

Leadership Excellence and Gender in Organizations

Developing future leaders: Examining the predictors and consequence of leader identity

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Recommended Citation

Chrobot-Mason, Donna and Campbell, Kristen (2018) "Developing future leaders: Examining the predictors and consequence of leader identity," *Leadership Excellence and Gender in Organizations*: Vol. 2 : Iss. 8 , Article 1.

Available at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/cgg/vol2/iss8/1>

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**Developing Future Leaders:
Examining the Predictors and Consequences of Leader Identity**

Abstract

Identity plays a critical role in understanding the process of leadership. Leadership has been defined as a socially constructed process of claiming and being granted a leadership identity (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). Thus, leadership development and ultimately leadership success must begin with the claiming of a leader identity. For adolescents and young adults, college is a time of self-exploration and identity development. As students experience new responsibilities and roles, their sense of identity may change, and a sense of leadership identity may develop or shift as well. Upon graduation, many students enter the workforce striving to achieve a leadership position. Previous research demonstrates how having a sense of leadership identity influences leader development and ultimately leader success. In this study, we investigate student leadership identity development. Our goal is to address a significant gap in the literature by examining predictors and consequences of leader identity development, including race and gender. By gaining a better understanding of the barriers as well as strategies to overcome barriers to leadership identity development, this line of work may help inform how colleges can prepare graduates for future leadership roles.