical significance were shared for each

demographic group presented in Table 7. Only demographic groups with over 30

participants in each forced-choice set were included. For race, the difference in the

means within personal and collective identity were statistically significant. There was

homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p =$

0.956, $p = 9.29$), for personal and collective identity respectively. White mean personal

identity score ($M = 3.98$) was –0.22, 99% CI [–0.39 to 0.07] lower than people-of-color

mean personal identity score ($M = 4.20$). As mentioned, there was a statistically

significant difference in mean personal identity score between participants identifying as

white and participants identifying as people of color: t(163) = –2.850, p = 0.005. In

terms of collective identity and race, the white participant score ($M = 2.89$) was –0.45,

99% CI [–0.67 to –0.23] lower than people of color ($M = 3.34$). There was a statistically

significant difference in mean collective identity score between participants who identify

as white and who identify as people of color: t(163) = –4.054, p = 0.000.

For gender, the difference in the means within social identity orientation was not

statistically significant, but may be of practical significance: t(163)=1.985, p = 0.049.

There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of

variances (p = 0.768). Men's mean social identity orientation score ($M = 3.29$) was 0.21,

95% CI [0.00 to 0.42] higher than women ($M = 3.08$).

For religion, the difference in collective identity orientation approached

statistical significance between Christian and that of Jewish, Muslim, and other-religion

participants: t(163) = 0.275, p = 0.019. There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances (p = 0.909). The Christian mean collective identity orientation score (M = 3.15) was 0.27, 99% CI [0.05 to 0.50] higher than other religions (M = 2.88).

For the second purpose of the study, Table 8 presents the unweighted mean results displayed by the identity orientation category of the most active identity in a participant's leadership. The active identifier in leadership is referred to as *active identity level* for the purposes of presenting results.

Active identities within leadership included identities from each of the four identity orientations. The most prominent active identity orientation was personal identity (n = 74; 45%). Personal identifiers ranked as most important by participants included competitor, introvert, planner, and open-minded. The second most common active identity orientation was collective identity (n = 54; 33%). Examples of identifiers active in leadership for participants included Catholic, Mexican, woman, black, gay, and Muslim. Third was relational identity (n = 33; 20%). Examples of active identifiers were leader, friend, role model, and director. Finally, social identity orientation represented the least overall number of leaders' active identifiers in their leadership (n = 4; 2%). The four identifiers active in participant leadership were woman in technology, follower of Christ, disciple of Jesus, and good friend.

Table 8

Identity orientation unweighted means by active leader identity orientation

		AIQ Identity Orientation			
Active Identity Level		Personal	Relational	Social	Collective
Personal Identity	Mean	40.70	36.53	21.73	23.43
(n = 74)	SD	4.43	5.34	4.47	5.73
Relational Identity	Mean	40.58	37.48	22.85	23.91
(n = 33)	SD	4.50	5.35	5.00	6.04
Social Identity	Mean	39.00	34.25	22.50	22.25
(n = 4)	SD	7.53	4.92	4.20	4.50
Collective Identity	Mean	40.65	36.11	22.37	26.31
(n=54)	SD	5.86	6.62	5.21	5.87

Table 9 presents the weighted means of the four identity orientations by active identity level. Personal identity orientation was the highest identity orientation ($M = 4.07$) for those leaders who listed a personal identity identifier as the most active identity in their leadership ($n = 74$). While not the highest identity orientation based on the weighted means, those leaders with a relational identifier active in their leadership score had the highest weighted mean ($M = 375$) as compared to the other three active identity level groups. This was the same for those participants whose active identity level was collective identity. They scored the highest identity orientation as collective ($M = 3.06$).

Table 9

Identity orientation weighted means by active leader identity orientation

		AIQ Identity Orientation			
Active Identity Level		Personal	Relational	Social	Collective
Personal Identity	Mean	4.07	3.65	3.10	2.93
	SD	0.44	0.53	0.64	0.68
Relational Identity	Mean	4.06	3.75	3.26	2.99
	SD	0.45	0.53	0.71	0.76
Social Identity	Mean	3.90	3.42	3.21	2.78
	SD	0.75	0.49	0.60	0.56
Collective Identity	Mean	4.06	3.65	3.17	3.06
	SD	0.50	0.58	0.69	0.72

Note. Value labels: 1 = not, 2 = slightly, 3 = somewhat, 4 = very, and 5 = extremely important to the sense of who I am

III.4 Conclusions and Discussion

The results of the present study suggest four conclusions and subsequent recommendations for research and practice. Each of the conclusions are articulated, as well as their potential impacts for leadership research and practice.

First, the results of the AIQ-IV suggest that leaders included in this study demonstrated a tendency toward a personal identity orientation. As stated in the development of the AIQ, identity orientations refer to the relative importance that individuals place on various identity attributes or characteristics when constructing their self-definitions (Cheek et al., 2002). This suggests that leaders are most concerned with the internal construct of their own identity, even in the context of their leadership. For this reason, practitioners who aid in leadership education and training should work to continue integrating reflective exercises that emphasize these personal identities and their intersection with leadership. For leadership scholars, this personal identity orientation can further be explored within the identity approach to leadership. How are personal identities influential in a social phenomenon of leadership as opposed to the other identity orientations? This exploration may prove meaningful, as many of the identities explored within the literature are intersections of collective identities and leadership (e.g., women leaders, black male leaders, etc.), thus suggesting a gap in the research.

Although disabled individuals represented only a small number in the study ($n = 5$), there may be a difference in identity orientations of individuals who identify with a disability. After briefly consulting the existing literature with keywords of disability and AIQ, no literature seems to focus on this distinct community as it relates to identity orientation. Thus, more research with a larger sample may be meaningful for understanding the differences in identity orientations of individuals with disabilities.

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Additionally, this approach to studying identity did not restrict research to a single identity and its intersection with leadership. If identity orientation is used as a context that can bridge several identities, then it might help with broader approaches to leadership development. For example, rather than developing leadership programs for African American men only, there may be value in merging leadership programs for students who share identities on a collective identity level. A statement of this significance does not intend to undercut current, identity-conscious approaches, but may aid in generalizability by or across identity orientations for leader development.

Conclusions of statistically significant AIQ by forced-choice demographics also may provide insight into identity orientations. For instance, this study used forced choice around collective identities into majority or underrepresented groups in a United States context (Adams & Bell, 2016). Using these prominent collective identities yielded some, but not consistent, differences in how they each impacted the weighted means of identity orientations. When considering identity orientations, people of color and white people differed in statistically significant ways on personal and collective identity orientations. This might be because people of color are more aware of their belonging with their racial collective identity at the research site (i.e., predominately white institution). Broadening beyond this, Adams's and Bell's (2016) collective identity frameworks are within a United States context, maybe suggesting this could be something more generalizable within this larger geographic context. The cause remains unclear for the difference in collective and personal identity but not social and relational orientations. This unknown

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lays out an opportunity for future research. The present study also revealed practical significant differences in gender. Men scoring higher than women in social identity orientation may suggest the need for men to value affiliation and integration in social groups compared to women. Considering this finding with current research, a reason may be the need for men to achieve awards, accolades, or social group recognition to confirm their identity. Finally, religion approached statistically significant difference in average weighted means of identity orientation. Christians scored a higher collective identity orientation than other religions. All of these mean differences are situated in the sample of individuals in positional and nonpositional student leadership roles. Overall, it is difficult to make meaning of the differences in mean scores by these demographic variables; however, it appears that collective identity orientation seems to have some influence by collective identity demographic variables.

Future research might also look at the makeup of all the rank-ordered identities and how they may or may not align with the overall AIQ strengths of associations with the four identity orientations. To illustrate, the present study considered the top-ranked identifier that a participant considered active in their leadership. In the future, all identities considered active in a participant's leadership could be explored further by sorting all identifiers into an identity orientation. As mentioned in the study limitations, a rank order makes it difficult to understand the intensity and relative distance between each item from participant to participant.

Overall, insights into identity orientations may prove valuable due to their ability to encompass a multitude of identifiers and identities. Each identity orientation and associated identity process has implications for leadership. This study suggests that identity is active in leadership and begins to develop an understanding by which identity orientations are present within the context of leadership.

CHAPTER IV

LEADERS' PERSPECTIVES: IDENTITY IN THE CONTEXT OF LEADERSHIP

IV.1 Introduction

"Enhancing the development of students has long been a primary role of student affairs practitioners" and educators (Torres, Jones, & Renn, 2009, p. 1). Identity development theories help educators understand how students go about discovering their "abilities, aptitude, and objectives" while assisting them to achieve their "maximum effectiveness" (American Council on Education, 1994, p. 69). Identity is shaped by how one organizes experiences within the environment (context) that revolves around oneself (Erikson, 1959, 1994). Across academic disciplines, the view of how individuals organize experiences takes on varying definitions. Within the research community, identity is commonly understood as one's personally held beliefs about the self in relation to social groups (e.g., race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation) and the ways an individual expresses that relationship (Schwartz et al., 2011). However, is how leadership educators contextualize leadership the most influential for framing identity?

Studying identities as discrete, independent variables is far easier to accomplish methodologically and is one way of "managing the complexity" of intersecting identities (McCall, 2005). Some researchers have moved toward embracing this complexity through qualitative methodological strategies that allow for more closely examining the realities of lived experience. However, studying intersecting identities is not without challenges and is difficult to work out methodologically. The challenge, as Bowleg

(2008) captured, is "how to ask questions about experiences that are intersecting, interdependent, and mutually constitutive, without resorting, even inadvertently, to an additive approach" (p. 314). What this means for educators is that the presence of intersecting identities (e.g., Asian American students with disabilities) does not necessarily constitute an intersectional approach. Indeed, all individuals possess multiple social identities. However, each is typically treated as distinct and independent. Rather, intersectionality centers analysis on how student experiences are enmeshed in systems of power and inequality.

Identity within the leadership context is the next frontier in leadership scholarship. In 2011, Haslam and colleagues posited the formation of an identity approach to leadership. Within this approach it became clear that the study of both identity and leadership requires contextualization. Additionally, all leadership does not depend on the "quality of the leaders alone but rather of the relationship between leaders and followers" (Haslam et al., 2011, p. 45). Relationships frame our identities, and identities are both observable and hidden within the leader and follower. This complex interplay suggests more intersectional investigation.

While identity and the leader are often researched, the scholarship is light on studies of how the leader's identity is understood, enacted, managed, or otherwise present in leadership. Much of the recent scholarship contributing to an identity approach to leadership centers on the follower's perspective (Haslam, 2004; Haslam et al., 2001; Postmes & Branscombe, 2010; Reicher, Spears, & Haslam, 2010; Tyler &

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Blader, 2003). Likely this is due to the social psychology background of the original

theory of social identity leadership (Hogg, 2001a) underpinning the approach. A more

limited and narrow view exists of the leader's perspective of their identity and its role in

their leadership.

Understanding a leader's perception of identity within leadership has

implications for the field. As Petriglieri (2012) conceptualized, leadership development

programs are "identity workspaces" that help meet the demand for effective leadership

by benefiting the individual, the organization, and society. A leader's identity refers to

the extent to which an individual self-defines as a leader and considers the leader role as

a central part of whom he or she is (Day, Harrison, & Halpin, 2009). Leader identities

serve as an organizing and motivating force necessary for thinking and behaving as a

leader and pursuing and engaging in development opportunities (Day & Harrison, 2007).

Thus, leadership educators stand to benefit from understanding the complexity of

identity within the context of leadership for the purposes of leadership education and

development.

IV.1.1 Purpose and Objectives

The primary purpose of the present study was to understand how a leader's

identity is experienced within their own context of leadership. The primary question of

interest was to describe how a leader's leadership is affected by their salient identities.

IV.2 Methodology

This study, conducted as part of a larger study exploring leadership and identity, focused on the experience of leaders and how their identity intersects with their leadership. The methodological approach for this study was qualitative in nature, as qualitative inquiry research helps comprehend processes or phenomena within experience (Bamberger, 2000). Because the purpose of the study was to understand how a leader experiences their identity within the context of leadership, a constructivist epistemology was used to enact a phenomenological approach. Specifically, a hermeneutical phenomenological methodology was employed.

In *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Denzin and Lincoln (2011) offered the following definition of qualitative research:

> Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer
> in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices
> that makes the world visible. These practices ... turn the world into
> a series of representations including fieldnotes, interviews,
> conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At
> this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic
> approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers
> study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of,
> or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring
> to them. (p. 3)

Research on the leader's perspective of identity within the context of leadership is scant; a qualitative paradigm aids this exploratory research.

A constructivist perspective assisted in the attainment of the research's purpose, as the meaning leaders ascribe to the role of identity in leadership was of interest. The meaning then was derived by the lived experience of the leaders who participated. Both identity and leadership researchers recognize the social construction of each discipline, and "the way in which people being studied understand and interpret their social reality is one of the central motifs of qualitative research" (Bryman, 1988, p. 8). In terms of background, social constructivism has roots in symbolic interactionism (Mead, 1934) and phenomenology (Schutz, 1970). Thus, a phenomenological methodology connects well to this research approach, ontology, and epistemology.

A hermeneutical phenomenological methodology was chosen (van Manen, 1990). Merriam (2002) asserted that "qualitative research attempts to find out how people make meaning or interpret a phenomenon" (p. 68). Leadership researchers have typically used quantitative approaches; however, to better understand complex, embedded phenomena such as identity and leadership, qualitative approaches to studying leadership are also necessary (Alvesson, 1996; Bryman, Stephens, & à Campo, 1996; Conger, 1998). A hermeneutical phenomenology was chosen over empirical, transcendental, and psychological phenomenologies (Moustakas, 1994). This was because this particular approach suggests that researchers first turn to a phenomenon, an

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"abiding concern" (p. 31), that seriously interests them (e.g., running, mothering, learning). The researcher is also involved in interpreting the phenomenon as they, too, have experienced it. In this case, the phenomenon was a leader's experience of their identity within their leadership.

IV.2.1 Sampling

The study employed the purposeful sampling procedures of intensity sampling to identify "intensity-rich cases that manifest the phenomenon intensely, but not extremely" (Patton, 2002, p. 243). Study participants included undergraduate, graduate, and professional-school students currently holding positional leadership roles within recognized student organizations or who were emerging leaders. As part of the larger study, participants were asked to attend a 30-minute, in-person research meeting. At this meeting, participants experienced the following Institutional Review Board–approved protocol: (a) completing an informed consent, (b) being facilitated through the completion of an Identity Wheel Activity paper worksheet, and (c) completing an online survey including the AIQ-IV (Cheek & Briggs, 2013). The AIQ instrument suggested the intensity with which an individual ascribes him- or herself to one of four identity orientations (i.e., personal, relational, social, and collective).

Because the intent of the present study was to explore identity regardless of the level of identity process, all four identity orientations were desired. Thus, the sample of participants purposefully included representation from each identity orientation. Participant identity orientation was determined by their highest weighted mean score

within the AIQ-IV. Intensity sampling consisted of inviting participants with the highest associations of each identity orientation. In addition to diversifying the identity orientations based on results from the AIQ, participants were intentionally diversified based on the identifiers listed on their Identity Wheel Activity (i.e., race, gender, characteristics, and relationships) and by the context in which they practice their leadership (i.e., student organization, employment, faith community, etc.). All invited participants wrote about their experience of how their identity is active in their leadership on their Identity Wheel Activity. Thus, they experienced the phenomenon of interest to the present study.

A total of 22 participants were invited to participate in a face-to-face interview, of which 13 interviews were conducted, at which time data saturation was achieved. Given (2016) considered data saturation as the point at which "additional data do not lead to any new emergent themes" (p. 135). As Polkinghorne (1989) recommended, researchers ought to interview from 5 to 25 individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon. Thus, data saturation was achieved within this data collection method and the literature.

Table 10 presents the participants who experienced the phenomenon. Participants are presented by their own chosen pseudonym selected during the research meeting. Their leadership context, position or role, and other selected demographics, including race and religion, are also included.

Table 10
Participant Table

Pseudonym	Context	Role	Race	Gender	Age	Religion	Sexual Orientation	Class
Andre Jones	Employment	Resident Advisor	White	Male	21	None	Gay	Middle Class
Andrew	Student Organization	Vice President	African American	Male	19	Christian	Gay	Middle Class
Autumn	Student Organization	Safety Officer	White	Female	21	Evangelical Christian	Straight	Upper Class
Bruce	Student Organization	President	Asian	Male	26	Hindu	Heterosexual	Middle Class
Elizabeth	Student Organization	Social Chair	White	Female	23	Agnostic	Bisexual	Middle Class
Finesse	Academic Project Group	Leader	African American	Female	20	Christian	Heterosexual	Middle Class
Johnny	Faith Community	Retreat Leader	White/ Portuguese	Male	20	Catholic	Heterosexual	Middle-Middle Class
Marie	Student Organization	President	Hispanic	Female	28	Catholic	Heterosexual	Middle Class

Table 10 Continued
Participant Table

Pseudonym	Context	Role	Race	Gender	Age	Religion	Sexual Orientation	Class
Mimirou	Student Organization	Co-Chair	Black	Woman	19	Catholic	Bisexual	Upper-Middle Class
Rat Commander	Student Organization	Unit Commander	Hispanic	Male	31	Nondenomi-national	Straight	Working Class
Scott	Student Organization	Social Chair	White	Male	18	Atheist	Heterosexual	Middle-Middle Class
Shawarma	Student Organization	Social Chair	Middle Eastern	Male	19	Maronite Catholic	Heterosexual	Middle Class
Trisha	Employment	Researcher	Asian	Female	26	Secular	Bisexual	Upper-Middle Class

IV.2.2 Data Collection

Using the results of the quantitative component of the larger study, intensive interviewing was utilized, which means a "gently-guided, one-sided conversation that explores research participants' perspective on their personal experience with the research topic" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 56). Additional key characteristics of intensive interviewing considered in the design were (a) selection of research participants who have first-hand experience fitting the research topic, (b) in-depth exploration of a participant's experience, (3) reliance on open-ended questions, (c) objective of obtaining detailed responses, (d) emphasis on understanding perspective, meanings, and experience or research participants, and finally (e) practice of following up on unanticipated areas of inquiry, hints, etc. (Charmaz, 2006). In the case of this study, the open-ended questions focused on identity within the context of leadership.

Questions were framed around the topics above and were ordered in initial, intermediate, and ending questions (see Appendix I) to aid in rapport building and sharing by the participant (Charmaz, 2006). Additionally, the in-person research meeting, which preceded the in-depth interview, was designed to increase rapport between the researcher and participant. This was determined helpful due to the nature of the research topic. Qualitative researchers must initiate a rapport-building process from their first encounter with a participant to build a research relationship that will allow the researcher access to that person's story (Ceglowski, 2000; Goodwin, Pope, Mort, & Smith, 2003; Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2004; Minichiello, Aroni, & Hays, 2008; Payne & Westwell, 1994; Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2015).

The participants were asked two broad questions (Moustakas, 1994): (1) "What role do you think identity plays in leadership – if any" and (2) "In what ways is [identity] active for you in your leadership?" Other open-ended questions were also asked, but these two, especially, focused on gathering data leading to a textural description and a structural description of the experiences and ultimately provided an understanding of the common experiences of the participants (Moustakas, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1989). Different identities were included in the interview to enable describing the phenomenon across various identities and identifiers (i.e., race, gender, sexual orientation, characteristics, and religious affiliation), as well as from differing identity orientations.

Interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed verbatim. Field notes were also included in analysis. It is currently understood that qualitative field notes are an essential component of rigorous qualitative research. The majority of qualitative research methods encourage researchers to take field notes to enhance data and provide rich context for analysis (Creswell, 2013; Lofland, Snow, Anderson, & Lofland, 2005; Mulhall, 2003; Patton, 2002).

IV.2.2 Data Analysis

I used the psychologist Moustakas's (1994) approach to phenomenology because it has systematic steps in the data analysis procedure and guidelines for assembling the textual and structural descriptions.

Building on the data from the first and second key interview questions, I reviewed the interview transcriptions and highlighted significant statements, sentences, or quotes that provided an understanding of how the participants experienced the

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phenomenon of their identity within their leadership. Moustakas (1994) calls this step horizontalization. Next, I developed clusters of meaning from these significant statements, which later emerged as themes.

These significant statements used to form the themes were then used to write a description of what the participants experienced. These textual descriptions were then used to write a description of the context or setting influencing how the participants experienced the phenomenon, called imaginative variation or structural description (Moustakas, 1994). Moustakas (1994) added a further step in which the researcher writes about their own experiences and the context and situations influencing their experiences. To shorten Moustakas's procedures, I have included them below in a methods discussion of the role of the researcher (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

From the structural and textural descriptions, I then wrote a composite description presenting the "essence" of the phenomenon. It is a descriptive passage, a long paragraph or two, from which the reader should come away with the feeling, "I understand better what it is like for someone to experience that" (Polkinghorne, 1989, p. 46).

IV.2.3 Role of the Researcher

For this purpose, the role of the researcher was that of constructivism. At its simplest, constructivism posits that knowledge is constructed; in other words, individuals make meaning of their world by constructing their own models or representations of their experiences (Jonassen, Peck, & Wilson, 1999).

I believe that knowledge cannot be passively amassed, but rather is the outcome of active cognitive processes undertaken by individuals as they organize and make meaning of their experiences. Constructivism has been instituted by the work of individuals such as Piaget, Dewey, Vygotsky, Kant, and Kuhn (Phillips, 1995). As a constructivist leader, I explore the way things were by speaking to the people who were there. Then, individuals use that knowledge to determine how things should be and find ways to get there. All this is done in a context within which everyone involved can relate. Inherently, this study worked to construct meaning from shared experiences on how identity influences the leader and their development. Additionally, I often work to be consciously aware of my own personal, relational, social, and collective identity (e.g., white, queer, male) as it relates to my own leadership. This awareness and consideration of my identity within my own leadership practice was the motivation for this study.

At first, my own identity motivated me to affiliate with student organizations and now community groups, for instance, by seeking out German Club or the LGBTQ professional organization. These identity spaces were places I first desired to affiliate with and then lead. Of course, my identity first made me relate to and belong with these groups. Then, my identity, in conjunction with my desire to influence the outcomes of the group, motivated my leadership.

On the other hand, I also joined organizations and groups where an identity was not the paramount focus. These groups were Residence Hall Staff Council and student activism efforts for shared governance. These groups comprised a heterogeneous mix of members of various identities. These spaces were not identity-focused, but my own

awareness of my identities (both marginalized and privileged) shaped my leadership, for instance, by creating positions on the leadership team charged with inclusion or diversity goals and by realizing how my identity as a male may be experienced by the women with whom I worked. Overall, identity remains a consistent factor considered in all my leadership contexts. While the way in which my identity influence changes based on my context, it remains an important consideration.

IV.3 Findings

When discussing the phenomenon of identity within the context of leadership, leaders revealed three themes within their experiences. These themes aid in achieving the primary purpose of the research to understand how a leader's identity is experienced within their own context of leadership. Textual descriptions are provided for each of the three themes of (a) awareness and salience (b) leader differentiation and context affiliation, and (c) identity as a situational factor in leadership. If a theme contains a subtheme, additional textual descriptions are provided.

Before delving into themes of the participant experiences, I articulate some of the action verbs used to describe how salient identity is experienced within leadership. First, Andre Jones, when asked, matter-of-factly shared, "I mean, they guide my leadership." Scott was very clear in his use of the actions preforming identity in his leadership, at first describing some identities as the *motor* for his leadership and later as an *informing factor*. For Andrew, identity was a *differentiating perspective* in his leadership. Finesse described identity in the way that it "empowers me to [lead]." While the role in which

identity is situated in leadership varied, these themes encompassed the operationalizations.

IV.3.1 Awareness and Salience

When leaders described their identity in the context of their leadership, identity importance and awareness were attributed. While identities and identifiers discussed by leaders as within their leadership spanned race, sex, sexual orientation, citizenship status, student classification, relationship identifier, and others, the majority of the 13 participants mentioned personal or group awareness, salience, or the importance as underpinning the involvement of identity in their leadership.

Within the awareness and salience theme, Rat Commander described, "Well, [identity is] important for me, too, just because I guess some of the experiences that I encounter. You don't want to have these blinders up to these things, you would like to think that these things don't exist in the world, but they do." Thus, Rat Commander suggested that identity adds an awareness element to his leadership. Finesse discussed awareness as well, but also suggested that she (Finesse's pronoun) adapts within her leadership:

> Being aware. I think it just makes me, I wouldn't say
> hypersensitive, but I'm always aware of my language, my tone of
> voice, my speech, that goes into being African American. Like
> when I raise my voice I'm not just [Finesse] raising her voice
> being assertive. I can be perceived as [Finesse] the angry, black

woman, or [Finesse] just the angry black person who's always

angry.

Overall, leaders were aware of their own identity and the identity of others in their

leadership. Andre Jones commented, "They play an active role in my thought process in

what I do when I'm leading." Finally, Johnny reflected on how his faith identity informs

his values and therefore his leadership. "I guess the most important way that it's active

in my leadership is that, in the Catholic faith you learn about being loving to other

people and also glorifying God through your actions." He continued, "So going off being

loving to other people. That's a huge part to leadership." Because of his Christian

identity, there seems to have been an awareness of how his church experience

contributed to his development and therefore his leadership. Across these participants,

there is an awareness of identities within their leadership context. The impetus for this

identity awareness seems to vary by participant, but the awareness nonetheless

influences leadership.

 This awareness and salience led to the subtheme of visibility or recognition by

others. For instance, for Trisha, her female identity was active in her (Trisha's pronoun)

leadership. She articulated, "Pretty much what is visible from people who are around

me, what they can see about me, those are the ones that I starred." Mimirou also echoed

this awareness through visible identities when she (Mimirou's pronoun) shared the

following:

 You can look at me and tell that I'm a black woman, that's not

 particularly hard to decipher, and so that visual, being able to see

that I identify as a black woman, my influence, my experiences,

but for me at least personally, I think that my sum of experiences

throughout my life has really helped shape and change my identity.

Another way in which certain identities were active in leadership emerged when they were recognized first by others. Trisha shared that her self-identifier of being self-critical is active in her leadership because of confirmation by others. "I try to be self-critical of myself to an extent, then people around me look at it and acknowledge it, it's more of reassurance for me that, 'Yes, I am this kind of person.'" Johnny elaborated on this subtheme while contextualizing where his mentor identity within his (Johnny's pronoun) student organization role comes from:

I was the president of the Future Farmers of America club, so the

FFA. I was the president of that, so I was a leader, and then

someone told me that they saw me as a mentor and that I kind of

like put them under their wing, or they were under my wing. After

that, is when I guess I understood that identity. So first I was a

leader, then someone told me they saw me as a mentor, and then I

practiced more on that.

While the visible participant identities including race and gender were sometimes described by leaders as the reality of their leadership, the identities, like self-critical and mentor, were more ascribed by others according to the leader's perspectives. Either way, these identities were salient to the leader, or they became salient due to them being regularly ascribed to the leader.

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IV.3.2 Leader Differentiation and Context Affiliation

        The other shared experience by participants were two concepts often found together in the analysis. Leaders were often drawn to the particular leadership context (e.g., student organization, employment, or faith community) due to their identities. Then, within these leadership contexts where they share identities with group members, participants focused on how their identities differentiated themselves from others. Scott summarized this interplay of concepts when he described, "… identity definitely plays an important part in leadership roles in both being the leader and selecting what to be a leader in."

        To illustrate the first concept of how identity influences the participant's affiliation with the leadership context in the first place, Johnny reflected, "If someone identifies like me, in agriculture, they're more prone to be a leader in agriculture. I really just think that the only important part of the identity is what they're going to lead in." Scott discussed a similar sentiment in identity, connecting it to the focus of his identity-based organization, a secular student association, when he shared the following:

        I have said that it's really important for me personally to align with

        the organization that I'm representing, but that might not be true

        for everyone. If someone really, really cares about this one

        particular issue or thing, even if they might not align themselves

        with anything else that an organization might represent, if that's

        sufficiently important to them, then sure, go for it.

These affiliations with the leadership context led some participants to describe their

feeling of relatability with followers due to their identity. Identity led to relatability in

their leadership because of the connection to others within the organization. Shawarma

asserted this experience with other students who identify similarly to him (Shawarma's

pronoun) in an Arab student organization. He recalled, "Being able to relate to

experience, culture, those types of things, and how that gives you trust or insight into the

people you're around or working with."

This was echoed by Autumn with her (Autumn's pronoun) Greek Life

organization and by Rat Commander in his Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC)

unit. Finally, not only is identity a draw to particular leadership contexts, it may aid with

decision making to narrow a leader's options. Scott shared the following:

> …identity definitely told me where I wasn't going to go. Like, I
>
> know what things I'm interested in, but I also know what things
>
> I'm super not interested in, and so my religious identity sort of
>
> informs my decision to not participate in most religious
>
> organizations.

While this may be more associated within identity-based organizations, this experience

was described in a comparable way in less clearly identity-based leadership contexts.

Thus, the leader's identity led to the participant's motivation to serve in leadership

positions. For instance, Andre Jones described how his identity was a part of his

leadership role as a resident assistant:

I had some issues with myself coming to terms with being gay.

And I realized, wow, other people could have those same issues

when they don't identify as what people think is the 'norm.' So

that's given me the ability to understand people and become more

understanding of their situation and then make accommodations

for them if they need it in terms of what they need to be an

effective follower.

Thus, Andre Jones's gay identity aided in his ability to relate to different groups or

individuals within his employment. This motivated him to apply for this particular

leadership position in the first place.

The other concept connected to context and group affiliation is how leaders

described how their identities differentiate themselves from the group. For instance,

Marie described the identities with which she (Marie's pronoun) identifies:

So, I started with being a woman, just like ... Kind of like when I

tried to do my intro speech, elevator pitch. I try to identify as a

woman, as a Latina, a grad student, and then I started more with

descriptions that the people mention about me, or even in those

strength tests …

Then she began to share a different set of identifiers that she began connecting to her

leadership. Marie continued later in the interview, saying the following:

I think more ... I was describing kind of in myself that that's ... To

be a leader, you don't need to be a specific ... Like a woman, like a

Latina or grad student, but I feel that you definitely need to be
responsible, organized, honest, and then ethical and persistent if
you actually want to carry out an idea. So, that was more the
characteristic for being in leadership, and then the others were
characteristics about myself. So, if an African American has the
same characteristics for leadership, they could be a great leader,
even if it's a male or another race.

Marie differentiated that some identities are more associated with a person
and not necessarily a leader or within leadership. This differentiation
resonated with other participants when they described the identities they
employ to distinguish themselves as leader within a group. Bruce
confirmed this notion when he shared, "You might relate to everybody in
terms of ethnicity or being an international student, but when it comes to
communication skills or the semi-professional skills, you should be able to
stand out." Bruce focused on his identifiers of differentiation:

I think the identities that I mentioned in general differentiate you
from others or give you an edge, so you stand out. I think one of
the main characteristics of a leader would be that they stand out in
the crowd, and on the other hand, which might seem contradictory,
a leader should be able to relate to everybody. That's where the
other identities come into play.

In sum, this theme contends that participant identity within leadership serves as a mechanism for connection as well as differentiation.

IV.3.3 Identity as a Situational Factor in Leadership

The final theme that emerged when discussing identity within the context of leadership was the way identity is a situational factor in participant leadership. Andrew summarized this shared experience:

> I definitely think in certain situations your identity can play an important role into what you're doing. Sometimes it may not play an important role at all, so definitely when you're leading the situation, you're probably going to be more of the less-identifiable person, so you're not going to be your individual self in that situation. You're going to be more catered to the group because if you try to cater to one person you're going to leave out the rest, so in situations where it's diverse you kind of have to be more caterable to the crowd, but if you're in a situation where everyone's decision is the same or more the same, you can definitely use your identifiers to have a bigger impact on that crowd.

Andrew, in the description above, seems to manage identity as a tool within his leadership. There is a reference to how this situational consideration of identity may relate to leader effectiveness. Andrew concluded by saying, "Sometimes, your identifiers can help you be more impactful if you know the situation where, again, it

makes sense and be powerful in that situation". Later, Andrew circled back to this idea

when he reflected out loud, "So just in the situation, it's kind of like you have to turn

certain identities off in order to, I guess, be more effective towards people." He went on

to say the following:

> You start talking about certain things in one crowd, they're going
>
> to disconnect, and then you're just going to start losing people, so
>
> you kind of just have to be aware of what's going on … you're not
>
> going to say the same thing to children to adults.

Andrew was describing identity as a factor in influencing groups. Marie discussed a time

in which identity may contribute to leader effectiveness in particular situations. She

described the role of a diversity dean at the university. She shared, "…your personal

background could help you to be ... depending on the role, to be more effective ... to

have more empathy with the situation." She elaborated by describing an African

American and white woman who were being considered for this role and why she

believed the African American candidate might be more effective as a leader. She

concluded, "So, there's some that your role can make it ... I mean, your personal

background could make you a better leader in the role, but then that doesn't mean that

others could not fulfill the role."

Identity as a situational factor was also described by participants in other ways

for leader effectiveness. Mimirou articulated the situational leadership context of her

student organization and how it elicits her black identity:

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Outside of [student organization], it's honestly not something that I

think about. Part of it's probably the way that I was raised. My

parents were always just like, 'Yeah, you're black. Yeah, you're

African, but it's not a big deal. You're just a person.' And so yeah,

I don't think in other leadership contexts it necessarily is as active.

Mimirou experienced this theme differently as she made it known that the importance of

her black identity is not the same within other leadership contexts. Thus, leadership

context is a situational factor for Mimirou. Overall, identity was expressed as a

situational factor in leadership for participants.

IV.4 Essence and Conclusions

In conclusion, the essence of the three themes cues the articulation of the

experienced phenomenon of a leader's identity within the context of leadership. This

phenomenon includes identities spanning demographic groups (e.g., race, gender,

religion), leadership contexts (e.g., employment, student organizations), and personal

identities (e.g., self-critical, honest).

A leader's awareness and salience of their identities contribute to their

development as a leader or their own mindfulness in preforming leadership. A leader's

identities guide the determination of how they come to affiliate with the leadership

context and followers. Plus, salient identities aid leaders in differentiating themselves

within the group—possibly aiding with leader emergence. Finally, identity is a

situational factor that leaders consider as supportive of their effectiveness.

As Scott posited, "I think that identity should absolutely be an informing factor for leadership, I don't think it should be a deciding factor." Scott articulated the conundrum of which comes first—identity informing leadership or leadership informing identity:

> So I don't know. I definitely do think leadership could inform
>
> identity, but it's difficult to see that first step being taken,
>
> depending on your identity to begin with. So definitely, like, a
>
> leadership role could make someone more social, but if they
>
> wanted to stay as far away from people as possible to begin with,
>
> would they ever consider that? I don't know. Probably not.

Thus, Scott established the age-old "which comes first" argument—the chicken or the egg? Does identity salience inform leadership, or does leadership inform identity salience? Can they occur simultaneously? When Mimirou was asked, "Do you think that identity influences leadership?" she replied, "I think it can," and when asked in follow-up which direction was more powerful, she asserted, "I would definitely say identity to leadership." These two concluding thoughts may situate implications for future research and practice.

IV.5 Implications for Future Research and Practice

There are a number of implications for further research and practice that became evident from the present study: (a) further investigating identity salience within leadership for informing research and practice, (b) considering the attribution processes and how leaders describe this within leadership in juxtaposition to the existing

perspectives of followers, and (c) identifying implications for how identity is considered a situational factor within leadership, which may or may not relate to the contingency approach to leadership.

Not surprising as emergent within this phenomenological study was the theme of awareness and salience. As Hogg et al. (1995) posited, "Identity salience is conceptualized (and operationalized) as the likelihood that the identity will be invoked in diverse situations" (p. 257). Identity that is salient in a leader's life may also be salient within their leadership. Thus, this theme confirms existing identity research in this area. To illustrate further, Finesse's experience as an African American is an identity important in her life, as well as in her leadership. There is a difference in the function of identity and the role it plays within leadership.

The theme of leader differentiation and context affiliation leads to the next implications for research and practice. These shared experiences within this leader-focused study suggest similarities to the social identity theory of leadership (Hogg, 2001a). Within this model, which situates Tajfel's (1982) social identity theory, the explanatory nature of the model suggests leader prototypicality, social attraction, attribution, and information processes. While this model is based on follower perspectives within a social psychology lab, leaders are confirming aspects in the model using similar but distinctive language. For instance, the model refers to leader prototypicality; however, leaders within this study described a similar sense of identity with the group as relatability. As discussed by Shawarma in his Arab student organization, groups with more prototypicality (e.g., salient group membership) can

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suggest that a leader with similar identities to the salient group membership will aid in leadership. As for social attraction, this might be where the leader-focused phenomenon differs from the follower-focused model. According to Hogg (2001b), social attraction is when more prototypical members tend to identify more strongly and thus display more pronounced group behaviors. Hogg (2001b) continued that leaders "will be more normative, show greater ingroup loyalty and ethnocentrism, and generally behave in a more group serving manner" (p. 189). This pronounced nature of social attraction within the model was described differently by participants of this study. Study participants focused on how the differentiations within the group aid them in emerging and enduring in their leadership positions. This may be an intersection of further research to determine if social attraction process is something a leader is aware of consciously in their leadership. Finally, the information processes and attribution component of the model concerns itself with attribution process groups in which members make sense of others' behavior (Hogg, 2001a). As shared in this theme, participants shared their experience and sense-making of their interactions of identity with their leadership. It is important to note that this aspect of the model also includes the sense-making of followers. Thus, another implication for research is what attribution process might leaders possess that are distinct from that of followers? For example, Finesse mentioned her black identity and how she is aware of others treating her differently due to her race. Because of her leadership, what attribution is different for her due to her leadership positioning in this regard? Luckily, some research has explored this more richly in the field, but often does so with only one identity in intersection with leadership (e.g., women's leadership, black

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leadership). Thus, it is recommended to review existing research of these forms of intersection from various identities, paying particular attention to the leader attribution process.

Finally, implications are discussed for the situational factor in which identity might play a role in leadership. It important that the situational role discussed here is differentiated from the situational or contingency approach to leadership (Northouse, 2016). As Fiedler (1964) asserted, both a leader's personality and operational situation matter to leadership. The contexts, or situations, emphasized in this approach are the organizational and leadership contexts. The way in which participants described the situational factors in which identity matters are related to the organization/group contexts, the followers, and the external perceptions of identity. There is also a situational element to the experience explained by participants. Among these considerations by participants are leadership context, leader identity, and the perceptions of followers. Thus, Fiedler (1964) may have been incorporating identity within his original assertion. More research might be able to determine the ways in which this phenomenon aligns with this approach and where they are distinct.

Implications for practice do focus on reflective practices that encourage leaders to consider identity in their leadership. Rat Commander argued the following:

I think [identity] does play a role in some capacity, I just ... It's

hard for me, unless I sat down and went through this kind of

exercise and this reflection, would I know that these are the

components of my identity as a leader. I think that, like I said, they

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do have a place, but unless you find a way to bring those things

out, then you can still probably be an effective leader, a bad leader,

if you didn't know these things.

Thus, Rat Commander provided the impetus for the final implication. Identity and its

intersection with leadership warrants inclusion in leadership education and development

programs. Mimirou concluded her interview by saying, "No. I'm really interested by this

'cause it's just something I had never thought of before." As mentioned previously,

Petriglieri (2011) conceptualized leadership development programs as "identity

workspaces" that aid effective leadership by benefiting the individual, the organization,

and society. Thus, spaces that permit, create, and hold space for reflection on such

central topics are paramount to leadership development. Infusing the themes articulated

in this study in leadership development and education programs may provide a

groundwork for exploring an identity approach to leadership. Reflection questions could

include "How is identity an informing factor in your leadership?", "In what ways does

your identity connect you to and differentiate you from the group you lead?", and

"Describe a time in which a greater understanding of your own or your group members'

identities may have aided you in your leadership effectiveness."

Overall, an essence was captured as to how a leader's salient identity—spanning

many personal and social identities—is experienced within leadership.

Recommendations were presented related to future research and current practice in

leadership education and development. In sum, the present study contributes to the

notion that an identity approach to leadership is warranted.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

V.1 Overview of Chapter

This chapter briefly summarizes the three studies, along with their major findings and recommendations. Efforts are included to present highlights and discuss linkages (i.e., similarities and differences) among the separate manuscripts. The chapter ties everything together and articulates the contribution to the knowledge base regarding the central focus of identity within the context of leadership. The chapter also discusses research imperatives, or knowledge gaps, not visible when each manuscript is considered individually and articulates an agenda for future research on the intersection of identity and leadership.

V.2 Considering Leaders' Identities, Identity Levels, and Those Active in Leadership Findings and Implications

Chapter II presented findings of the first study entitled, *Considering Leaders' Identities, Identity Levels, and Those Active in Leadership*. This individual study addressed the focal research questions of (a) What identities do leaders possess? and (b) Which are most salient in their leadership? For this first study, a qualitative paradigm was employed.

The deductive content analysis included 1,711 identifiers provided by the 165 participants. Participants averaged about 10 identifiers (M = 10.29) in their reflections on the ways in which they identify. Of these identifiers, *leader* was the most predominate identifier among participants, with 59 participants using this identifier.

Student was the second most (*n* = 52) commonly used identifier. *Friend* was the third most prominent identifier used by participants in response to the ways in which they identify. Of the 1,711 identities listed for the first step of the study's worksheet, participants indicated 719 identities, or 42%, as being active in their leadership. Thus, the average was about four (M = 4.33) identifiers active in participant leadership.

These findings were the basis for the following recommendations. First, the difference in the mean suggests that leaders may not be able to hold as many identities as active in the context of leadership as they do in their worldview, or it may suggest that not all identities are as meaningful in a leadership context. The second conclusion stems from the identities that are salient to leaders. *Leader* and *student* were the most frequent identifiers for participants, thus confirming the need to contextualize leadership scholarship. Third, while the findings of the most frequent identifiers were not unexpected, participants did include some identifiers of interest. Some identifiers differed from higher-education commonly used references to identity, suggesting a reexamination of how these may influence leadership in ways not currently articulated in the current body of knowledge. The final conclusion arises from the findings of the top identifiers by identity levels. The study revealed that personal and collective identity levels influence the identity processes of leaders more than social and relational. While frequency may not signify intensity of identity to participants, it can be reasonable to conclude that identity processes associated with these dominant two levels may have greater impact on leaders. In terms of social identifiers based on frequency, social identity is least present in the ways in which leaders identify.

V.3 Identity Orientations and Leadership Findings and Implications

Chapter II discussed findings from the second study, *Identity Orientations and Leadership*. Building off the insights from the first study, study two sought to situate the current research within the existing literature. First, it contributed to determining which identity orientation is most salient to leaders using a pre-established, quantitative instrument. Next, it determined if the primary identity level of participants is related to the identity level of the identity most active in their leadership. This study utilized a descriptive, mixed-methods study using multiple case studies with sequential data collection (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

The study reported results that revealed 165 participants' affinity within four identity orientations. The study revealed the most prominent identity orientation as personal identity and the least as collective identity. Results of the AIQ revealed statistically significant differences between leaders' identity orientations by various forced-choice demographic variables (i.e., race, gender). Disability also had differences in the means for each identity level; however, responses for participants identifying with a disability were small ($n = 5$). The most prominent active identity level was personal identity ($n = 74$; 45%) within leadership. The second most common active identity level within leadership was collective identity ($n = 54$; 33%), followed by relational identity ($n = 33$; 20%) and social identity orientation, which represented the least of participant leaders' active identifiers in leadership ($n = 4$; 2%).

V.4 Leaders' Perspectives: Identity Within the Context of Leadership Findings and

Implications

The final study (Chapter IV) sought to understand how a leader's leadership is affected by his or her salient identities. To achieve this, the study employed a qualitative paradigm using a hermeneutical phenomenological methodology. Ultimately, the study articulated a shared understanding of how identity is experienced by leaders within the context of their own leadership. This essence interwove the three themes of (a) awareness and salience, (b) leader differentiation and context affiliation, and (c) identity as a situational factor in leadership.

Several implications for further research and practice became evident from the third manuscript. First, the impetus for further investigation of identity salience within leadership for informing research and practice was discussed. Next, emphasis was placed on the attribution processes and how leaders describe this within their leadership in juxtaposition to the existing perspectives of followers. Finally, implications were discussed for how identity is considered as a situational factor within leadership. Within the discussion, connections to the existing contingency approach were suggested, but caution was advised in areas where it may be distinct.

V.5 Synthesis of Conclusions and Recommendations

With the findings and conclusions across all three studies, newly formed conclusions and recommendations are presented. These conclusions and recommendations are made when findings are considered together.

To begin, when considering the first and second studies together, the conclusions lend themselves to exploring active identities within leadership. While the study explored the most active identity within leadership, there are a number of identities active at varying degrees. If these multiple, intersecting identities are considered together, they may have more explanatory power in predicting identity orientation. Future research is warranted as the present study was a rather small sample. Additionally, as leadership context is a factor when leaders activate particular identities within their leadership, this study ought to be replicated within a variety of contexts (e.g., military leaders, high-school leaders, community leaders, etc.). This would aid with generalizability and the ability to compare active leadership identities.

Next, when the second and third studies are considered jointly, it leads to the recommendation to explore the ways in which identity levels may influence leadership. As mentioned by Bruce, demographic identities are less important than personal identities. Similar sentiments were echoed in Marie's comments of her experience of her identity with her leadership. While not named as such, the demographic identities are collective-level identities, suggesting that personal identity–level identifiers are more important to leadership once integrated within a leadership context. This suggests that collective identities may be more important to emergent leaders, while enduring leaders are more mindful of personal identities. This may provide recommendations for emerging-leader programs versus those for executives or professionals.

Finally, while leaders do consider the ways in which their identities differentiate themselves from the group, more emphasis should be placed in research on ways that

identity connects them to the group. As mentioned in the phenomenological study, it appears that identity aids in affiliating with a leadership context and then in differentiation. This might suggest that certain identity levels are used to preform specific leadership behaviors (e.g., group cohesion, task attainment, influence, etc.).

V.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, as Haslam et al. (2011) asserted, "Leaders need to be engineers of identity" (p. 171). The synthesis of these three studies lends credence to an identity approach to leadership. These studies also suggest that identities actively inform a leader's leadership in a variety of ways that are distinct from the existing body of knowledge. These studies contribute to an understanding of how identity matters to leaders and contributes to a body of knowledge from the follower perspective—and accordingly provides a 360-understanding of identity within the context of leadership. Identity levels, or identity orientations, may prove valuable in understanding ways in which leaders are artists of their identity (Haslam et al., 2011). Much is yet to be explained at the intersection of identity and leadership, leaving fertile ground for leadership scholars and practitioners to explore.

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RECOGNIZED STUDENT LEADER RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Howdy ${m://FirstName}!

Our records show you are/were ${e://Field/Position} in ${m://ReconizedStudentOrganizationName}. If you are or have been a student leader at Texas A&M University you are invited to participate in a research study being conducted by Mr. Dustin Grabsch and supervised by Dr. Lori Moore.

The purpose of this study is to understand how identity may influence leadership. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to attend a 30-minute meeting on-campus where you will complete an individual activity. Some participants may be invited to a follow-up interview. There are no right or wrong answers. Participation is completely voluntary.

Are you interested in attending a 30-minute research study meeting on the Texas A&M University-College Station campus?
Yes
No

The records of this study will be kept private. Information about you will be kept confidential to the extent permitted or required by law. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any documents that might be published. People who will have access to your information include the Principal Investigator and research study personnel. Research records will be stored securely and only members of the research team will have access to them.

If you would like more information about the study before deciding whether or not to participate, please contact Mr. Dustin Grabsch at dgrabsch@tamu.edu or 979-862-9172. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, but we hope you will take the time to help us better understand the phenomenon of leadership. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dustin K. Grabsch
Ph.D. Candidate
Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications

Texas A&M University

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:
${l://OptOutLink?d=Click here to unsubscribe}

APPENDIX B

FACULTY/STAFF LEADER NOMINATION RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Dear ${m://FirstName} ${m://LastName},

Welcome back from spring break! **I am writing to invite you to nominate current Texas A&M University student(s) who you consider to be leaders.**

Based on your position in the University, I believe you to have substantial interactions with undergraduate and graduate students. You are under no obligation to share this information and whether or not you nominate students will not affect your relationship with Texas A&M University.

If you are aware of students who lead a group (i.e. an on or off-campus organization, group, club, classroom projects, etc.) you are invited to submit their name(s) and email(s) so they may receive an individualized invitation to participate in a Texas A&M University IRB-approved study being conducted by Mr. Dustin Grabsch and supervised by Dr. Lori Moore. The purpose of this study is to understand how identity may influence leadership.

Do you have any student(s) to nominate who are leaders?
Yes
No

After receiving your nomination, if students agree to participate they will be asked to attend a 30-minute meeting on-campus where they will complete an individual activity. Some participants may be invited to a voluntary follow-up interview. There are no right or wrong answers. Participation in all aspects of the study is completely voluntary.

If you would like more information about the study before deciding whether or not to nominate student(s), please contact Mr. Dustin Grabsch at dgrabsch@tamu.edu or 979-862-9172. Your nomination and the student's subsequent decision to participate in this study is completely voluntary, but we hope you will help us better understand identity within the context of leadership. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dustin K. Grabsch
Ph.D. Candidate
Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications
Texas A&M University

IRB NUMBER: IRB2017-0943D
IRB APPROVAL DATE: 03/07/2018

Why did I receive this email? Your name and email was posted publicly on a Texas A&M University department or office website. Your role and/or position was also determined to interact with current Texas A&M University students. Follow the link to opt out of future emails: ${l://OptOutLink?d=Click here to unsubscribe}

APPENDIX C

NOMINATED STUDENT LEADER RECRUITMENT EMAIL

${q://QID3/NominatedStudentLeader},

Congratulations! You've been nominated by ${q://QID2/FacultyStaffNominator} to participate in a research study about identity and leadership conducted by Mr. Dustin Grabsch and supervised by Dr. Lori Moore. ${q://QID2/ FacultyStaffNominator} considers you a leader of an on or off-campus group at Texas A&M University.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to attend a 30-minute meeting on-campus where you will complete an individual activity. Some participants may be invited to a follow-up interview. There are no right or wrong answers. Participation is completely voluntary.

Sign-up for a meeting time and
day: https://tamu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6sPMwAWoZMnQP7n

The records of this study will be kept private. Information about you will be kept confidential to the extent permitted or required by law. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any documents that might be published. People who will have access to you information include the Principal Investigator and research study personnel. Research records will be stored securely and only members of the research team will have access to the records.

If you would like more information about the study before deciding whether or not to participate, please contact Mr. Dustin Grabsch at dgrabsch@tamu.edu or 979-862-9172. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, but we hope you will take the time to help us better understand the phenomenon of leadership. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dustin K. Grabsch
Ph.D. Candidate
Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications
Texas A&M University

IRB NUMBER: IRB2017-0943D
IRB APPROVAL DATE: 03/07/2018

CONSENT FORM

Project Title: Exploring Identity in the Context of Leadership

You are invited to take part in a research study being conducted Mr. Dustin Grabsch, a Ph.D. Candidate supervised by Dr. Lori Moore, at Texas A&M University. The information in this form is provided to help you decide whether or not to take part. If you decide you do not want to participate, there will be no to you, and you will not lose any benefits you normally would have.

Why Is This Study Being Done?
The purpose of this study is to explore identity within the context of leadership.

Why Am I Being Asked To Be In This Study?
You hold a student leadership position within a Recognized Student Organization at Texas A&M University or were identified as a leader of a group by a faculty or staff member nomination.

How Many People Will Be Asked To Be In This Study?
Approximately 250 students will participate in the study via an established Recognized Student Organization leadership listserv and the nomination process.

What Are the Alternatives to being in this study?
The alternative to being in the study is not to participate.

What Will I Be Asked To Do In This Study?
You will be asked to participate in an individual activity about yourself and your leadership with other participants and complete a survey. This activity is expected to take about 30 minutes. Some participants will be invited to a follow-up 45-60 minute interview to discuss their responses more in-depth.

Will Photos, Video or Audio Recordings Be Made Of Me during the Study?
The researchers will make an audio recording during the study so that your exact quotes may be utilized in the research only if you give your permission to do so. Indicate your decision below by initialing in the space provided.

_____   I give my permission for audio to be made of me during my participation in this research study.

_____   I do not give my permission for audio to be made of me during my participation in this research study.

Are There Any Risks To Me?
The things that you will be doing involve no more risks than you would come across in everyday life; however, some questions asked may make you uncomfortable. You may choose not to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable.

Will There Be Any Costs To Me?
Aside from your time, there are no costs for taking part in the study.

Will I Be Paid To Be In This Study?
You will not be paid for being in this study

Will Information From This Study Be Kept Private?
The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Research records will be stored securely on a password-protected computer and files will be protected with a password. Only members of the research team will have access to the records. Data will be coded so that it does not identify you.

Who may I Contact for More Information?
You may contact the Protocol Director, Mr. Dustin Grabsch to tell him about a concern or complaint about this research at 979-862-9172 or dgrabsch@tamu.edu.

For questions about your rights as a research participant; or if you have questions, complaints, or concerns about the research, you may call the Texas A&M University Human Subjects Protection Program office at (979) 458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu.

What if I Change My Mind About Participating?
This research is voluntary and you have the choice whether or not to be in this research study. You may decide to not begin or to stop participating at any time. If you choose not to be in this study or stop being in the study, there will be no effect on your student status with Texas A&M University.

Your signature documents your permission to take part in this research.

_____   _____
Signature of subject   Date

_____
Printed name of subject

_____   _____

Signature of person obtaining consent   Date

_____
Printed name of person obtaining consent

LEADERSHIP RESEARCH MEETING SCRIPT

Introduction

Welcome and thank you for your participation today. My name is [Researcher Name] and I am a graduate student at Texas A&M University conducting this study in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the doctoral degree. Thank you for joining our Leadership Research Meeting, which should require no more than 30 minutes of your time.

The agenda for our time together is:
- Review the Informed Consent and ask questions
- Complete the Identity Wheel Activity including the follow-up questions
- Complete an online survey with demographic questions
- Review what happens following the Leadership Research Meeting

Review Consent Form

In front of you are two handouts. One is the agenda for today's meeting and the other is the informed consent form for this study.

At this time I would like to review the informed consent document which you picked up upon your arrival to this meeting. Does everyone have a copy in front of them?

[Pause]

We will review the informed consent together before continuing and I can answer any questions you may have about the study.

[Emphasize the section related to audio recordings]

Audio recordings will only occur if you are selected to participate in a 45 – 60 minute follow-up interview based on the responses you provide at today's meeting.
Are there any questions about the informed consent form?

[Pause for Questions & Close Door if Necessary]

Please print your name, sign, and date. Please bring your informed consent form to me to pick up the next worksheet entitled Identify Wheel Activity. Please do not begin this activity until instructed.

Identity Wheel Activity

Great! Now we will continue to the next document in front of you. This is the individual activity you will be completing. Before we begin, this activity does require you to reflect on your various identities. Some consider identity a very personal topic to share, so feel free to move or reposition yourself in the room to have more privacy if you need. Also, the room may not be conducive to writing, so find a hard surface to write on if needed.

[Wait for Movement to Conclude]

We will NOT be discussing your responses today individually or in groups, so they will be kept private and as mentioned before they will remain confidential.

Ok, before we begin, one request. Please write legibly. In order for me to capture your responses correctly, please print as plainly as possible. We are ready to begin.

1. Please write the last four digits of your UIN or student ID number. Sometimes recalling the last four is difficult, so consult your student ID if needed. Please also add a pseudonym or fake name. Whichever pseudonym you choose, please ensure it is identical to the pseudonym you will provide later in the online survey. Only participants who complete this Identity Wheel Activity and have a linkable online survey will be included in the study.

2. The instructions on the worksheet are identical to what I will now read. *Place your pseudonym in the middle circle. List as many ways in which you identify in each circle below. Add additional circles as needed.*
   a. You may begin and identities are easy at first, then you might slow down. Be sure to think about the various ways your identify in your life.
   b. Also, it is not a competition to list to most. Please list only the ones that come naturally to you.
   c. Once done, please give me a thumbs up as you are able so I can gage the group's progress. Please do not continue on without instructions.

3. Now, you have all your identities added to the identity wheel do not add any additional identities to your wheel. Please *Star identifiers which you consider to be the <u>most active</u> in your leadership.* Do not just star identities to star them. The idea here is to be reflective and think through which identity(ies) are active, salient or important to your leadership. If none are active in your leadership, you do not need to do anything. Again, give me a thumbs up as you are able when you are through before we continue on together.

4. Next to the starred or underlined identiy(ies), rank order them. 1 - being the most important and/or most active in your leadership - to the least important. If you have three started, your rank order will go from 1 – 3.

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5. Finally, on the reverse of the Identity Wheel Activity are three questions. I will read them all now. Please complete them at your own pace.

   a. *When considering your leadership above, which context (i.e. organization, group, club, etc.) did you primarily consider when responding to the identities active in your leadership? Name the organization, group, club or context.*
      i. This context does not need to be the organization or group that brought you here for the study. Please answer with which context you thought of when asked about identities active in your leadership.
      ii. Notice the question asked for your primary context. Choose one in which was most important or salient for you when responded to the question.

   b. *What made this context come to mind first? Please be specific.*
      i. Please share here. Be specific and detailed as possible. The more you can write here the better.

   c. *Describe the group to someone who may not understand the context named above.*
      i. This is to explain to someone outside of the university so they understand what you are referring to above. Please do not use acronyms or abbreviations.

As you work to complete the next component of the meeting, I will come around to look over and spot check your *Identity Activity Wheel.* I will be making sure I can read your handwriting and the follow-up questions provide enough context to your leadership.

Online Survey

Using the laptops provided or your own personal device, navigate to the following website URL [link]. Complete the online survey and demographic questions. When asked, be sure to use the same last four digits of your UIN and the pseudonym you selected for today's meeting. If your last four of your UIN and pseudonym you place on the online survey does not match your Identity Wheel your responses will not be used in the study. So please make every effort to complete both and ensure this information is identical.

Conclude Meeting

Thank you everyone for making time to participant today. As a fellow student, I know your time is valuable so thank you. For most of you this will conclude your participation

in the study. Some of you, based on your responses may be invited for a follow-up interview to discuss more deeply your identity in the context of your own leadership. I will be staying around to answer any questions you may have about the study. Thank you again for your time today.

*** If participant wishes to discontinue study, ask if they would be willing to share why:***

IDENTITY WHEEL ACTIVITY

Last Four Digits of UIN: _____
Pseudonym: _____

Directions: Place your pseudonym in the middle circle. List as many ways in which you identify in each circle below. Add additional circles as needed.

Pseudonym:
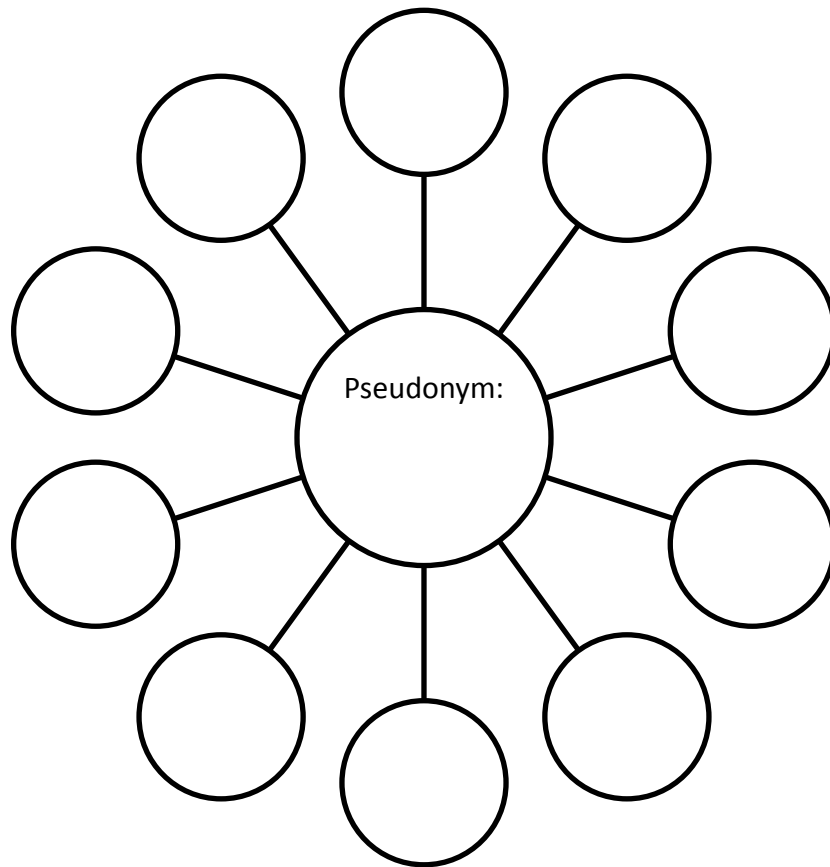
Adapted for use by the Program on Intergroup Relations and the Spectrum Center, University of Michigan.

After listing as many ways in which you identify, star identifiers which you consider to be the most *active* in your leadership.

Then rank order their importance from 1 - being the most important - to the least important.

When considering your leadership above, which context (i.e. organization, group, club, etc.) did you primarily consider when responding to the identities active in your leadership? Name the organization, group, club or context.

What made this context come to mind first? Please be specific.

Describe the group to someone who may not understand the context named above.

APPENDIX G

ASPECTS OF IDENTITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions: These items describe different aspects of identity. Please read each item carefully and consider how it applies to you. Fill in the blank next to each item by choosing a number from the scale below:

1 = Not important to my sense of who I am
2 = Slightly important to my sense of who I am
3 = Somewhat important to my sense of who I am
4 = Very important to my sense of who I am
5 = Extremely important to my sense of who I am

_____ 1. The things I own, my possessions
_____ 2. My personal values and moral standards
_____ 3. My popularity with other people
_____ 4. Being a part of the many generations of my family
_____ 5. My dreams and imagination
_____ 6. The ways in which other people react to what I say and do
_____ 7. My race or ethnic background
_____ 8. My personal goals and hopes for the future
_____ 9. My physical appearance: my height, my weight, and the shape of my body
_____ 10. My religion
_____ 11. My emotions and feelings
_____ 12. My reputation, what others think of me
_____ 13. Places where I live or where I was raised
_____ 14. My thoughts and ideas
_____ 15. My attractiveness to other people
_____ 16. My age, belonging to my age group or being part of my generation
_____ 17. My gestures and mannerisms, the impression I make on others
_____ 18. The ways I deal with my fears and anxieties
_____ 19. My sex, being a male or a female
_____ 20. My social behavior, such as the way I act when meeting people
_____ 21. My feeling of being a unique person, being distinct from others
_____ 22. My relationships with the people I feel close to
_____ 23. My social class, the economic group I belong to whether lower, middle, or upper class

_____ 24. My feeling of belonging to my community
_____ 25. Knowing that I continue to be essentially the same inside even though life involves many external changes

____ 26. Being a good friend to those I really care about
____ 27. My self-knowledge, my ideas about what kind of person I really am
____ 28. My commitment to being a concerned relationship partner
____ 29. My feeling of pride in my country, being proud to be a citizen
____ 30. My physical abilities, being coordinated and good at athletic activities
____ 31. Sharing significant experiences with my close friends
____ 32. My personal self-evaluation, the private opinion I have of myself
____ 33. Being a sports fan, identifying with a sports team
____ 34. Having mutually satisfying personal relationships
____ 35. Connecting on an intimate level with another person
____ 36. My occupational choice and career plans
____ 37. Developing caring relationships with others
____ 38. My commitments on political issues or my political activities
____ 39. My desire to understand the true thoughts and feelings of my best friend or romantic partner

____ 40. My academic ability and performance, such as the grades I earn and comments I get from teachers

____ 41. Having close bonds with other people
____ 42. My language, such as my regional accent or dialect or a second language that I know

____ 43. My feeling of connectedness with those I am close to
____ 44. My role of being a student in college
____ 45. My sexual orientation, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual

Cheek, J. M. & Briggs, S. R. (2013). Aspects of Identity Questionnaire (AIQ-IV).
Measurement Instrument Database for the Social Science. Retrieved from www.midss.ie

APPENDIX H

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Race and Ethnic:
____ White
____ Person of Color

Gender:
____ Man
____ Woman

Sexual Orientation:
____ Heterosexual
____ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, etc.

Physical/Psychological/Developmental Disability:
____ Able Person
____ Disabled Person

Class:
____ Owning and Middle Class
____ Poor and Working Class

Age:
____ Middle/Adult
____ Young and Elderly

FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1.	Initial Question	Let's start by talking a bit about yourself and why you decided to come to Texas A&M University.
2.	Initial Question: Recall	Let's review your Identity Wheel Activity. Talk me through your process of determining what to write as identifiers. Which did you write first? Last? Why? Was the activity hard or easy for you? Please explain.
3.	Intermediate Question: Active Identity	You stared [fill in blanks] as being active in your leadership. How did you determine which were active to you as opposed to other identities? In what ways is [one identity] active for you in your leadership? [Repeat per Identity]
4.	Initial Question: Transition	One of the reasons you were invited to participate in the study is because you hold a leadership role in a student organization or you were identified as a leader by a faculty or staff member. Can you tell me about the group(s) you are a leader in? What's your leadership context? Could you describe that group for me? I am not as familiar.
5.	Intermediate Question: Leader Emergence	Why did you get involved with this group in the first place? How did you become a leader? Is it a role? Influences? How do you know? Are you similar to or different from – in terms of identities - the group's members? Did your active identity(ies) aid you in emerging as the leader? Why or why not?
6.	Intermediate Question: Leader Development	How is your leadership the same and different in this leadership context (e.g. group/organization) compared to others? How have you developed as a leader? Is your development as a leader intersect or relate to your active identities? Why or why not?
7.	Intermediate Question: Leader Effectiveness	Do you consider yourself to be effective in your leader role? Why or why not? How does your active identity(ies) aid or deter you in your effectiveness?
8.	Intermediate Question: Multiple Leadership Roles	In addition to the leadership context we have been discussing, are you a leader in other aspects of your life? Please describe them. Do you think your active

		identities in your leadership are the same in those spaces? Why or why not?
9.	Intermediate: Leading Diverse Groups	Considering the identity(ies) active in your leadership, how do they aid or hinder your ability to lead diverse groups? How do you adjust or accommodate other groups that are different than your current leadership context?
10.	Ending Question: Opinion and Summary	Now, we are done talking about your specific experiences. I want to hear your opinion on something. What role do you think identity plays in leadership – if any? What experiences inform your opinion?
11.	Ending Question: Close	Is there anything else about your identity and leadership you would like to share that I did not ask you about?

LEADERS' IDENTIFIERS SORTED BY IDENITTY LEVEL

Personal Identities	Count
Introvert	15
Caring	12
Independent	11
Organized	9
Organized - Organizer	
Researcher	9
Extrovert	8
Extrovert - Extroverted	
Honest	8
Adventurous	7
Adventurous - Adventure	
Adventurous - Adventurer	
Confident	7
Funny	7
Hard Worker	7
Hard Working	7
Liberal	7
Musician	7
Passionate	7
Responsible	7
Smart	7
Strong	7
Athletic	6
Creative	6
Happy	6
Intelligent	6
Loyal	6
Outgoing	6
Short	6
Achiever	5
Advocate	5
Artist	5
Compassionate	5
Curious	5

Encourager	5
Encourager - Encouraging	
Intellectual	5
Kind	5
Listener	5
Thinker	5
Ethical	4
Friendly	4
Helper	4
Social	4
Strong-Willed	4
Thoughtful	4
Understanding	4
Ambitious	3
Animal Lover	3
Assertive	3
Calm	3
Conservative	3
Dedicated	3
Detail-Oriented	3
Determined	3
Explorer	3
Fair	3
Inclusive	3
Integrity	3
Introverted	3
Learner	3
Logical	3
Loud	3
Motivator	3
Open-Minded	3
Perfectionist	3
Planner	3
Quiet	3
Reader	3
Servant	3
Agriculturalist	2
Analytical	2
Anxious	2
Busy	2

Careful	2
Charismatic	2
Collaborator	2
Communicator	2
Confidant	2
Control	2
Control - Controlled	
Critical Thinker	2
Dad Of The Group	1
Driven	2
Easy-Going	2
Educator	2
Empathetic	2
Gardener	2
Good Listener	2
Hardworking	2
Helpful	2
Humorous	2
ISTJ	2
Lover	2
Music Fan	2
Music Fan - Music-Lover	
Nerd	2
Nerd~Geek	2
Nerd~Geek - Geeky Nerd	
Opportunist	2
Opportunist - Optimist	
Outdoors	2
Outdoors - Outdoorsy	
Outdoorsman	2
Patient	2
Persistent	2
Positive	2
Proactive	2
Reasonable	2
Reliable	2
Risk-Taker	2
Selfless	2
Service-Oriented	2
Shy	2

Supporter	2
Sweet	2
Traditional	2
Traveler	2
Active	1
Active listener	1
Activist	1
Adopted	1
Adventurer~Traveler	1
Alcoholic Addict	1
ALOTer	1
Always positive	1
Analyzer	1
Angry	1
Animal Person	1
Anime Enjoyer	1
Apologist	1
Artistic	1
Ass-Kickin'	1
Authentic	1
Background More Than Foreground	1
Blunt	1
Bold	1
Book	1
Book Lover	1
Bookworm	1
Brave	1
Break the Norm	1
Broad Thinker	1
Bubbly	1
Bulletproof	1
Burdened	1
Business on a Handshake	1
Calculating	1
Candid	1
Caner	1
Career Focused	1
Carefree	1
Cat Lover	1
Cat owner	1

Cautious	1
Caver	1
Chatty	1
Class Clown	1
Clever	1
Climber	1
Committed	1
Communication	1
Community Creator	1
Competitor	1
Conflict Resolver	1
Confrontational (If Need Be)	1
Conscientious	1
Considerate	1
Constantly Busy	1
Control of Emotions	1
Conversational	1
Coordinator	1
Courageous	1
Crafter	1
Critical	1
Delegate	1
Dependable	1
Determined [Indiscernible]	1
Devoted	1
Diagnosis	1
Diplomatic	1
Direct	1
Disciple of Jesus	1
Disciplined	1
Down for Anything	1
Eager	1
Early Riser~Night Owl	1
Efficient Thinker	1
Enabler	1
Energetic	1
Enthusiastic	1
Envisionary	1
Equestrian	1
Evaluator	1

Extra	1
Facilitator	1
Fairless	1
Faith	1
Faith-Filled	1
Fight	1
Financially Unstable	1
Firm	1
Focused	1
Follower of Christ	1
Forward	1
Free-Spirit	1
Future-Focus	1
Gamer	1
Genuine	1
George	1
Gifted	1
Give Thoughtful Advice When Needed	1
Global	1
Goal-Oriented	1
Go-Getter	1
Good At Using Technology	1
Good Communicator	1
Good Samaritan	1
Gun Owner	1
Handworker	1
Happiness	1
Hard of Hearing	1
Hard to Focus	1
Hard to Organize	1
Headstrong	1
Hero	1
High Achiever	1
Hippy	1
Hobbyist	1
Holistic	1
Hope	1
Hopeful	1
Humanist	1
Humble	1

Includer	1
Individualistic	1
Information Driven	1
Innovative	1
Innovator	1
Interested In Assisting	1
International	1
Involved	1
Jolly	1
Joyous	1
Kindness	1
Knowledge	1
Left of Center Politically	1
Left-Handed	1
Level Headed	1
Liable To Make Mistakes	1
Like The Color Blue	1
Linguist	1
Loving	1
Loyalty	1
Marketer	1
Marries	1
Masculine	1
Math-Minded	1
Maximizer	1
Mental Illnesses	1
Methodical	1
Micro-Manager	1
Mindful	1
Missioner	1
Moderate	1
Motivated	1
Musical	1
Natural	1
Nature Lover	1
Naturist	1
Nerd~Reading, etc.	1
New Things	1
No BS Kinda Guy	1
No Need For Constant Recognition	1

Not Always The Smartest	1
Occasionally Seek Opinions From Others When Indecisive	1
Occasionally Too Many Irons In The Fire	1
Once Friends I Can Be Very Open And Fun	1
Open To Change	1
Optimistic	1
Original	1
Out Spoken	1
Outspoken	1
Over Achiever	1
Partially OCD	1
People Pleaser	1
Performer	1
Perpetually Late	1
Personal	1
Pet Owner	1
Photographer	1
Physically Fit	1
Picky	1
Poet	1
Political	1
Political Moderate	1
Practical	1
Pragmatic	1
Presenter	1
Prideful	1
Pro-Active	1
Problem Solver	1
Procrastinator	1
Producer	1
Progressive	1
Pro-Life	1
Protective	1
Public Speaking	1
Quick Learner	1
Quirky	1
Rational	1
Raver	1
Redhead	1
Reflective	1

Reserved	1
Resilient	1
Resource	1
Resourceful	1
Respectful	1
Restorative	1
Retrospective	1
Romantic	1
Rule Follower	1
Runner	1
Sassy	1
Scholar	1
Scienc-ie	1
Secular	1
Self-Assured	1
Self-Aware	1
Selfless Loyal & Compassionate	1
Selfless Servant Leader	1
Selfsufficient	1
Sensitive To Others' Feelings	1
Servant Leadership	1
Short~Average	1
Shy At First When Meeting New People	1
Simplicity	1
Small Hometown	1
Spelunker~Caver	1
Spontaneous	1
Sports	1
Sports Fan	1
Sports Person	1
Stoic	1
Strategic	1
Strength Of Mind	1
Strong~Brave	1
Stubborn	1
Studies~Knowledgeable	1
Study Nerd	1
Support	1
Survivor	1
Talented	1

Tall	1
Team Oriented	1
Team Work	1
Tech Enthusiast	1
Thankful	1
The fun one	1
Thorough	1
Tolerant	1
Traditional Bearer	1
Travelled	1
Trouble	1
Trustworthy	1
Try To Keep Calm At All Times	1
Unconventional	1
Unemployed	1
Unique	1
Upbeat	1
Values	1
Visionary	1
Volunteer	1
Wants Others to Do Well	1
Well Educated	1
Well Rounded	1
Wisdom	1
Wish To Include Everyone In Group	1
Woke	1
Workaholic	1

Relational Identity	Count
Leader	59
Student	52
Student – Students	
Friend	46
Daughter	32
Sister	29
Son	17
Son - Son Of (My Parents)	
Brother	14
Teacher	10

Mentor	9
Worker	6
Colleague	5
Colleague - Co-Worker	
Follower	5
Girlfriend	4
President	4
Roommate	4
Ally	3
Aunt	3
Director	3
Husband	3
Mother	3
Mother - A mom	
Wife	3
Advisor	2
Big Brother	2
Boyfriend	2
Caretaker	2
Classmate	2
Family-Oriented	2
Mediator	2
Middle Child	2
Partner	2
Role Model	2
Team Member	2
Treasurer	2
A.F. Officer	1
Academic Peer Mentor	1
Adviser	1
Ambassador	1
Best Friend	1
Brother~Son	1
Business Major	1
Business Student	1
Business~Marketing	1
Care giver	1
Care Taker	1
Child	1
Civil Engineer	1

Coach	1
Cousin	1
Competent Leader	1
Current Leader	1
Eldest Sibling	1
Executive Vice President	1
Father	1
Father~Parent	1
Good Friend	1
Good Friend~Companion	1
Graphic Designer	1
Health Care Professional	1
Leader~Driven	1
Leader~Officer	1
Mentor~Big	1
Mentee~Little	1
Mentor~Trainer	1
Neighbor	1
Officer	1
Only Child	1
Political Science Major	1
Resident Advisor	1
Roommate	1
Sailor	1
Salesman	1
Senator	1
Servant Leader	1
Service Leader	1
Sibling	1
Single Parent Household	1
Sister~Cousin~Niece	1
Sister~Daughter	1
Sister~Sibling	1
Supervisor	1
Supporter And Friend	1
Team Leader	1
Trainer	1
Uncle	1
Vice President	1
Younglives Leader	1

Collective Identity	Count
Female	40
Male	39
Aggie	32
Christian	29
Christian - Christian (Faith)	
Woman	26
Woman - Women	
White	25
American	21
Engineer	17
Engineer - ENGR	
Texan	17
Texan - Texas	
Black	13
Hispanic	12
Straight	12
Middle Class	11
Catholic	10
Man	10
Bisexual	9
Heterosexual	9
Educated	7
Gay	7
Scientist	7
Able-Bodied	6
Able-Bodied - Able-Bodies	
Able-Bodied - Able-Body	
Graduate Student	6
Graduate Student - Grad Student	
Graduate Student - Graduate Students	
Latina	6
Artist	5
Cadet	5
Environmentalist	5
Asian	4
Atheist	4
Immigrant	4
Indian	4

Mexican	4
Minority	4
Third Culture Kid	4
Agnostic	3
Athlete	3
Cisgender	3
Citizen	3
Feminist	3
Human	3
Millennial	3
Single	3
U.S. Citizen	3
U.S. Citizen - American Citizen	
Young	3
1st Generation College Student	2
African	2
Agriculturalist	2
Biracial	2
College Educated	2
Consumer	2
Counselor	2
Dancer	2
Democrat	2
Eagle Scout	2
English Speaker	2
English Speaker - English Speaking	
Entrepreneur	2
Family	2
German	2
Houstonian	2
Latino	2
LGBTQ+	2
LGBTQ+ - LGBTQ	
Masters Student	2
Mathematician	2
Muslim	2
Non-Religious	2
PhD Candidate	2
Senior	2
Singer	2

Student Athlete	2
½ Nigerian ½ African-American	1
1st Generation	1
90s Kid	1
Abled	1
Academic	1
Activist	1
Actress	1
Aerospace Engineer	1
African American	1
America	1
Anglo-Saxon	1
Arab	1
Army Brat	1
Asian~White	1
Asian-American	1
Biologist	1
Brahmin	1
Brewer	1
Brown	1
Brunette	1
Californian	1
Canadian	1
Chef	1
Child of Divorce	1
Chinese	1
Cisgender Female	1
Civilian	1
College Student	1
Conservative Republican	1
Constructionist	1
Consultant	1
Dallas	1
Delta Gamma	1
Disabled	1
Disabled~Enabled	1
Economist	1
Electrical Engineer	1
Emerging adult	1
English major	1

European	1
European Mutt (Mix Of Various European Ethnicities)	1
European-American	1
Farmer	1
Feale	1
Female (Girl)	1
Female~Cis-woman	1
Female~Gender Fluid	1
Female~Woman	1
Filipina	1
First Generation	1
First Generation College Student	1
Fisherman	1
Floridian	1
Former Leader	1
Former On-Campus Leader	1
Former Student	1
Foster	1
Freshmen	1
Future Aggie Wrangler	1
Gen Z	1
Geoscientist	1
German-American	1
Girl	1
Girl~Woman	1
Graduate	1
Graduate Student (PhD)	1
Greek Affiliated	1
Guatemalan	1
Half-Portuguese	1
Hindu	1
Hispanic~Latina	1
Home-Schooled	1
Housing~Reslife	1
Indigo Child	1
Indonesian	1
International Student	1
Irish-American	1
Korean	1
Latina~Mexican	1

Lebanese	1
Leo	1
Liberal Arts Major	1
Libertarian	1
Maronite Catholic	1
Mexican-American	1
Military Brat~Family	1
Minority In Field Of Study	1
Missionary Kid	1
Moderate (Politically)	1
Multiracial	1
Native English Speaker	1
Nigerian	1
Nighthawk (Corps Unit)	1
Nonreligious	1
Nordic	1
North Carolinian	1
Orthodox Christian	1
Pennsylvania	1
Person	1
PhD	1
Plus-Sized	1
POC	1
Poor	1
Portuguese Heritage	1
Psychologist	1
Psychology Major	1
Ravenclaw	1
Refugee	1
Republican	1
Roman Catholic	1
Ross Volunteer	1
Rowery Athlete	1
Rudder's Ranger (Corps)	1
Russian	1
Salvadorian	1
Scout	1
Skinny	1
Slytherin	1
Small Town Person	1

Sorority Woman	1
Southerner	1
STEM	1
Student of Texas A&M	1
Tennesseean	1
Texas A&M	1
Texas A&M Undergrad	1
Transracial Adoptee	1
University Student	1
Upper Middle Class	1
Veteran	1
Veterinarian	1
Vietnamese	1
Vietnamese American	1
Walton	1
Wealthy	1
Women In STEM	1
Woman In Tech	1
Young (20 something)	1
Young Adult	1
Young Professional	1

INTERVIEW CODES AND THEME ASSOCIATION

Identity as a Situation Factor
Leader Effectiveness
Mm-hmm (affirmative), and honestly, you can create space for it if you're feeling the need to or if you feel like you want to, but that space has gotta come from somewhere. So, either there is space for it or if you feel like it's important enough to influ
I think ... Not necessarily your identity. How could I say it~ I think the identity leadership is needed in order to have role models, in order to make sure that other people could feel alike with, ~Oh, they did this, so I can do it.~ Making sure that ther
What servant leadership is is basically, whatever you do, everything that you do is in the best interests of your subordinates. So if you identify yourself as a servant leader, and more importantly others identify you as a servant leader, then I think you
So just in the situation it's kind of like you have to turn certain identities off in order to, I guess, be more effective towards people, because I mean, you start talking about certain things in one crowd they're going to disconnect and then you're just
Yeah. Like for example, like, pronouns. I'm always very hyper sensitive. How would you like to be referred as~ Like I always try to go the extra step to make sure everybody's needs are being met before we start, like personal needs are being met before we
And then, your personal background could help you to be ... Depending on the role, to be more ... To have more empathy with the situation. That's why, for example, for the diversity dean, there was two females, but white and I think that's why the university
And so working with those differences is, I think, what makes it's important. Especially working on a team and when you're taking turns being leaders. It's super important is not identifying as the same thing but using the different identities to work toward
I think identity plays a huge role in leadership. Depending upon the identity and, I guess, the leadership, it might be a more active or inactive role. Personally, outside of these three which I really had to think hard about, I don't think that my identity
So, you're touching on an idea of how your identity matches what you're trying to lead~~~Autumn~~Yeah. I think that's really important.~~Speaker 1~~So, like an alignment~~~Autumn~~Yes. Yeah. So, my dad's a financial advisor, and he obviously teaches people
I think that's probably the best example is just thinking about who we work with and interact with, like is the situation going to be the best or is it not going to be the best~ I did a diversity program. This kind of factors into both being African-American
So with these situations it makes me more aware of what goes on around me, so I just think about things more actively that I see just because I have been through certain experiences on my own, so whenever I'm interacting with someone I like

So it sounds like the liberal identity plays out in a similar way as the other identities we discussed, so kind of situational, almost opening your perspective, thinking about things in different ways than maybe that your peers would~ Would you say that's true? – Yes
I definitely think in certain situations your identity can play an important role into what you're doing. Sometimes it may not play an important role at all, so definitely when you're ~inaudible 00~57~03~ situation you're probably going to be more of the l
I think it honestly depends on a person's leadership style. ~~~I tend to be very direct. So I speak my mind and use whatever identities I think are applicable to a situation. My two identities are leader and educator are very broad. I think they're very br
So you talk about being more empathetic, being more mindful about difference on the team. So do you really think that that identity is different than your other two in term of how it impacts leadership~~~Andre Jones~~Yes. ~~Interviewer~~Overall, it really
Awareness Insights and Salience
Visible or Recognizable by Others
Pretty much what is visible from people who are around me, what they can see about me, those are the ones that I starred.
I did not star quiet, I did not star tolerant, calm, because these are things that people don't notice about me. They don't really notice that I'm quiet because it's not really evident that I'm a quiet person. They don't notice that I'm a risk-taker because
That's how I said that these are active in my leadership, because people notice it I'm clear that this is active in my leadership. I don't know if I'm really being the other qualities in my leadership because I don't get that feedback from the other people
It's confirmed by other people.
I try to be self-critical of myself to an extent, then people around me look at it and acknowledge it, it's more of reassurance for me that, ~Yes, I am this kind of person.~
Yet that's kind of another common place where other people might say that being a woman, they're mindful of when they lead men, because they worry about perceptions. You're kind of in a different environment. You're kind of in an all women environment alre
Yeah. I think what first came to mind when you asked that question, probably the most honest answer because I'm trying to remember everything, is in high school, I was a leader. I was the President of the Future Farmers of America club, so the FFA.
I think that experience a lot of times influences identity, but that identity doesn't always influence experience, because depending on how you identify some things are obvious. You can look at me and tell that I'm a black woman, that's not particularly
So I don't know. I definitely do think leadership could inform identity, but it's difficult to see that first step being taken, depending on your identity to begin with. So definitely, like, a leadership role could make someone more social, but if they wan
So for me, personally, there needs to be an alignment there, but in general, I don't think identity should be a deciding factor in much of anything. I think it should inform every decision, but I don't think it should determine any decision

Well, it's important for me, too, just because I guess some of the experience that I encounter. You don't want to have these blinders up to these things, you would like to think that these things don't exist in the world, but they do.
I think it does play a role in some capacity, I just ... It's hard for me, unless I sat down and went through this kind of exercise and this reflection, would I know that these are the components of my identity as a leader. I think that, like I said, they
Looking back at it, I didn't know that these were the things that I necessarily identified with in my leadership. Could they be beneficial~ You bet. I do think it plays an influence, but I think that ... I don't even remember when I did this, if I did do i
I think for me, it's just being cognizant. Sometimes, I have to understand the way ... That self-identity, the way that people identify me, it's finding that balance and making sure I'm gonna have these demographic ~inaudible 00~50~12~ kind of place me in
I would say just being aware of the way I think I'm conveying myself, and then what people are receiving.
I think it just depends on, for one, whether or not that identity is ... I don't want to say important to you, but whether it is one of the more forefront identities. So for example, I identify as a black bisexual woman and young adult doesn't necessarily
I guess, I just had never considered the way that my identities influence my leadership, but it's also interesting to see, because I'm not the only leader in FLI, so I'm interested in the ways that the other leaders in FLI bring their identities into their
No. I'm really interested by this, 'cause it's just something I had never thought of before, but ...
So it would be cool to see how the same way that our leadership and followership styles interact, how our identities interact within the leadership team, and then it would be really cool to see the way that the freshmen perceive our team as far as the inte
Do you think that leadership influences identity~~~Mimirou~~I think it can-~~Interviewer~~Which direction is more powerful~~~Mimirou~~I would definitely say identity to leadership-
... is more powerful. Just because leadership to me almost, in this context, seems like the manifestation of that identity, so it's like ... So you know how you have your core values, your beliefs and your principles and then your actions, and your actions
Yeah, it was the role that kind of woke me up to that.
I think, like, it ties into two of the things that I chose, so African-American and being an advocate for other people just because because I experience on a daily basis what minorities feel like, what they act like, what they experience, I feel like I tai
Being aware. I think it just makes me I wouldn't say hypersensitive, but I'm always aware of my language, my tone of voice, my speech, that goes into being African-American. Like when I raise my voice I'm not just Kiara raising her voice being assertive.

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I think however you perceive yourself, however you identify yourself is reality, so I feel like that just knowing who you are, knowing what you can give to people affects the way you lead.
I guess your values kind of they feed off your identity, but your identity kind of sets ... Oh God, it is hard to separate those and logically say it. Gosh. Your identity is maybe more firm, and your values change off that. I don't know if I'm making sense
Yes, definitely, because especially during my undergrad, being the professional characteristics didn't really matter that much because I had a long way to go, I had my master's degree to go to, then my PhD degree to go to, so what was really important
Let's see. I think it plays a bigger role for different people. I guess kind of like my example on giving fitness advice. If someone is really passionate about fitness and working out and eating healthy, and that is who they are, that's their identity. The
I mean, I guess the main one is just that your identity helps your inclusion in situations, but I mean, depending on your other identities, I don't know, some people are different than me, so different identifiers might be more important that I might
When it came to selecting, it got more challenging. Because some of them I knew was important, but I didn't know which one was the most important. So for me my sexual identity, which is relatively new in terms of the time that I have identified with that,
Identity and diversity have only really been apparent to me, and the importance of them, ... have only really, fairly recently been illuminated to me, what the importance are and that they actually existed. If someone talked to me three years ago, ~What ar
So I guess what you're sharing there makes me think do you feel like leaders who hold a marginalized identity are more effective at identity-based leadership~~~Andre Jones~~I think that might be correlated, but I don't think that would be the general cause
So it might be a catalyst for a leader to understand their identity because they are marginalized, but it doesn't mean that someone who holds all the privileged identities couldn't learn to see those other perspectives of how identity might be playing into
Leader and Leader In
Relatability to Group
Being able to relate to experience, culture, those types of things, and how that gives you trust or insight into the people you're around or working with.
So, like I'm wearing them right now, so it's basically every day. It's just a constant reminder of what I stand for and that other people are looking at me and judging me, and I want that judgment to be a good one. So, I have my DG letters on my car. Also,
So I said number one was Texas A&M, so when thinking on stuff everyone here is an aggie, so no one's trying to be above someone else. I look this way or I am this way, so therefore I am above you or better than you. I look at it being you're an aggie first
There's a relatability ...~~Shawarma~~Exactly.
You could, but it also helps to work, because if you're working with Arabs, for example, it's more beneficial. If you already know the culture, know how, basically the traditions and how they are in general. Not like ... It's not generalizing. Not to gener

As we get down here a little bit further into the minority and Hispanic, which is three, four. I think I starred those just because I think there's people out there that look like me and maybe have had experiences such as I've had that, in my identity
Okay. Then, the aggie one sounds a little different. It almost sounds like it's a foundational aspect in your leadership, like it almost provides the similar framework or groundwork almost, I guess, for how you lead, because you know others value it too.
I had some issues with myself coming to terms with being gay. And I realized, wow, other people could have those same issues when they don't identify as what people think is the ~norm.~ So that's given me the ability to understand people and become more
Personal Characteristics Matter More to Leadership
Personality characteristics matter more for leadership to you than identity~~~Marie~~Yeah.
For you, what made those other identifiers more important than the demographic identities~ Because now we're saying that maybe some of those demographic things might help you relate to the group, but not necessarily become the leader.
It depends on the ... If you have those personal characteristics, not necessarily your personal identity, it could be the other way. It could be that ... It could be towards the oppression or it could go towards giving the opportunities. It doesn't matter
I mean, huge, I would imagine. I think you get into leadership because you're a certain kind of person. You don't get into leadership if you're an introvert that doesn't want to deal with people, so if you identify yourself as very closed off, as very
You said that, ~I didn't want to star things like being a woman or being Latina, for instance.~ Because to you, that doesn't matter in leadership, right~ It matters, but it's different, right~ You said you don't have to be a certain type of leader in order
Yeah, or I may not actually be a leader, maybe just my presence in a group I try to reinforce this kind of sentiment in everyone.
Thirdly, it's not just the leader and the followers, it's the people who are outside of the organization. The leader would basically represent the organization, I see when there is a leader who is confident and who has a strong set of values that is really
Yeah. I don't think that really affects my leadership too much except for I'm in the Arab Student Association, so if I wasn't really Arab, it's kinda hard to get a leadership position there.
And then, of course, granted that you are a social person, you do like to have conversation, the ways in which you identify yourself will almost certainly inform the kinds of leadership that you decide to pick up. It'll almost certainly inform the organiza
So yeah, no, identity, absolutely, at least in my opinion ... I suppose I could be wrong about this, but identity definitely plays an important part in leadership roles in both being the leader and selecting what to be a leader in.

Right. I mean, identity definitely told me where I wasn't going to go. Like, I know what things I'm interested in, but I also know what things I'm super not interested in, and so my religious identity sort of informs my decision to not participate in most
My political identity keeps me away from super conservative or super liberal groups because that's not what I am. It's not that I don't want to associate myself with those people. I mean, those people, that's not a good way to say that. Like I said, I real
Maybe not personally, but definitely if they're in a position where they're explicitly representing their organization, they should try their best to make it clear what parts of their identity are to be associated only with them and what parts of their ide
I think that identity should absolutely be an informing factor for leadership, I don't think it should be a deciding factor. And what I've said may seem to contradict that a little bit. I have said that it's really important for me personally to align with
So it sounds like the agriculturalist kind of describes almost the context in which you've really built most of your leadership habits from. Would you say that's accurate~~~Interviewer~~Definitely.
Okay. I think the role that identity plays in leadership is that it forms ... I'm trying to think. Because I guess, a leader is a general term, but your identity will form what kind of leader you are. If someone identifies like me, in agriculture, they're
Yeah. I guess, going back, one thing I didn't write on here, which I wish I did was educator. That's one reason why I went into SMYRT. I know I would have starred that if I wrote that down. I just didn't think about it. Just personally, being in SMYRT, I k
I think being African-American is a collection of experiences. I think with that collection of experiences you can either choose to educate someone or allow someone to be completely ignorant, so I think being African-American is in terms of if I was to use
Most of my leadership positions in life have presented themselves at school. College, high school, all that. As a student, how was I active in my leadership~
I guess really your identity sort of helps set the context of your leadership. The ways you identify can lead to strengths or weaknesses in your leadership. Gosh, I'm really bad at articulating my thoughts, I swear. The way you identify, I guess, kind of i
The ones that I starred were the ones that differentiated me from others or gave me an edge over others. Those were the ones I starred, or the places where I got a chance to show my leadership skills. Right here, when I starred Aggie, being here at A&M rea
Like I said, A&M is the place that gave me the best opportunity to show my leadership skills, so if I were not an Aggie, probably things would have been a little different. That is why I thought it's important that I am an Aggie, and that helps me with my
Researcher. As I mentioned earlier, I am a part of student organizations and one of those used to deal with my biotech research. That's what came next to my mind because, since I was also a researcher, that gave me an opportunity to be a leader in a profess
The main reason is because ISA, International Student Association, I was a part of that group in my masters, but right now when somebody mentions me as a leader, what

comes to my mind is the Graduate Student Association. Since it's a professional organization
I think it's both ways, actually. In some ways, your identity helps you become a leader, and in other ways, being a leader helps you create an identity with people. The people who didn't know me, for example, from the GSA before the elections, now they kno
So, I starred Aggie because like I said earlier, I was on campus, and I knew that it was associated with the school. Role model and leader were starred because of the question that was asked like, ~Active in leadership~~ So, I felt like those really went a
Okay. So, it sounds like those last ones were more of like your leadership context like where you do it~~~Autumn~~Yeah.~~Speaker 1~~Would you say that's true~~~Autumn~~Yes.~~Speaker 1~~Okay. And then, the middle ones were more of like how you approach your
I'm currently the Safety Officer for the Texas A&M Sailing Team, so that's why I thought of that.~~Speaker 1~~So, again, more of a context, not necessarily like these are kind of the values. Things that underpin your leadership.
So definitely being gay is different than being straight to people who are outside of the community, so sometimes people can look ... It's different working with people if they don't have necessarily the same viewpoint on things, like being gay. It can be
Being who I am, that was a key aspect for me into why I wanted to make it more inclusionary versus what it had been in the past, so definitely I feel like if I wasn't there maybe that inclusion wouldn't necessarily have been there and making it more open
I mean, they guide my leadership.
I'm the only gay male on my RA staff. I'm not the only member of the LGBT community though. I'm definitely the most ... I advocate the most for the LGBT community from my group of resident advisors, but we're all very different I think in terms of a lot of