
RESIDENCE LIFE AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Leadership development in students is an important outcome for students in higher education. Relatively few researchers have studied leadership development of students and residence life. This paper looks at literature covering different benefits to students in residence hall, with focus in the area of leadership development. There are many factors contributing to the students' success in leadership development in residence halls, including the compelling force to influence others in their actions and behaviors, and the opportunity for students to participate in students' housing governance. The main findings is that while there may be varied views about students who choose to be in residence halls, there is a positive influence on students in developing leadership skills.

Keywords: Residence life, students, leadership development

1. INTRODUCTION

Achieving the goal of developing college students as effective leaders involves a number of factors in varied ways. Numerous literature has identified a number of factors that are important in residence life influencing students' leadership development. Some of these include social interactions with peers, participation in students' governance and extracurricular activities, and leadership experience through student organizations. The purpose of the current study was to describe how residence life from a variety of typologies develop leadership skills.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Residence halls

Residence halls are a community made up of students, faculty and staff. According to Willoughby and Carroll (2009) college housing impacts student behavior and outcomes. Halls of residence are indeed important organizations that explore the students perception to students' growth indicated by Frascaroli, Bianco and Gozzoli (2015). They continued that students' experience helps with the development of soft skills and professional development. Alkandari (2007) indicated that residence halls is the most important service offered in most higher education institutions because they provide students with accommodation especially to international students who do not live with their families. He further purported that students are very satisfied with their halls of residence because of the programs, student governance and other activities. Alkandari again stated that staying in residence halls plays a critical role in creating a healthy racial climate among students coming from different racial background.

Miles (2011) noted that students can serve as leaders in a variety of contexts including sororities, fraternities, students organization and residence halls. Many researchers including Amole 2009, Xu et al., 2015 have opined that residential hall living has an influence on behavioral patterns. There is a strong conviction from researchers that more attention should be given to residence halls because it is a place that provides solace and refuge for students.

Leadership can be developed in residence and research has confirmed that assertion. Shertzer et al., (2005) indicated the place of residence may influence student leadership as a result of the close interactions with peers and the environment which is likely to promote such skills. Determining the