LEADERSHIP IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT OF LGBT-IDENTIFYING COLLEGE STUDENTS

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PURPOSE

The study addressed the question, “What affects the leadership identity development of LGBT student leaders at a Catholic university?” Each participant described intersections of LGBT identity and leadership identity and also identified positive and negative influences to their identity development and perceptions of leadership.

METHODS

LGBT students were identified by staff who work directly with students and student groups. Student participants were also given the opportunity to identify possible participants. Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted in a grounded theory approach. Each interview was transcribed verbatim and then coded for themes.

PARTICIPANTS

- Nine LGBT students, each of whom is involved in on- and off-campus activities in varying degrees
- Three participants identified as bisexual, two participants identified as gay, one participant identified as lesbian, one participant identified as gender-queer, one participant identified as queer/gender-fluid, and one identified as pansexual

FINDINGS

- Perceptions of Leadership and Leaders
- Perceptions of Self as a Leader
- Leadership Identity
- Advocate
- LGBT Identity
- Involvement

IMPLICATIONS

- It is important that we provide resources for students who are questioning in order to aid their development.
- Creating a campus environment which LGBT students perceive as welcoming to them is important in getting them involved as well as providing a positive perception of leaders on campus.

FUTURE RESEARCH

- Identify and interview more participants
- Conduct follow-up interviews with each participant
- Develop study to look at particular constructs within LGBT identities (e.g. sexual orientation vs. gender identity)
- Incorporate queer theory

SELECT REFERENCES


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