



Campus Recreation and Leadership Development: Pathways for Student and Community Transformation

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Contents

Introduction	4
Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership Overview	5
MSL Leadership Development Outcomes	7
MSL Campus Recreation Items	10
Who Is More Likely to Participate?	15
General Campus Recreational Involvement	20
Relationships with Leadership Outcomes	23
Recommendations for Practice	28
Recommendations for Future Research	30
References	33





Introduction

Campus recreation activities are an important and vibrant component of student life that provide students with opportunities to build community and promote wellbeing. As recreation opportunities have expanded on campuses, researchers and practitioners alike continue to explore how recreation relates to and can foster various forms of student development (Forrester, 2014; Peck et al. 2015; Stenta & McFadden, 2015). One such area is leadership. Long touted as a desired outcome of college attendance, student leadership development is a burgeoning field (Astin & Astin, 2000; Komives, Dugan, Owen, Slack, Wagner, & Associates, 2011). In the past few decades, educators have created formal leadership development programs to support student learning and growth in leadership knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Komives et al., 2011; Roberts, 1981).

Recent research has started to surface effective practices for college student leadership development (Dugan, Kodama, Correia, and Associates, 2013). Such research has revealed a variety of activities that can promote student leadership development, many of which can be integrated within various functional areas on campus. Given this, educators who provide distinct collegiate experiences are trying to understand not only how their programs promote these behaviors, but they are also trying to uncover how they may provide other developmental benefits related to leadership. Researchers have examined the effect of several areas on leadership development, such as fraternity and sorority life (Shalka & Jones, 2010), alternative spring break (Skendall, 2012), and residence life (Early, 2016). Endeavors to discern impact on leadership development are now expanding into campus recreation activities. With recent publications sparking conversation on how campus recreation can support student leadership development (Dugan, Torrez, & Turman, 2014; Stenta & McFadden, 2015), this report builds upon that work, providing new knowledge and opportunities to make meaning of research in light of current practice.

Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership Overview

Research included in this report utilized data from the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL), an international research program founded in 2006 and focused on understanding the influences of higher education on leadership-related outcomes. As of 2017, the MSL survey had been administered domestically and internationally at over 350 campuses to more than 610,000 students. In 2012, the MSL team implemented a three-year assessment cycle with the most recent iteration being administered in the spring of 2018.

The Social Change Model of Leadership Development (SCM) serves as the MSL's central leadership theory. Based on the foundational beliefs that all students can engage in leadership and that leadership is a process (rather than simply a position), the SCM consists of seven values that encompass the knowledge, attitudes, and skills students can develop to effectively engage with others toward positive social change (Higher Education Research Institute [HERI], 1996). Many college and university programs that use the SCM as a foundational theory strive to help students understand and develop their capacity in each value. Students can then employ this knowledge and these skillsets to advance positive change within their communities.



Adapted from *A social change model of leadership development* (3rd ed., p.20) by Higher Education Research Institute [HERI]. Copyright © 1996, National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs. Reprinted with permission of the National Clearinghouses for Leadership Programs.

Definitions

Individual Values

Consciousness of self - an awareness of one's talents, skills, attitudes, and social identity as well as the ability to be mindful; being present to one's actions and mindset.

Congruence - consistent actions with espoused beliefs and values while relating with others in authentic and genuine ways.

Commitment - the investment of time and energy in a cause or group, diligently and steadily moving toward a goal.

Group Values

Collaboration - a group's ability to bring together diverse perspectives and talents in a common effort toward a goal; entails shared responsibility, authority, and accountability amongst all members of a group.

Common Purpose - a group's shared values, vision, and goals toward which they must collaborate to achieve.

Controversy with Civility - a group's ability to recognize that conflict due to differences is unavoidable and, therefore, those differences need to be addressed in open and productive ways.

Society/Community Values

Citizenship - an understanding of the interconnected nature of an individual and group with the larger community that moves beyond an obligation to contribute to society and toward a realization in the interdependence that exists between all.

MSL Leadership Development Outcomes

In addition to the SCM, there are several other constructs related to leadership development included in the MSL survey. The importance of providing opportunities for students to develop their leadership capacity (i.e., knowledge, attitude, and skills) is well established (Dugan, 2017). However, various theories and research indicate that leadership educators should also focus on several other aspects of the developmental process (Chan & Drasgow, 2001; Correia-Harker, 2016; Dugan 2017; Dugan et al., 2013). The MSL includes many of these components; and brief descriptions of each construct are offered below, including theoretical or empirical connections between the component and the leadership development process.

1. Leadership Capacity – the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for one to effectively engage in leadership (Dugan, 2011)

- When considering leadership development, leadership capacity is what most educators attend to, endeavoring to teach students specific skillsets and concepts necessary for successful leadership. Leadership capacity is theorized as a central tenet of individual development for leadership (Chan & Drasgow, 2001; Dugan, 2017). Depending on the theoretical foundation, leadership development efforts will emphasize different aspects of and behaviors associated with leadership. Given this, it is important to acknowledge that the MSL centers leadership capacity within the Social Change Model of Leadership Development.

2. Leadership Self-Efficacy – the internal belief in one's ability to be successful engaging in the leadership process (Bandura, 1997).

- Studies find that leadership self-efficacy is positively associated with one's leadership motivation (Correia-Harker, 2016) and leadership capacity (Dugan & Komives, 2007; 2010).



3. Leadership Motivation – an individual-difference construct that affects a person’s decision to engage in leadership training, roles, responsibilities, and processes and that affects one’s intensity of effort and persistence in the leadership process (Chan & Drasgow, 2001; Correia-Harker, 2016).

- Leadership development theories suggest leadership motivation is another central aspect of the developmental process (Chan & Drasgow, 2001; Dugan, 2017), and it has been empirically linked with other key psychological constructs necessary for leadership development (Correia-Harker, 2016).

4. Complex Cognitive Skills – abilities that require higher-order thinking to make meaning of the world and knowledge

- Complex cognitive skills are theorized to be part of the leadership development process (Chan & Drasgow, 2001; Dugan 2017) and are particularly important for individuals to learn from leadership roles and leadership development experiences as well as to make sound judgments regarding courses of action when addressing highly-complicated societal issues in partnership with diverse collaborators.

5. Social Perspective-Taking – the ability to not only perceive the world from another’s perspective, but it is also the ability to accurately interpret the other person’s thoughts and feelings (Gelbach, 2004)

- Research indicates that social perspective-taking is an important skill that helps individuals more effectively enact the group-level values of the SCM (Dugan, Bohle, Woelker, & Cooney, 2014). In essence, social perspective-taking enables individuals to better engage group processes in leadership.

6. Resilience – one’s ability to persist in the face of adversity and employ positive coping mechanisms (Luthans, Avolio, Avey, & Norman, 2007; Dugan, 2017).

- Resilience is believed to be an important skill to maintain hope as individuals face long-term, complex social issues in the leadership process (Dugan, 2017).

7. Socio-cultural Conversations – exchanges with peers about or across lines of difference.

- Studies have repeatedly shown socio-cultural conversations to be one of the most potent collegiate experiences to develop students' capacity and self-efficacy for socially-responsible leadership (Dugan & Komives, 2007; 2010; Dugan et al., 2013).

8. Social Change Behaviors – actions in which students can engage to address an issue and improve their communities.

- Research has connected social change behaviors with social perspective-taking and civic identity (Johnson, 2015); they can also be considered forms of enacting socially responsible leadership.

9. Belonging Climate – the degree to which students feel valued and accepted as part of the campus community.

- One's experience of the context (in this case, the campus climate) is speculated to be a factor in whether and how a student engages in leadership development (Dugan, 2017).

MSL Campus Recreation Items

In 2014, the MSL team collaborated with NIRSA: Leaders in Collegiate Recreation to examine who participates in recreation activities, how different forms of recreational involvement relate to leadership outcomes, and whether various experiences or intermediary outcomes influenced leadership outcomes for campus recreation participants (Dugan, Torrez, & Turman, 2014). The report provided a first look into the relationship between campus recreation activities and socially-responsible leadership development.

That same year, NIRSA and the MSL research team revised the recreation survey items to collect information about a broader spectrum of campus recreation activities. Even though the 2012 MSL instrument included an item that asked about involvement in sports clubs, intramurals, and recreational clubs, several forms of recreational involvement were not included. For the 2015 MSL instrument, the team changed the item language and response options to the following:

To what degree have you been involved in the following on-campus recreational facilities, programs, and/or services? (Never, Once, Sometimes, Many Times, Much of the Time)

- Instructor-led group fitness or exercise classes (ex. yoga, Zumba)
- Intramural sports (ex. intramural flag football, ultimate Frisbee)
- Open recreation (ex. pick-up basketball, weight lifting, treadmill)
- Outdoor adventure activities and/or trips
- Sports clubs (ex. club volleyball, club hockey)



This newly-framed question allowed for expanded exploration of how a range of recreational activities relate to various leadership development outcomes. Therefore, this report uses data from the 2015 administration to explore the following questions:

1. What are the profiles of students who engage in various recreation activities?
2. How does student involvement in distinct recreation activities relate to desired leadership outcomes and feelings of belonging on campus?



2015 MSL PARTICIPATING INSTITUTION CHARACTERISTICS

This sample (n=97) includes institutions from the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Australia. Characteristics for institutions outside of the United States are recorded as “unclassified.”

TYPE



- Public | 56%
- Private | 39%
- Unclassified | 4%

ENROLLMENT



- >5,000 | 17%
- 5,000 - 9,999 | 22%
- 10,000 - 19,999 | 21%
- >19,999 | 36%
- Unclassified | 4%

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION



- Affiliated | 27%
- Non-affiliated | 69%
- Unclassified | 4%

SELECTIVITY



- Less competitive | 6%
- Competitive | 27%
- Very competitive | 28%
- Highly competitive | 16%
- Most competitive | 12%
- Unclassified | 11%

2015 MSL PARTICIPATING STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Based on this survey, 81.6% of students were involved in at least one recreation activity.

Self-reported characteristics of students participating in the 2015 MSL	ALL STUDENT RESPONDENTS (N=98,657)	RECREATION PARTICIPANTS (N=80,504)
	%	%
GENDER		
Women	64.6	63.4
Men	34.9	36.2
Trans/Non-conforming	0.5	0.4
RACE		
White	67.2	68.7
Multiracial	9.9	9.9
Asian/Asian American	7.3	7.3
Latino/Hispanic	6.4	6.4
African American/Black	5.4	5
Not listed	2.5	2.4
Middle Eastern/North African	0.7	0.7
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.3	0.3
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.3	0.3
SEXUAL ORIENTATION		
Heterosexual	91.3	91.8
LGBTQ	8.7	8.2

Self-reported characteristics of students participating in the 2015 MSL	ALL STUDENT RESPONDENTS (N=98,657)	RECREATION PARTICIPANTS (N=80,504)
	%	%
CLASS STANDING		
First-year	22.2	23
Sophomore	21.2	21.8
Junior	25.1	24.7
Senior	29.3	28.9
Graduate	1.4	1.2
TRANSFER STATUS		
Started at current institution	77.8	83.1
Transferred to current institution	22.2	16.9
ENROLLMENT STATUS		
Full-time	94.7	97
Part-time	5.3	3
RESIDENCE		
Off-campus	53.8	48.2
On-campus	46.2	51.8
FIRST-GENERATION STATUS		
Non-first generation	84.7	87.1
First generation	15.3	12.9

Who Is More Likely to Participate in Campus Recreation Activities?

Certain types of students have a proclivity to engage or not engage in various experiences in college. In this survey, 81.6% of students were involved in at least one recreation activity. As students choose whether to participate in particular campus activities, they may unintentionally limit their access to experiences that provide developmental benefits. Thus, it is important to be aware of who is more or less likely to engage in campus recreation activities. The following chart indicates the likelihood of students to participate in each recreational activity type based on their individual characteristics. Thus, up arrow symbols mean that students are more likely to engage in the activity given the presence of the corresponding characteristic. Conversely, a down arrow symbol indicates that, on average, students are less likely to participate in that recreational activity given the presence of certain characteristics. Chart cells with no symbol means there is no statistically significant relationship between the activity and characteristic.

In reviewing who tends to be more or less engaged in recreation activities as a whole, some results may not be surprising, and some may be a bit unexpected. So what may explain why some students tend to participate and some don't? Certain students may have more opportunities due to resources (e.g., financial, time) or have more peer encouragement to engage in recreation activities. Others may have been socialized differently regarding physical recreation; families and communities may place more or less emphasis on physical activity and recreation engagement. Access and socialization are just two explanations that may illuminate why some students are more or less likely to engage in recreation. These rationalizations may also explain why the propensity to participate in distinct recreation activities vary by diverse social identity groups.

Student characteristics and likelihood of participation in different recreational activities

Gender	GENERAL	GROUP FITNESS	IM	OPEN	OUTDOOR	SPORT CLUBS
Women		↑	↓	↓		↓
Men	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑
Trans/Non-conforming	↓			↓	↓	
Race	GENERAL	GROUP FITNESS	IM	OPEN	OUTDOOR	SPORT CLUBS
White			↑	↑	↓	↓
Multiracial	↑		↑	↑	↓	
Asian/Asian American	↓	↑	↓	↓	↓	↓
Latino/Hispanic	↓		↓	↓		↓
African American/Black			↓	↓	↓	↓
Not listed				↓	↑	↑
Middle Eastern/North African	↓	↓		↓		
American Indian/Alaskan Native						
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
Sexual Orientation	GENERAL	GROUP FITNESS	IM	OPEN	OUTDOOR	SPORT CLUBS
Heterosexual						
LGBTQ	↓		↓	↓	↓	↓

↑ = significant, positive relationship between the recreation activity and the outcome. ↓ = significant, negative relationship between the recreation activity and the outcome.

Student characteristics and likelihood of participation in different recreational activities

Class Standing	GENERAL	GROUP FITNESS	IM	OPEN	OUTDOOR	SPORT CLUBS
First-year	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Sophomore	↓	↓	↓	↓		
Junior	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
Senior	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
Graduate	↑	↑	↑			
Transfer Status	GENERAL	GROUP FITNESS	IM	OPEN	OUTDOOR	SPORT CLUBS
Started at current institution						
Transferred to current institution	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Enrollment Status	GENERAL	GROUP FITNESS	IM	OPEN	OUTDOOR	SPORT CLUBS
Full-time						
Part-time	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Residence	GENERAL	GROUP FITNESS	IM	OPEN	OUTDOOR	SPORT CLUBS
Off-Campus						
On-Campus		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
First Generation Status	GENERAL	GROUP FITNESS	IM	OPEN	OUTDOOR	SPORT CLUBS
Non-first-generation						
First Generation	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓

↑ = significant, positive relationship between the recreation activity and the outcome. ↓ = significant, negative relationship between the recreation activity and the outcome.

Reflections for Practice

What are the ways you can reach out to students who are less likely to engage in campus recreation?

- ✓ How can you market and/or offer services via spaces or programs in which they already participate?
- ✓ What offices or student organizations can you partner with to reach these students?

How are your program, services, and/or facilities inadvertently discouraging certain students from participating?

- ✓ What timing and locations could be more convenient for some groups?
- ✓ What facilities might not feel welcoming or meet some groups' needs?
- ✓ What is the culture like in various recreation spaces? What subconscious and overt messages do students of different identities receive?

Considering the students who participate in specific recreation opportunities, some idiosyncrasies and patterns emerge. In terms of gender, men are more likely to participate in all types of recreation except instructor-led group fitness. Conversely, women are more likely to partake in instructor-led group fitness yet less likely to do intramural sports, open recreation, and sports clubs. Transgender students are less likely to participate in open recreation and outdoor adventure activities. With gender-assigned changing facilities and sports leagues being fairly common, many transgender individuals may find it difficult to navigate issues that surface from such practices and policies.

Racial trends reveal more complicated patterns. Findings show that tendencies for white students and students of color vary from activity to activity with only two racial groups showing consistent patterns (i.e., Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students are more likely to participate in all activities and Asian/Asian American students are less likely to participate in all activities). Providers of each type of recreational activity may want to explore the unique nuances of participation in terms of race. Consider why certain groups have a propensity to engage in the specific activities. If you are perplexed and struggle to understand why participation rates vary by race, you could reach out to offices or staff who serve those specific populations to explore why those students do or don't participate. Or you could directly consult those student populations to ask what influences their engagement, or lack thereof, in specific recreation opportunities. Seeking understanding will only help you to create more inclusive and welcoming experiences for diverse students.

Some of the strongest patterns seem to relate to students who potentially have greater access to programs or are more deeply connected in the campus community. Students who live off campus or have part-time status tend to be less active in all types of recreation activities. It may be that these students spend less time on campus and, thus, may not be on campus during times when various recreation activities are provided. Similarly, upper-class students (i.e., juniors and seniors) have had more time in the campus community and may be more connected to opportunities. Thus, upper-class students are more likely to engage in all activities whereas sophomore and first-year students tend to be less likely to engage in all activities. Also, in terms of community connection, transfer students and first-generation students are less likely to participate in all types of recreation activities because it may be harder to build connections or more difficult to navigate the college environment due to a variety of reasons. Explicit outreach to or collaborations with offices that serve these communities might be necessary to help transfer and first-generation students become more involved in recreation activities.

General Campus Recreational Involvement Has a Positive Relationship with Desired Leadership Outcomes

Overall, students who participate in campus recreation activities report higher leadership outcomes and feelings of belonging on campus.

Controlling for individual demographics (e.g., gender, race, class year, major) and institutional characteristics (e.g., size, setting, affiliation), students who engage in at least some form of recreation activity report higher scores across a range of leadership outcomes, other developmental constructs, and behaviors associated with leadership development.

When compared to peers who do not engage in recreational activities, students who engage in recreation activities report significantly higher levels in and more frequent behaviors of the following (see sidebar).

Leadership Constructs

Leadership capacity

- Consciousness of self
- Congruence
- Commitment
- Collaboration
- Common Purpose
- Controversy w/ Civility
- Citizenship⁺

Leadership Self-Efficacy

Leadership Motivation

Other Psychological Constructs

Complex Cognitive Skills

Social Perspective-Taking

Resilience

Sense of Belonging on Campus⁺

Leadership Development Behaviors

Socio-Cultural Conversations⁺

Social Change Behaviors⁺

+ indicates small effect size

Looking more closely at the results, the relationship between campus recreational activities and four outcomes had small effect sizes: citizenship (part of leadership capacity), sense of belonging on campus, socio-cultural conversations, and social change behaviors. Most of the relationships between recreation involvement and outcomes were statistically significant yet trivial in effect size, but the four outcomes that were statistically significant and had small effect sizes are considered more practically significant. In other words, involvement in campus recreation activities has a more meaningful relationship with these outcomes.

Considering these four outcomes collectively, it appears that campus recreation activities may have an influence on students’ feelings of and active engagement with community. Students who participate in recreation activities may be able to build stronger connections within broader networks as they interact with a range of students in fitness classes, on the pitch, or in the wilderness. Some recreation activities could also provide students with meditative space to make meaning of their roles in society or interconnectedness with others. Furthermore, students who participate in recreation activities may benefit from physiological benefits (e.g., enhanced mood) that boost their drive to become active within the community. These are just a couple of plausible explanations as to how engagement in recreation activities meaningfully relates to citizenship, sense of belonging on campus, socio-cultural conversations, and social change behaviors. More research is needed to fully understand these findings.

Percentage of Recreation Participants and Non-Participants That Indicated “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” with Sense of Belonging and Engagement Statements.		
Statement	Recreation Participants	Non-Participants
I work with others to make my communities better places.	70%	59%
It is important to me that I play an active role in my communities.	69%	58%
I feel accepted as a part of the campus community.	71%	51%
I feel I belong on this campus.	70%	51%

After reviewing these findings, one could ask about the effect of other organizational involvement on campus. Are the relationships between recreation and the various leadership outcomes simply a matter of recreation participants being generally more involved on campus? Could reports of higher levels of leadership outcomes be due to students' involvement with other organizations on campus?

Subsequent analyses revealed that the degree to which organizational involvement masked the impact of recreational involvement was minimal. Results showed that although organizational involvement accounted for some of the relationship between recreation involvement and leadership outcomes, all relationships between recreation and desired outcomes remained significant except one: congruence (part of leadership capacity). Additionally, of the four outcomes that had meaningful relationships in the first analysis, three of them (socio-cultural conversations, social change behaviors, and sense of belonging) maintained small effect sizes, indicating a meaningful relationship independent of other forms of organizational involvement.

Percentage of Recreation Participants and Non-Participants That Indicated "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" with Social Change and Socio-Cultural Statements.

Statement	Recreation Participants	Non-Participants
Worked with others to make the campus or community a better place.	71%	41%
Acted to raise awareness about a campus, community, or global problem.	57%	34%
Discussed major social issues such as peace, human rights, and justice.	89%	74%
Discussed your views about multiculturalism and diversity.	87%	74%

Reflections for Practice

Campus recreation activities have much potential to support college student leadership development with findings seeming to illuminate some positive trends. How can you use this information to advance recreation programs and services at your institution?

- ✓ In what ways could you communicate these results to relevant stakeholders to show the importance of recreation involvement?
- ✓ How can this information be leveraged to build bridges with other departments or programs at your institution?

Knowing that students who participate in recreation activities have a strong community mindset and tend to engage more in their communities, how can you capitalize on this at your institutions?

- ✓ In what ways can you harness these interests to advance changes in the recreation, campus, and local communities?
- ✓ What are some opportunities to connect recreations programs and services with the local community?

Relationships with Leadership Outcomes Varies Across Different Campus Recreational Activities

Patterns from the general recreation involvement findings are promising, yet additional analyses that examined how unique recreational activities related to the range of leadership outcomes revealed variation across activities. As mentioned earlier, the MSL captured frequency of student involvement in five types of campus recreational activities: instructor-led group fitness, intramural sports, open recreation, outdoor adventure activities, and sports clubs.

The chart below indicates whether leadership outcomes are associated with each recreational activity and the directional nature of each relationship. Up arrow symbols mean that if a student engages in that activity then they tend to have a higher reported score for the particular outcome. Down arrow symbols indicate that students who participate in that recreational activity report lower scores on the specific outcome. Chart cells with no symbol means there is no statistically significant relationship between the activity and outcome.

Examining the table of results suggests a couple interesting trends. First, all forms of campus recreation have a positive relationship with specific outcomes, often those related to social action and engagement in community. Second, some forms of campus recreational involvement, specifically instructor-led group fitness, open recreation, and outdoor adventure activities, are more consistently associated with higher levels of outcomes across the board. However, intramural sports and sports clubs have a less consistent relationship with desired outcomes.

Relationships with Leadership Outcomes Across Different Recreational Activities

Key Leadership Constructs	GENERAL	GROUP FITNESS	IM	OPEN	OUTDOOR	SPORT CLUBS
Leadership Capacity (SCM)	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓
Consciousness of Self	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓
Congruence		↑	↓		↑	↓
Commitment	↑		↓	↑	↑	↓
Collaboration	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓
Controversy with Civility	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓
Citizenship	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	
Leadership Self-Efficacy	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
Leadership Motivation	↑	↑		↑	↑	↓
Psychological Constructs	GENERAL	GROUP FITNESS	IM	OPEN	OUTDOOR	SPORT CLUBS
Complex Cognitive Skills	↑	↑	↑		↑	
Social Perspective-Taking	↑	↑			↑	↓
Resilience	↑	↑	↑		↑	
Sense of Belonging	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
Leadership Development Behaviors	GENERAL	GROUP FITNESS	IM	OPEN	OUTDOOR	SPORT CLUBS
Socio-Cultural Conversations	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
Social Change Behaviors	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑

↑ = significant, positive relationship between the recreation activity and the outcome. ↓ = significant, negative relationship between the recreation activity and the outcome.

Common purpose, a value of the Social Change Model of Leadership Development, is not included in this table because it was not measured in the 2015 MSL survey administration. The MSL research team determined the collaboration and common purpose survey items measured the same construct. Thus, it was removed to reduce multicollinearity.

Those involved in any form of campus recreation seem to be more engaged and feel more like a part of their communities.

The outcomes that emphasize community may look familiar in that most are highlighted earlier as having significant and meaningful relationships with involvement with recreation activities in general. Thus, seeing the consistent relationship across all five recreation groups makes sense and adds a layer of understanding. For socio-cultural conversations, social change behaviors, and sense of belonging, the meaningful relationship with recreation activities as a whole can be attributed to the significant, positive relationship across each distinct recreational activity. This is encouraging for campus recreation professionals in that no matter what type of involvement, campus recreation participants engage in more conversations about and across differences, participate in more opportunities to enact social change, and feel more a part of the campus community.

At this point, one can only speculate as to why these relationships exist, but here are a few plausible reasons why the trends emerged. First, involvement in campus recreation activities can provide opportunities for students to interact with diverse peers on and off campus. As they participate in a new exercise classes, play matches, share gym equipment, or jump into pick-up games, students can meet and interact with peers who are not normally in their social spheres. Second, as they converse with these different sets of peers, students may learn about a breadth of activities or social issues with their communities. Essentially, these interactions can broaden students' awareness of their community and introduce more ways to invest time and energy into bettering their communities and society. Additionally, these loose connections with different individuals across a campus can create expansive networks and help students see themselves as being part of a larger interconnected community.

Reflections for Practice

As you consider that various forms of recreation activities are related to outcomes associated with community building and engagement, what are ways you can promote behaviors that might contribute to strengthening these relationships?

- ✓ How can you better communicate recreation activities as a place to connect, build new friendships, and establish networks across campus?
- ✓ What are ways that you can help recreation participants promote other involvement opportunities and/or weave other community engagement experiences into distinct recreation activities?
- ✓ How can you help students to make explicit connections between exercise and positive affective states as well as encourage them to capitalize on those elevated moods for the promotion of positive change in their communities?

Third, recreation participants may also benefit from general exercise advantages. Exercise is empirically associated with elevated mood (Giacobbi, Hausenblas, & Frye, 2006; Reed & Ones, 2006), which is one of four conditions that can promote growth in self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). As students partake in recreation activities, improved moods and increased feelings of empowerment from exercise may help them to feel more reassured in their abilities to enact leadership.

Students who engage in instructor-led fitness, open recreation, and outdoor adventure recreation generally indicate higher levels on nearly all outcomes measured, yet involvement in intramurals and sports clubs yields less consistent results.

Reviewing the array of leadership outcomes examined, encouraging trends are readily visible for those who participate in instructor-led group fitness, open recreation, and outdoor adventure activities. These individuals report higher levels of three central psychological constructs related to leadership enactment (i.e., leadership capacity, leadership self-efficacy, and leadership motivation; Dugan 2017) as well as many other outcomes associated with leadership development. These patterns are consistent with findings from general recreation involvement discussed earlier in this report. However, those who participate in intramural sports and sports clubs do not seem to exhibit the same tendencies. Intramural sports participants have lower levels of congruence and commitment, two values of the individual domain of the SCM, when compared to those who do not participate in intramurals. When compared with their peers, sports club participants show lower levels of several leadership outcomes, specifically with leadership capacity (and most of the SCM values within), leadership motivation, and social perspective-taking.

Reflections for Practice

When thinking about the different recreational activities you offer, what distinctions do you notice that might explain these trends?

- ✓ What do you notice about the types of students who participate in the different activities?
- ✓ In what ways do the different recreational activities seem to advance mindsets, behaviors, and/or conditions that can promote learning for social-change leadership? What about the ways they might limit this type of learning?

With opportunities to advance leadership development through intramural sports and sports clubs, what are ways you can better incorporate experiences for students to develop skillsets related to the social change model of leadership development?

- ✓ Who are the students who tend to participate in intramurals and sports clubs and how might they be prone to think about leadership? What would they need to develop their leadership abilities according to the social change model of leadership development?
- ✓ To what degree are coaches and advisors engaged in the leadership learning process? What could they learn to help participants develop abilities to engage in leadership on and off the field?

More research is needed to fully understand why there are such differences between various forms of recreation, but there may be a few plausible explanations as to why such trends exist. One hypothesis is that intramural sports and sports clubs are often focused on competition. As students engage in these activities, the focus is on doing better than the other team or individual. Students may be overly focused on winning and may not view recreation as a way to build community and connect with others. This reinforces “us versus them” mentalities that may not be consistent with SCM values, and thus, may not be conducive for developing cooperative leadership. Although competition is not inherently negative in that it can motivate individuals to higher levels of performance and spark action to make change, recreation professionals may want to be more intentional in leveraging and/or tempering competition to maximize students’ development toward socially-responsible leadership.

Recommendations for Practice

Recreation practitioners have much to ponder from the findings outlined in this report, and below are a few practices worth consideration.

Communicate the positive connections between campus recreation activities and leadership outcomes.

- There are several encouraging results that suggest campus recreation activities spark positive student leadership development. Because many campus administrators, collaborators, and students may not recognize recreation activities as influential for students' leadership development, recreation advocates should promote the promising benefits outlined in this report. Sometimes, educators fail to clearly articulate the developmental gains students can make through co-curricular experiences, and thus, they may miss opportunities to advocate for resources to build and expand access to valuable activities. Being able to effectively communicate the advantages of participating in recreation activities will ensure that community members recognize the extent to which these opportunities contribute to student learning, including that of leadership development, and can help students tap into recreation's full benefit.

Review information about who is and is not engaged in campus recreation activities.

- With recreation participants reporting higher levels of desired leadership and community engagement outcomes, recreation administrators should attend to who is and is not participating in different recreation activities. Campus recreation professionals should regularly review participation data to understand which student populations are more or less engaged in their activities. If certain groups are disproportionately represented, recreation professionals should question why that is, determine whether their programs inherently cater to certain groups, and identify ways to involve students who tend not to participate.

Offer educational opportunities for recreational professionals (e.g., coaches, advisors, instructors) to learn more about the social change model of leadership development.

- Although some recreational activities seem to inherently contribute to the students' leadership development, there are plenty of opportunities for recreation professionals to intentionally develop capacity, self-efficacy, and motivation to engage in socially-responsible leadership. Providing these professionals with a baseline understanding of the social change model of leadership development and how recreation relates to it will surface possibilities for them to make explicit connections to their own work and introduce program changes that intentionally foster students' leadership development.

Emphasize collaborative leadership practices centered in the social change model of leadership development, particularly within competitive sport offerings.

- Competition may be a strong driving force in intramurals and sports clubs, yet educators can help refocus students to center collaboration in their efforts. More specifically, consider how to help students collectively determine ways to give each other feedback or ways to build team morale and performance. When there are disagreements on the team, encourage students to productively address these issues and identify paths forward to resolution. If captains or coaches tend to call all the shots, using a collective approach to make decisions and develop the team may feel a bit foreign, but it could result in greater leadership development gains for the larger team.

Recommendations for Future Research

This report reveals the promising impact campus recreation can have on students' leadership development, however, additional research could provide deeper insights into the nature of the results. Such research could help educators confirm the influence various campus recreation activities have on leadership development, discover why particular recreation activities have an impact on this form of development, and better understand unique, developmental nuances campus recreation has for diverse student groups.

Longitudinal research could verify the directional nature of this report's findings. The MSL is a cross-sectional survey, which means the data are collected at one point in time. Although it is plausible that campus recreation impacts several leadership development outcomes, it is just that: a possible explanation. A longitudinal study would be able to substantiate causal claims about the influence of campus recreation on student leadership development.

Qualitative research could provide valuable information regarding how and why some campus recreation activities are related to particular leadership development outcomes while others are not. The MSL dataset provides a wealth of information about the general relationships between campus recreation activities and leadership development, but it does not clarify precisely what factors, processes, or considerations explain the nature of the impact. Such research would allow educators to discern how these various recreation activities make an impact and potentially replicate such practices or components in other recreation opportunities.

Further analysis that disaggregates MSL data by various student identities and experiences will provide nuanced findings that are critical to maximize leadership development for distinct student populations. Students' various social identities influence the way they experience the world and the ways others interact with them. With prior research indicating that students of certain social identities experience varying levels of developmental gains from different campus activities and experiences (Dugan et al., 2013; Dugan, Torrez, & Turman, 2014), it is all the more important that researchers continue to parcel data by social identities for certain forms of analyses. Doing so with these data will help campus recreation staff recognize the distinct ways their programs impact diverse student groups.

Investigating these lines of inquiry will provide campus recreation staff with more robust information to articulate the impact of their programs and will aid them in designing future recreation experiences that are formative for students' leadership development.

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