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The Making of College Student Leaders: Implementing Reflective Practices for Self-Awareness of Personality Traits and Leadership Styles

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The Making of College Student Leaders: Implementing Reflective Practices for Self-Awareness of Personality Traits and Leadership Styles

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May 10, 2022

Abstract

As a higher education professional, I seek to develop the next generation of leaders. The purpose of this research study was to explore how student leaders' self-awareness, in terms of leadership styles, changed through engaging in self-reflection. The research questions were: (1) What do students know about their personality and leadership style after having taken the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)? and (2) Can engaging in self-reflection impact their leadership?

Addressing these questions through research and implementing new practices would expand students' skillsets. This is important because not many student leaders have access to tools and instruments that can help them identify their preferences or strengths; thus, they serve and lead without fully knowing or understanding their potential. There was a total of one precycle and three cycles that followed Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle model through one-on-one interviews and surveys. Ultimately, my findings indicated that identifying personality preferences and engaging in self-reflection support student leaders in self-awareness, which in turn influences their advocacy and service.

Keywords: student leadership development, student leadership, leadership styles, personality preferences, personal development, professional development, advocacy, collaboration, self-reflection, self-awareness

Acknowledgements

My deepest gratitude goes to my professors, advisors, family, friends, cohort mates, SAI department, and participants for allowing my action research project idea to come to fruition.

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The Making of College Student Leaders: Implementing Reflective Practices for Self-Awareness of Personality Traits and Leadership Styles

Holding student leadership roles provide undergraduate students with opportunities to not only exercise leadership, but also work on their personal and professional development.

However, not much attention is focused on increasing self-awareness of those student leaders, and self-awareness is key in understanding who you are and how you relate to others and your environment. Interestingly, a study found that despite most of the participants believing they were self-aware, only 10%–15% of the participants actually were (Eurich, 2018).

In reflecting upon my own undergraduate experience, I realized how much self-awareness I gained after graduating, which I wish I could have been exposed to beforehand to better serve the people I represented and the colleagues I worked with.

My years as a law student were the first instance I recall of beginning to have self-awareness and then work on increasing it. I started to read more self-improvement and philosophical literature, engaged in self-reflection, practiced mindfulness, and put all those lessons to work in my student leadership roles and professional roles too. Afterwards, I noticed a shift in how I better and more confidently handled myself in different spaces and how others interacted with me too. I pondered on all the possibilities and potential opportunities I could have had to effect positive change if I had started my self-awareness journey sooner: in college. As I reflect more about my self-awareness journey, I feel called to work with students to increase their own self-awareness so they can tap into their fullest potential in their student leadership roles.

I feel a calling to serve, which influences my social location. I serve and have served people in many capacities, but one most relevant to this degree and research is service through

leadership. Through devoting myself into various leadership positions in high school, college, law school, and my current role, I have seen intersections of my several identities. Some identities that influence my leadership are age, gender, socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, and multilingualism. All of these have influenced me both consciously and subconsciously in how I navigate situations and how I advise and support students.

I am currently a graduate assistant (GA) at the University of San Diego (USD) within the department of Student Activities and Involvement (SAI), working primarily with the Torero Program Board (TPB). TPB is a branch of the Associated Student Government (ASG) that focuses on coordinating programs and events for undergraduate students to enjoy. Prior to holding the GA position, I was practicing law. Hence, pursuing this master's degree was a welcome career change. I have experience working in both criminal and civil law as a prosecutor and city attorney. Additionally, I have a background in education as a substitute teacher for middle and high school students. I speak three languages, am a child of Mexican immigrants, consider myself a border child, and grew up in a working-class community. All of this has shaped me into who and what I am today.

As a GA for TPB, I advise seven of its members, in addition to advising an ASG Senator and three members of ASG's Judicial Branch. I advise each TPB student leader in weekly one-on-one meetings where we discuss several topics, but I focus primarily on supporting those students and guiding their ideas for planning and executing student events. What I find most fascinating is the exploration of students' capabilities and their development. However, through working closely with TPB students, I recognized a struggle to identify or articulate their personality types, strengths, or gaps. I also recognized a gap in what they know about

themselves, their potential, and what they can do about it. Thus, I believe it is beneficial for student leaders to engage in self-reflection and assess their personality types, strengths, and gaps early on.

I see my action research project as a continuation of my commitment to support the next generation of leaders, both on and off campus.

Research Questions

For the purpose of this study, I focused my action research on the student leaders within TPB. My research questions were: (1) What do students know about their personality and leadership style after having taken the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)? and (2) Can engaging in self-reflection impact their leadership? Through addressing these questions, I encouraged student leaders to reflect on their leadership experiences and leadership styles including those of others who have influenced them. In sum, this research contributed to the increase of self-awareness of student leaders and serves as a reflection of my passion to support the journey of every student.

Literature Review

Throughout my literature review, I focused on research that would provide me with an ample overview of student leadership, emerging leadership, student development, personality type assessments, and student self-reflection/awareness. I tried narrowing my research to focus on literature relating to undergraduate students. The databases I used were Google Scholar, EBSCOHost, Academic Search Premier, and Wiley Interscience Journals. I hypothesized if student leaders engage in self-reflection after taking personality type assessments, they will be more self-aware and in turn, be stronger leaders.

This topic is timely because there is an increase in need for more advocacy, collaboration, and equity in leadership—and undergraduate institutions are the best place for students to explore and develop their identities. My research led me to literature from different countries, childhood experiences of young adults, cultural perspectives to leadership, leadership education profession, athletes, and the U.S. Navy. However, there was no literature on point with my proposed topic.

Defining Key Terms

First, it is useful to define key terms. Self-reflection can be defined in terms of critical or reflective thinking (Nottingham, 1998). Critical thinking is that which involves higher-order thinking or reasoning (Glaser, 1941, as cited in Nottingham, 1998). Similar to Perez (2018), I would also define leadership as becoming your best in service of others. Leadership is “about the willingness to step up, put yourself out there, and lean into courage” (Brown, 2021).

The MBTI personality inventory is grounded in Carl Jung’s theory of psychological types, and it is the tool I focused on for my action research project (Quenk, 2009). There are different versions of the MBTI, but I focused on the version that identifies 16 qualitatively different personality types encompassing preferences for four categories: (a) introversion/extroversion, (b) sensing/intuition, (c) thinking/feeling, and (d) judging/perceiving. psychological type describe personality as our “bundle of preferences for how we are energized (introversion or extroversion), how we take in information (sensing or intuition), how we make decisions (thinking or feeling), and how we choose to relate to the external world (judging or perceiving)” (Hirsch & Kise, 2011, p. 1). Personality types are useful for recognizing patterns in how we lead, influence, communicate, collaborate, negotiate business and personal priorities,

and manage stress (Hirsch & Kise, 2011). It is important to note, on its own, type theory cannot provide a way of dealing with every issue, but it can lead to a deeper understanding of the value of each person and provide a logical model for why people say and do the things they do (Hirsch & Kise, 2011).

Student Organization Impact

Rosch and Collins (2017) examined the historical role of student organizations in developing leadership capacity in students and their current roles on campuses in creating transformational environments for student leadership learning and growth. Rosch and Collins also mentioned how student organization involvement is uniquely suited to accelerate leadership development and how some student organizations mirror professional organizations' structures.

Today, student organizations remain prime sources for developing the leadership capacity of its members (Rosch & Collins, 2017). The authors provided a unique analogy:

Student organizations can serve as pebbles thrown into a pond, providing opportunities for widening the perspectives of their uninvolved peers through the waves of their activities within the hallways of their secondary schools and the quads of their university campuses. (Rosch & Collins, 2017, p. 9)

I interpreted this analogy and realized that students involved in student organizations are instruments of influence to a wider audience. I believe a leader should be service-driven and committed to their constituents, which is why I maintain that learning more about oneself may benefit the individual, everyone, and everything around them—serving something bigger than themselves.

There is a larger impact to serving in student organizations: Highly engaged students who experience success through their involvement often experience threefold levels of growth, and as their skills improve, their leadership self-efficacy grows as well, given the real-world impact they see (Rosch & Collins, 2017). In addition to individual capacity building, student organizations also serve as settings where leadership can be developed collectively and be successful in working in groups, which is why all student leaders should take personality type assessments and self-reflect to increase self-awareness and recognize how they show up in different environments (Rosch & Collins, 2017). Taking all the above into consideration, I focused my action research project on USD's TPB members.

Leadership Identity

Chung and Personette (2019) stated connections exist between experiential learning, leader identity development, and leadership educator professional identity development models, all of which play a role in how leadership experiences in today's youth and early adulthood offer potential pathways to the leadership education profession. Although their article focused on the identity of a leadership educator, it offered interesting points. Once students get involved in group activities, such as student organizations, and assume increasing responsibility, they enter the stage of exploration and engagement. In this stage, students discover their strengths and weaknesses and get affirmation about their leadership qualities, thus building confidence about their developing leadership identity (Chung & Personette, 2019). Hence, my proposed implementation of personality type assessments and self-reflection, could greatly help student leaders' development through identifying what type of personality they have and encouraging them to further reflect and explore their leadership types and values.

Offering great insight, Chung and Personette (2019) declared having leader education professionals, as well as leadership identity models increasingly accessible, may provide for discovery of their leadership educator professional identity much sooner. Although I am not advocating for development of a leadership educator identity, I am advocating for accessibility to personality type assessments *sooner* in students' leadership roles, so a similar discovery is made earlier about leadership identity.

Self-Reflection

Despite Nottingham's (1998) focus on staff within student affairs, the overarching concept is also applicable to student leaders. Here, Nottingham explored the role of self-reflection as enriching the traditional development efforts and reviewed several instruments (one of which was the MBTI) that can assist with understanding how personality, learning, and behavioral styles can support self-reflective thinking and influence the effectiveness of individuals. My research proposes personality type assessment, along with self-reflection, will help the development of student leaders and consequently impact those around them. In fact, self-reflection allows one to identify (a) strengths and limitations in different environments and (b) individual personality, learning, and behavioral characteristics that influence one's interactions with others (Nottingham, 1998). Additionally, self-reflection is important because it provides space to acknowledge differing attitudes, beliefs, cultures, and experiences.

Interestingly, colleges and universities take on the roles of *in loco parentis*, student services, and student development (Delworth et al., 1989, as cited in Nottingham, 1998). Thus, it is vital we at universities engage in having student leaders self-reflect, especially because we serve in a role of *in loco parentis*. This is reemphasized: "a primary support for students in their

leadership emergence is the role of adult professional advisors” (Reese, 2003, as cited in Rosch & Collins, 2017, p. 13). Hence, student affairs professionals are the ideal people to assist in student leader development, including the increase of self-awareness through self-reflection and personality type assessments.

Nottingham (1998) argued the direct application of critical reflection and development to one’s experiences is helpful and believes with the appropriate use of personality, learning, and behavioral inventories, one can increase and enhance their effectiveness and improve their professional development. This shows that taking personality type assessments and engaging in self-reflection are useful for development and enhancing one’s effectiveness; hence, student leaders would be a great focal point for future research.

MBTI in Student Affairs

Regarding MBTI and its use in student affairs, according to Kragness and Rening (1996a, as cited in Nottingham, 1998), it is:

suited to increase self-awareness in order to get along with others more effectively. It is also used to identify the source of problems in relationships . . . and to prepare a . . . plan for growth and change. (p. 76)

It makes sense that even if characteristics of gender, economic status, race, and religion are the same, problems might arise because of contrasting MBTI types; however, others with similar characteristics and complementary MBTI types may not have any issues (Nottingham, 1998). This is also another example of how racism is socially construed because problems come from differing personalities.

Ultimately, “[s]elf-reflection is an important component of the personal and professional development of those in student affairs” (Nottingham, 1998, p. 71). However, I believe self-reflection should not only be focused on staff, but also students. Peer interaction in student organizations and involvement foster the development of interpersonal competencies, such as autonomy, confidence, and self-awareness (Kuh, 1995, as cited in Rosch & Collins, 2017). Despite the formal and academic field of leadership that was originally born of a White, middle-class, male, U.S. lens (Dugan, 2017, as cited in Chung & Personette, 2019), we as action research co-participants are trying to be more inclusive in our thoughts and actions. The research I conducted shows a gap, which my action research project attempted to address. My action research project proposes personality type assessments along with self-reflection, will help the development of student leaders and consequently positively impact those around them.

Context

My action research project took place at USD, a mid-sized, private, contemporary Catholic university tracing its history back to 1937 (University of San Diego, 2021). It is also a liberal arts university with an undergraduate population of just under 6,000 students.

I hold multiple roles at USD. In addition to being a graduate student, I am also a graduate student leader, and also employed as a GA within the SAI department, a branch in Student Life (which falls within the division of student affairs). I intend to graduate at the end of Spring 2022, which is when my GA role and graduate student leader roles will also end.

I started as one of four GAs in SAI, but now I am the only GA. SAI consists of three units that serve undergraduates involved in the Associated Student Government (ASG), the student programming group—known as the Torero Programming Board (TPB), and student

organizations. Specifically, my role works directly with TPB. TPB is a small group of student leaders who plan and execute undergraduate student events. TPB members participated in my action research project. I am passionate about learning more about student leadership development, specifically with personality type assessment and self-reflection and am grateful that I sharpened my skills as a leader and researcher while contributing to the development of TPB student leaders.

The instrument I used for my action research project was the MBTI. I recruited participants who took the MBTI. The MBTI has been used over decades by a variety of companies and institutions and is available for a fee. However, USD's Office of Career Development has access to this instrument and can provide students with codes to take it at no cost to students. Afterwards, a career development advisor who is certified by the MBTI company will interpret the results for the students.

I believe processing the results with students and implementing self-reflective practices would be beneficial for their development as student leaders, individuals, and soon-to-be professionals because it will help identify their types, behaviors, and possible strengths and gaps.

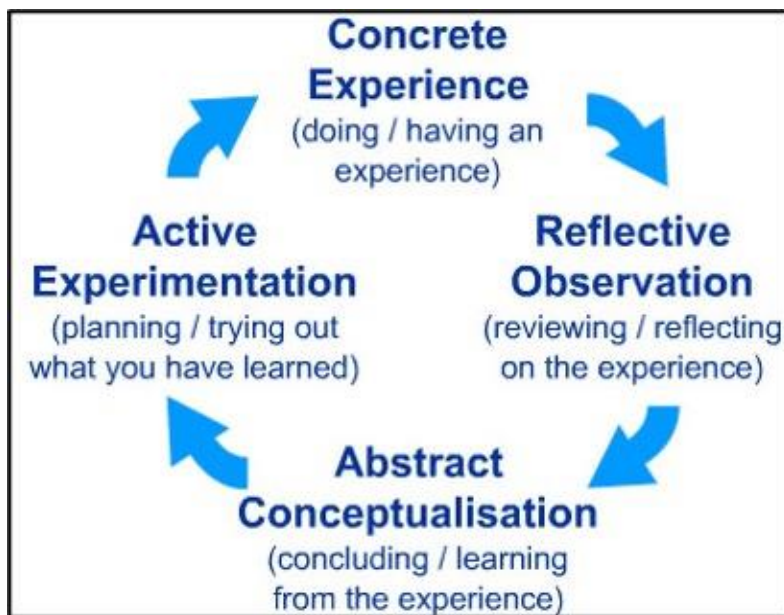
Methodology I

The methodological approach I based my action research in was Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle. Kolb (1984) stated "Knowledge is continuously derived from and tested out in the experiences of the learner" (p. 27). Kolb's experiential learning cycle model seemed like a good fit for my action research project because it consists of four stages of learning: concrete experience, reflective observation of the new experience, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (McLeod, 2017).

Learning is ongoing throughout the cycles. “Only through the reflection process can the experience be truly transformational, as the knowledge students carry into the learning activity is evaluated in terms of their personal experience” (University of Puget Sound, n.d.). The first stage of Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning cycle is concrete experience, which consists of an individual doing, acting, or having an experience (see Figure 1). Next, the individual reaches the reflective observation stage, in which they review or reflect on the experience. Afterwards, the individual reaches the abstract conceptualization stage in which they conclude or learn from the experience. Lastly, in the active experimentation stage, the individual plans or applies their newly learned information potentially starting the cycle all over again.

Figure 1

Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle



Note. Kolb’s learning styles and experiential learning cycle. Reprinted from *University of Puget Sound*, by Anonymous, n.d. (<https://www.pugetsound.edu/experiential-learning/available-resources/creating-critical-reflection-assignments-resource-1/kolbs>).

Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle may start anew, cycle after cycle (see Figure 1). Although Figure 1 shows the order of the model, individuals can start and end at any point of the cycle, it does not need to necessarily follow a fixed order. Through my action research project cycles, I made slight adjustments to Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle as presented in Figure 1. My first cycle outline was: plan, act, observe, reflect. My second cycle outline was: act, observe, plan, reflect. My third cycle had a cycle within a cycle, which I will discuss later.

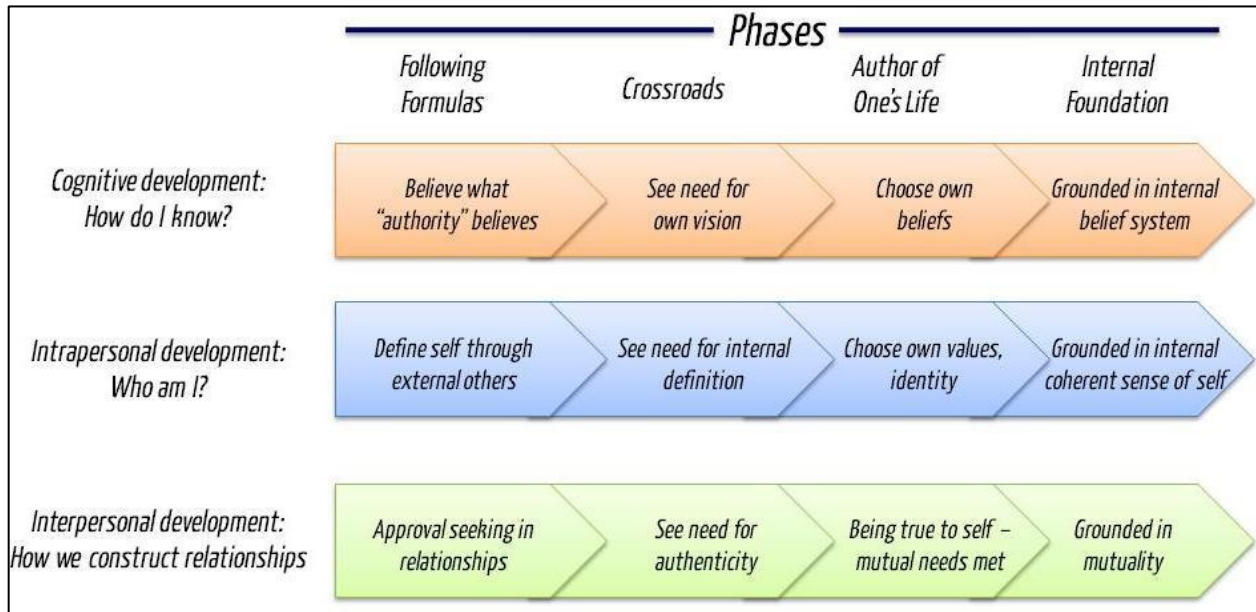
Overall, through my field notes and reflection, I analyzed what happened in each cycle and why it happened, identified the conclusion of that cycle, and created an action plan for what to do next. Lastly, I took what I learned from that cycle and applied it to the next.

Theoretical Framework

To make meaning of the students' experience, I used Baxter Magolda's (2001) self-authorship theory. Baxter Magolda (1998) defined self-authorship as "the ability to collect, interpret, and analyze information and reflect on one's own beliefs in order to form judgments" (p. 143). Self-authorship theory consists of four phases: following formulas, crossroads, author of one's life, and internal foundation (see Figure 2). The theory also addresses three questions: How do I know? Who am I? and What kind of relationships do I want to construct with others? (Baxter Magolda, 2001). This theory takes internal and external factors into account as college students grow, develop, and make their own judgments as individuals and contributing members of society.

Figure 2

Self-Authorship Theory



Note. Self-authorship theory diagram. Reprinted from *imjoeboe*, by J. Boehman, 2011

(<https://imjoeboe.wordpress.com/2011/04/28/self-authorship/>)

Meeting societal expectations, in terms of professional and personal identities, to then reflect and adjust accordingly require self-authorship (Baxter Magolda, 2001; Kegan, 1994). It was interesting to read how establishing an internal belief system and a sense of self to join others in mutual relationships being the central challenge that Baxter Magolda’s (2001) participants faced in their twenties. I realized how higher education could play a role in helping the professional and personal development of individuals. Baxter Magolda’s (2001) participants’ careers, advanced education and personal environment demanded that they make the transformation from external definition to self-authorship. Their college education was intended to help them prepare for success and leadership roles in society. Educators hope

that college graduates will experience a transformation from reliance on authority to complex ways of making meaning in which they are able to integrate multiple perspectives and make informed judgments. (p. 24)

That is why I believe Baxter Magolda's (2001) self-authorship theory is a great framework to understand the transformation of students as they go through their higher education journey and why I specifically used it for my action research project.

Conceptual Framework

I embedded any relationships I saw between each of my research cycles and Baxter Magolda's (2001) self-authorship theory. Consistent with this theory, the MBTI fit into intrapersonal development and crossroads phases. The MBTI and reflection were intended to help students gain self-awareness and see the need to explore and identify their personality preferences and leadership styles. This likely helped students gain confidence and improve their own sense of identity, so they develop into their best version of student leaders.

Research Design

Methodology is the combination of epistemic stance and the methods of investigation. Epistemology is concerned with the nature of knowledge and ways of knowing and learning about reality (K. Brown, personal communication, 2021). Thus, my methodology decisions reflected my epistemological stance depending on how I approach the ways of knowing and learning about the experiences of my action research project participants and the process of my project. Given this, my epistemological stance was a combination of humanistic school of thought and constructivism.

I aligned with the humanistic school of thought because my research dealt with personal growth and self-actualization through exploring more about oneself. The MBTI and self-reflection pieces result in deeper self-awareness and contribute to personal growth, which can also be reflected in professional development and self-confidence in one's attributes and preferences in a workplace setting. Humanism emphasizes self-direction in the learning process, and comes into play by those who are curious and engage in further exploration and reflection.

Constructivism applies because this research also focused on understanding and reconstruction in the sense of gaining self-awareness and confidence and translating that into service and advocacy. Building trust and authentic relationships lay the foundation for this type of work. Each student's individual experience makes their development unique to them. Their background and previous knowledge shapes how they show up. Those students with whom this research especially resonates, would be able to hone in on reevaluating issues and approaching things with passion for uplifting voices and reclaiming their narratives.

For overarching design, I used both a qualitative and mixed-method research design. With a qualitative method, I learned more about the stories of different students and got a greater holistic sense as to who they are and where they are in their development.

Methodology II

The cycles for my action research project focused on evaluating the extent of student leader self-awareness and their level of confidence. There was a total of one precycle and three cycles that followed Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle model. Each cycle was intended to allot time to reflect on the process and data collected. Reflecting intentionality encourages researchers, like myself, to make informed decisions for the next cycle.

I sent an email to solicit participants in which all 12 TPB members (undergraduate student leaders) from the 2021–2022 academic year were blind-copied (Appendix E). Seven students completed the consent forms (Appendix A), but only six took the first survey (Appendix B). Of those six students, all six selected to move onto the next part of the study, which was the 1:1 interview (Appendix C). Later, those same six students received an email (Appendix F and G) with the link to the second and final survey, but only four students completed the second survey (Appendix D).

Precycle: Needs Assessment

For the precycle, my observations from my time working with two sets of administrations of TPB (2020–2021 and 2021–2022) and my personal experience as student leader informed my initial research questions and inquiry. While working with TPB, I noticed that there was some training around strengths through CliftonStrengths assessment, but it was only one group session, and there was not much follow up afterwards nor attention dedicated to the student leader as an individual. Then, I reflected on this need presenting itself because personality type assessments and self-reflection were not practiced with student leaders until later in their trajectories, if at all. Additionally, some personality assessments cost money to take and not all student organizations have the funds to cover those assessments for their members, which also limits the exposure and knowledge that students may benefit from. Identifying students' personality preferences/types and engaging in self-reflection can help the development of student leaders and consequently impact those around them.

Noticing this pattern sparked my curiosity and solidified my desire to explore the undergraduate student leader experience. I envisioned working with TPB members to focus on their self-awareness through self-reflection and their personality preferences through the MBTI. I

predicted that the student leaders could increase their self-awareness through self-reflection and maximize their potential to benefit themselves and their community.

Ultimately, through my action research project, I hoped that students would achieve the following: (a) learn about their personality preferences, (b) identify connections and patterns as they make meaning out of their MBTI report and who they are, (c) engage in self-reflection practices and increase self-awareness, (d) become more confident in their abilities and in their roles as student leaders, (e) develop meaningful and attainable goals (personal and organizational goals), and (f) effect positive change in themselves and their surroundings.

Cycle 1

Using Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle, I first started with the planning stage. I knew I had to create and disseminate a survey, so I consulted with my work supervisor about potential appropriate times to disseminate the survey and decided on a date after USD's homecoming events because one of TPB's busiest times of year is homecoming. Then, I acted, which took me to the next stage of Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle.

On October 2021, I created and disseminated a survey (Appendix B) with the goal of capturing a baseline understanding of the extent of student knowledge and understanding of personality assessments, MBTI, leadership style, self-reflection, and self-awareness. The survey questions were informed by the observations and data from the precycle. I opted for a survey as a means of gathering baseline information and to subtly encourage participants to engage in reflection on their leadership identity and development. After email outreach to the 12-member TPB team, seven students completed the consent form and six completed the initial survey.

In the conclusion stage for this particular cycle, I noticed that the time participants were taking to complete the survey was about seven minutes and not 20 minutes like I had estimated.

Also, based on the data, I noticed that all participants had at least three to four years of leadership experience prior to joining TPB (see Table 1). This shows participants all had invested quite some time leading and had started as early as middle school. What the data also showed was that all, but one participant had previously taken the MBTI before TPB Fall 2021 Training, so they had prior knowledge as to what the MBTI assessed. This helped me realize that I was dealing with student leaders who had prior knowledge and experience with both serving in student leadership roles at different institutions and had also taken the MBTI both at USD and out of USD, and based on that I did not have to assume that this was their first time serving as student leaders. I took this knowledge and applied it to my next cycle.

Table 1

Participants of Cycle 1

Participant	Class Year	Years of Leadership Experience	Prior to TPB Fall 2021 Training, had the Participant taken the MBTI? If so, when?
Student 1	Sophomore	5–6 years	Yes, in a high school class.
Student 2	Sophomore	7 or more years	Yes, in a high school class and a college class.
Student 3	Junior	3–4 years	Yes, in a college class.
Student 4	Sophomore	5–6 years	No
Student 5	Junior	5–6 years	Yes, in college training for work.
Student 6	Junior	5–6 years	Yes, in a college class.

Cycle 2

For Cycle 2, I knew that I wanted this cycle to consist of a one-on-one interview conducted in person with each individual participant. I had several intentions for this cycle. First, I wanted participants to reflect on their leadership and leadership development, in general and

not only with their TPB roles. Second, I hoped the questions would allow the participants to explore their understanding of their MBTI preferences and their past leadership experiences and mentors. Third, I planned to ask participants to talk about their experience and specific scenarios so they could articulate and make sense of their experiences by naming and associating key moments in their leadership, in addition to sharing any connections they made between their responses and their particular MBTI preferences. While in Cycle 2's planning stage, I planned to take notes, and audio record with participant permission for the interview. I estimated the duration of the interview to be 60 minutes, because I wanted to give each individual enough time to remember, reflect, articulate, and make sense of their experiences and responses.

After planning, I got to the next stage which was to act/do. In this stage, I crafted several interview questions and then began consolidating the questions so they were not repetitive, and they would be simple to understand and respond to. The goal was uniformity in questions so I could gather data and be able to decipher other variables. Then, I started the 1:1 interviews.

During the 1:1 interviews, I sat in front of the participant and read off a script (Appendix C). I took notes on my laptop about participants' responses, body language, tone of voice, and mannerisms. I observed how receptive they were to the questions and how articulate they were in their responses. I also observed that despite allotting 60 minutes for each interview, they lasted about 30–40 minutes. This encompassed the observation stage.

Reflecting on the conclusion of this stage, I noticed that I, again, overestimated the time I thought it would take and the time it actually took. Additionally, I discovered that every participant answered differently and uniquely to them, which was beautiful to witness because each person has their own story and journey of how they go to this particular time and place.

Student 4 mostly spoke only about examples of scenarios within TPB internally. Meanwhile, Student 6 mostly spoke to TPB events and the experiences of working with other campus partners or student organizations. Student 1 was able to reference an event that happened within the TPB organization that had a lasting impact on them. Student 2 mostly gave examples from their time in high school. Student 3 spoke in detail about one of their parental figures who was and is influential in their lives. For this student in particular, I could see that they were having a reaction and coming to terms with the great influence that this person has had on them. They even made the connection about how they had not realized until that very moment the significant impact that particular parent had on them. Student 5 was driven by justice and including others. Table 2 presents data from three different questions that were asked during the interview (see Appendix C for the interview script). Table 2 uses a mixture of both direct quotes and paraphrasing to convey the message while being mindful of formatting space.

Table 2

Participants of Cycle 2

Participant	Naming helpful things from learning about their personality preferences through taking the MBTI:	When asked what connections they saw between the scenarios they described and the MBTI:	When asked to pause, breathe, and share feelings/thoughts towards the end of the interview:
Student 1	They learned about themselves and probably care too much about things they should not. They do not value happiness or family as highly as they value school, work, and success.	“A lot. Personal life traits were aligning with work life, I’m determined and motivated. All connected with my leadership. I like to get things done and that makes me comfortable.”	It set in who they are, they accept it and are confident with it despite people saying they are “over the top or disciplined”, they are not going to change because they “are happy and feel good about who they are.”

Student 2	It helped them understand how they go about leadership in different ways, especially being more introverted and how the typical leader is extroverted, but that is not them. Additionally, when things change, it's difficult to manage because they enjoy plans and structure.	They saw similarities between the mentor they talked about in their response and themselves both sharing similar MBTI types. "I was intuitive in a lot of situations" Their mentors and themselves are "feeling-based people" and "I am emotion-driven."	"Talking about this gets me excited" they like being busy and thrives under pressure. "I felt like I hadn't done much reflection until now and it was nice"
Student 3	They enjoy being able to identify things in themselves and others. For example, E/I and how they each get their energy and how they are less of an E than others.	"MBTI can apply to all in life because it's how people think and behave. It's very relational. People with certain types can work well with other types. Each different type will lead in a different way"	"It's hard to think of off the top of my head. I wanted these questions in advance"
Student 4	They saw how they prefer to be around others with different personality traits, and realized how they can use others as collaborators now and in the future.	"Reflected on my MBTI type" and for example, regarding the F/T types, they realized how they are a certain way, and the other letter type would not necessarily feel, respond, or see situations the same	"It's important to reflect on leadership styles... Talking now will prompt me to reflect"
Student 5	It helped them as leader to remember their strengths and build on those too. They felt like they did not really know themselves, but it is important to take assessments to learn more. Also, to learn more about how and why they interact/communicate with others the way they do.	"In every scenario, it involved a lot of intuition of wrong/right, seeing how different groups had issues and unmet needs; leadership quality and styles do relate to letters"	They were very grateful to have other leaders like that in their life, they hope to continue what they are doing and get better, and they are thinking how to improve as a leader because they get "too passionate" and needs to be "more levelheaded"
Student 6	It gave them insight on who they are as a leader and how it drives them—critical thinking, empathy, problem solving.	"Biggest connection is me being in all scenarios and how I respond, MBTI provides insight on why I respond in each scenario, why I consider feelings, introverted, decision	They acknowledged that they "reflected on what it is like to be in a leadership role" but is asking themselves about "when else you're not in a

		<p>making and why you are the way you are. MBTI gives context.”</p>	<p>leadership role, who influenced who I am?”</p>
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Cycle 3

For Cycle 3’s planning stage, I initially planned this cycle to include the second and final survey (Appendix D) that would be live over the course of three weeks beginning on December 1, 2021. I would send an email to the six participants with a link to take Survey #2 (Appendix F). My strategy was for them to return from Thanksgiving break and look forward to the end of the semester. The last day of classes for undergraduate students was December 10th and the last day of final exams was December 17th. I planned the survey deadline to be December 20th so they had a few days after final exams to complete the survey, but not too far out that they would forget because of their winter break activities and the holidays, which make students less likely to check their emails or follow-up on things that happened before final exams. In terms of content, I developed this survey to ask a few similar questions to the first survey so I could compare the responses side by side and report the findings. I had to consolidate the number of questions I drafted because the longer a survey is and the more open-ended questions it has, the less likely people are to complete it. Knowing this, I narrowed the focus and number of questions in the survey. It contained more open-ended questions and matrix tables with Likert scales than the first survey because I also wanted the participants to share about their experience through the various stages of my action research project. I also wanted to provide them the opportunity to share if any changes or growth had occurred. From the day I emailed the initial outreach message to TPB seeking participants to the deadline of completing Survey #2 would have been 10 weeks (10/19/21–12/20/21).

My hope for this cycle was to send students the second and final survey, which intended to capture the extent of student knowledge about their leadership, personality, and purpose after having participated in the different cycles of this study. Also, the survey was intended to compare results from the first survey to hopefully demonstrate student leadership achievement or development over time.

In the doing stage, I made Survey #2, emailed it to all six participants, and waited for their responses. However, as the days went by, I began to grow wary that my initial deadline of December 20th was too close to the end of finals and perhaps students needed more time to rest and recover from studying and taking final exams. Upon further reflection, I consulted with my action research project faculty advisor about this particular issue. They suggested that it was a good idea to extend the deadline not only because of final exams, but also because of the growing concerns about the new COVID-19 Omicron variant which was sweeping the world. After thinking about both those concerns and observing how uncertain the environment grew from the Omicron variant and the spike in cases with several people falling sick, I concluded that extending the deadline was appropriate and necessary. Thus, on December 16th, I sent an email to all participants informing them about the extension and the new deadline of December 29th (Appendix G). When I reflect upon these series of events, it was clear this was a cycle within a cycle because of the different stages I went through for the deadline extension.

After that, I returned to the observation stage of the main cycle in Cycle 3. Here, I observed that of the six participants that received the email with Survey #2's link, only four had completed it. But of those four participants, the qualitative data that I received was overwhelmingly positive. When asked whether they planned to engage in more self-reflection practices, 75% of participants stated they strongly agreed with that statement, and 25% stated

they agreed. This shows that what the students practiced in this study, they can apply to their lives, in general. Then more specifically when asked whether they intended to take the lessons they learned from this process and practice them in their student leadership role, 100% of students stated they strongly agreed with that statement. Then when asked whether they intended to take the lessons they learned from this process, but this time practice them in a professional work setting, 75% of participants stated they strongly agreed with that statement, and 25% stated they agreed. Student 1 stated, "I really learned a lot about myself and I am proud of who I am!" as a closing remark.

In the conclusion stage, I reflected and was initially disappointed that I lost two participants in this final cycle. I reframed my thoughts positively because I did have six student leaders participating in cycles one and two. Despite only being able to fully compare four participants from the beginning of this study to the end, I am confident that my action research project helped all participants in some way although I only have data to demonstrate that for four participants. Nevertheless, I also grew in self-awareness and as a researcher. When I looked to the data from Survey #2, I was impressed with the findings. Table 3 shows that from Survey #1 to Survey #2, all four students either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "As a result of participating in this study, I can confidently articulate my leadership style." There was a strong positive change in the data from two students: Student 1 who started with "agree" and went to "strongly agree" and Student 3 who started at "neither agree nor disagree" to "agree."

Table 3*Participants' Confidence Level in Leadership Style at Cycle 3*

Participant	Class Year	Survey Statement #1: I can confidently identify my leadership style.	Survey Statement #2: As a result of participating in this study, I can confidently articulate my leadership style.	Change in confidence from Survey #1 to Survey #2
Student 1	Sophomore	Agree	Strongly Agree	Positive
Student 2	Sophomore	Agree	Agree	Same
Student 3	Junior	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Positive
Student 4	Sophomore	Agree	Agree	Same

Meanwhile Table 4 shows that 50% of participants had a positive change, 25% remained the same, and 25% had a negative change. Perhaps the negative change can be attributed to Student 3 increasing their self-awareness and reconsidering their preferences.

Table 4*Participants' Confidence Level in Personality Preferences at Cycle 3*

Participant	Class Year	Survey #1 asked to rate the statement: I can confidently identify my personality preferences.	Survey #2 asked to rate the statement: I am able to identify my personality preferences after participating in this study.	Change from Survey #1 to Survey #2
Student 1	Sophomore	Agree	Strongly Agree	Positive
Student 2	Sophomore	Agree	Strongly Agree	Positive
Student 3	Junior	Strongly Agree	Agree	Negative
Student 4	Sophomore	Agree	Agree	Same

Table 5 is encouraging because it demonstrates the applicability of their leadership beyond their student leadership roles and is forward looking as well. I noticed that Student 1 was focused on success, jobs, greatness, and was goal oriented. Student 2 looked at leadership as a lifestyle, was outward facing focusing on people/others, and consistency. Student 3 mentioned constant learning and future-thinking to life and jobs. Lastly, Student 4 was also outward facing focusing on people/others and impacting lives.

Table 5

Participants' Potential Leadership Impact at Cycle 3

Participant	Class Year	Where else can your leadership have impact?
Student 1	Sophomore	"My leadership can have impact in my friend group, classes, family, and my real world job. I want to be a CEO one day, or a manager, so I would love to come out of college with great leadership skills."
Student 2	Sophomore	"I think that leadership is a lifestyle not just a position and that you can lead in all aspects wether [sic] it be your family, classes, friendships, etc."
Student 3	Junior	"It can impact my friends and family as well as the community as a whole; making differences in peoples lives"
Student 4	Sophomore	"My leadership can have impact in many places because I am constantly learning through my TPB role like how to collaborate with all kinds of people and how to communicate effectively. I will be able to use those skills in my other roles at USD but also throughout my life and in future jobs."

Another thing that came to mind was my positionality as GA and advisor to TPB. I have advised all of the participants either last academic year or this current academic year, and what was interesting to observe was three of the six participants I no longer advise, but yet two of three completed Survey #2. Similarly, of the remaining three out of six participants that I currently advise, one participant did not complete Survey #2, but the other two participants did.

This leads me to believe that each participant acted out of their own free will because participation was voluntary.

Results

After the completion of research cycles, I identified a few key findings. According to the responses to Survey #2, participants were able to confidently articulate their leadership style, engaged in more self-reflection, increased self-awareness, and enhanced leadership development. This was shown by their selection that they strongly agreed or agreed to those statements on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree.” Some themes that emerged from the data were being more confident, being more observant, having realizations and strategizing, being more aware, and being accountable.

My research questions were: (1) What do students know about their personality and leadership style after having taken the MBTI? and (2) Can engaging in self-reflection impact their leadership? To answer the first question, students shared they (a) learned about themselves and how certain aspects of their personality dominate their life and their intention for that to not be the case, (b) helped them understand how they go about leadership in different ways and exposed why coping through things were challenging, (c) enjoyed analyzing and identifying different qualities, (d) realized why they prefer to be around different people with varying traits and the value of that, (e) rediscovered their strengths and weaknesses and why awareness and self-improvement are important, and (f) provided insight on who they are as a leader and how it drives them, but also sparked exploration into other influences of their own leadership.

Regarding the second question, engaging in self-reflection can and does impact their leadership. This is shown in participants responses’ where they shared that as a result of participating in this study, they enhanced their leadership development, articulated what they

learned about their self-awareness, and explained how participation in this study and reflection affected their leadership. Student 1 stated, “I would say that I am more confident in my leadership because I know a huge part of it is my personality and I never want to change who I truly am. I know I can always improve and be better, but the core type A personality within me will hopefully never change.” Student 2 shared, “I think that I am more observant on the leadership styles of others and how that influences the dynamic of the team.” Student 3 stated, “Participating had influenced my leadership because it pointed out what was my strengths and weaknesses, so I know how to use them in leadership positions.” Student 4 shared, “It has made me more aware of how my actions contribute to my leadership style and how many little things I do contribute to my overarching ‘leadership style’. It also made me realize that whether I knew it or not, a lot of the leadership I was exposed to in the past has shaped the way I now lead.” Their responses reflect confidence, genuine self, pride, observation of others and team dynamics, realizations and strategy, accountability, awakening, and awareness of how the past shapes them. 100% of participants who responded to this question shared that they intend to take the lessons they learned from this process and practice them in their student leadership roles.

Additionally, participants stated that they plan to engage in more self-reflection practices (75% strongly agreed and 25% agreed) and shared a few self-reflection and mindfulness practices, such as journaling, yoga, meditation, reflecting and talking to others about it, thinking and asking reflective questions and being observant and self-aware.

The data showed that students are discovering their strengths and weaknesses and getting affirmation about their leadership qualities, and building confidence about their developing leadership identity, which fits the criteria for the stage of exploration and engagement according to Chung and Personette (2019).

As discussed earlier, using Baxter Magolda's (2001) self-authorship theory (see Figure 2), the MBTI and self-reflection exercises were intended to help students gain awareness, primarily self-awareness, and also see the need to explore and identify their personality preferences and leadership styles. Referencing Figure 2, in terms of the cognitive development aspect: How do I know? portion of Baxter Magolda's (2001) self-authorship theory, participants were not in the following formulas phase because they do not necessarily believe what authority believes. They moved beyond that to crossroads and arguably were in author of one's life phase. After that, they would be working towards being grounded in internal belief system—the internal foundation phase. Regarding the interpersonal development phase of self-authorship where one asks, Who am I?, participants similarly were not in the following formulas phase because they do not define self through external others. However, they were at crossroads because they saw a need for internal definitions and progressing towards author of one's life phase which encompasses choosing one's own values and identity. Lastly, for the interpersonal development phase: how we construct relationships, I recognized a mixture of phases in their responses. In the following formulas phase, they sought approval in relationships while in the crossroads phase, they saw a need for authenticity. This is where I believe most participants were because they were being true to themselves so mutual needs were met. However, the internal foundation phase is farther away because their relationships were not yet grounded in mutuality.

Overall, the data of my action research project's cycles showed that participants were able to confidently articulate their leadership style, engaged in more self-reflection, increased self-awareness, and enhanced their leadership development.

Limitations

Although this research was conducted with ten total participants, some factors caused limitations and challenges to this research. In particular, a set of limitations were the low response rate, the small number of participants, and participant diversity. Because the six participants attended the same university and were recruited from the same organization there is not enough data to claim on behalf of a larger demographic or all institutions across the nation or world. There were no participants who identified as first-year or senior, which could have also impacted this research. Additionally, the final cycle had four participants so that limited the ability to consider the findings in relation to each participant throughout my action research project due to attrition.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought many unforeseen challenges and limitations. Initial planning for my action research project started during the spring 2021 semester. At that time, school and work were completely remote with a very limited number of students allowed to live on campus and with strict rules against gathering in groups. Later that summer, work transitioned back into the office for the first time in over a year. This began without a mask mandate, although masks were later required, all while classes remained online. Then, for the fall 2021 semester, there was a major change. Although work remained in person with a mask mandate, classes began in person also with a mask mandate and students were back to living on campus like they were prepandemic. As the fall 2021 semester progressed, there were routine worries about the number of COVID-19 cases on campus and the associated isolation protocols for those who contracted the virus or were exposed to it. The continued loss of life, new variants, contagion, and uncertainties heightened the trauma that we all experienced and are still experiencing. Towards the middle to end of the fall 2021 semester, which was when I was ready

to roll out the series of cycles for my action research project, the Delta variant was infecting more people, and then the Omicron variant skyrocketed the number of cases. Throughout the ongoing pandemic, USD has had an active COVID-19 task force including contact tracing. So, I had to be hypervigilant as to keeping myself and my participants safe and abide by university policies and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines. I did not ask students about their experiences with the ongoing changes from this pandemic—transition to and from virtual learning and engagement, relocation, fatigue, isolation, etc.

Finally, there were institutional structural changes to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process that delayed the start of my research project. The IRB application process was undergoing changes as I was preparing my materials and application. There was a new IRB option under which we could submit our materials and action research proposal, but because it was a new change, there were challenges associated with its implementation of which I was caught in the middle, which added another layer of time, effort, and uncertainty. This led to a domino effect of shorter amount of time for participant outreach and execution of each stage within each cycle (planning, doing, observing, and reflecting).

Recommendations

My action research project sheds light on the experiences of undergraduate students in leadership positions at the university. Based on the findings, I offer three recommendations to address the adaptive challenge of self-awareness in undergraduate student leaders. The three recommendations are: (a) Encourage undergraduate student leaders to take additional personality assessments; (b) implement activities or discussions that support mindfulness or self-reflective practices (such as discussion groups, reflective questions on a worksheet, training on increasing

individual self-awareness); and (c) provide space and time for students to participate in the above-mentioned activities both individually and as a group.

First Recommendation

My first recommendation is: Encourage undergraduate student leaders to take additional personality assessments. The participants in this study indicated that the MBTI was a tool that helped them learn about themselves. It would be beneficial for student leaders to take this and similar assessments/instruments to learn more about the traits that support their leadership and work on teams. Additionally, there are instruments that help identify a student's conflict resolution styles, their strengths, and their learning styles. In addition to MBTI, there are: CliftonStrengths assessment, Enneagram personality test, DiSC personality test, Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, VARK Questionnaire, to name a few. Identifying and shedding light to more parts of the individual that they were not aware of is helpful to increase self-awareness, identify ideal environments and relationships, and also identify potential challenges or conflicts and strategize accordingly. This would help the individual and group function better, be more open, and serve at their fullest potential.

Second Recommendation

My second recommendation is: Implement activities or discussions that support mindfulness or self-reflective practices. This would enable students to get more comfortable with who they are, which identities they hold, and also learn about who their peers truly are. A few examples of activities or discussions that support mindfulness or self-reflective practices are, but not limited to discussion groups, reflective questions on a worksheet, training on increasing individual self-awareness. Cultivating a supportive environment where mindfulness or self-reflective practices are implemented can lead to more openness on an individual and group level,

more inclusivity, more space to be witnessed and not be afraid to take risks, and more community-building.

Third Recommendation

My third and final recommendation is: Provide space and time for students to participate in the above-mentioned activities both individually and as a group. If students do not have space nor time to participate in mindfulness activities, self-reflective practices, or take additional personality tests, then students will be less likely to engage in those things on their own time and by themselves. Carving out time, perhaps in a team meeting or individual meeting, would encourage students to be more open and willing to participate. Those above-mentioned activities benefit not only the individual, but also the collective. Although, it may seem like another task to add or another agenda item, the reward of self-awareness is worth it and shows up in the short and long term.

I champion sharing and communicating findings about personality assessments, making meaning of what they connote as an individual and a group, and also increasing self-awareness through varying practices such as self-awareness. I believe that through working both inward for the individual and inward for a group, can shed light on each person's unique characteristics and experiences which can inform their practices and also form connections to leadership and amongst each other too. Student 2 shared a similar perspective. These were Student 2's closing remarks, "I think that going over the results with the team would be really helpful because we would be able to see how different people have different connections to leadership and how all of us have our own assets and bring something critical to the team." As much as I encourage sharing and communicating findings within groups, that student's voice is impactful because they are communicating their need and idea of synthesizing data as a team.

Conclusion

As a Latinx graduate student, student affairs practitioner, educator, advocator, leader, and researcher, I am very grateful for the participation from student leaders and the support from the SAI department and SOLES faculty.

Overall, I more deeply explored concepts of leadership and self-awareness, both through others and myself. Through my action research project, I not only attempted to answer the two research questions: (1) What do students know about their personality and leadership style after having taken the MBTI? and (2) Can engaging in self-reflection impact their leadership?, but I also answered the ultimate question of “why this topic?” My core values of leadership through service and advocacy showed through this entire process, that “why” was so passionate that it kept me going even in moments where I felt defeated by the IRB process or in the number of participants. Despite the challenges, my research questions were answered, I am proud of the results, and am hopeful for the future of each participant both on and off campus, now and for years to come. I am confident that each participant will succeed in their student leader roles and that they will continue their self-awareness journey and share their experiences with others, I am also confident that SAI is equipped to support and hold space for increasing activities or discussions that support mindfulness or self-reflective practices individually and collectively.

For future research, it would be interesting to seek participants from other student organizations or other higher education institutions where they have a similar or equivalent student programming board, especially because this was one of my limitations. Perhaps my action research project could be continued in the future and track the progress of the participants as they navigate their time as a college student and where they are headed after graduation. Such a project would allow the researcher to explore the students’ development of self-authorship in

greater depth. Regardless, I will leave this quote from an anonymous author, “Self-awareness is not a destination, but a journey. One successful leaders are always on.” Thus, go inward.

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Appendix A

Consent Form

**University of San Diego
Institutional Review Board
Research Participant Consent Form**

For the research study entitled:
**The Making of College Student Leaders: Implementing Reflective Practices
for Self-Awareness of Personality Traits and Leadership Styles**

I. Purpose of the research study

Valerie Gurrola is a graduate student in the School of Leadership and Education Sciences at the University of San Diego. You are invited to participate in a research study she is conducting. The purpose of this research study is to explore how student leaders' self-awareness, in terms of leadership styles, changes through engaging in self-reflection.

II. What you will be asked to do

If you decide to be in this study, you will be asked to:

Complete two surveys and participate in a one-on-one interview.

**Audio recording may be used for educational purposes, such as data collection and note-taking, will remain confidential. Please see Section VIII.*

- The first survey will ask how much you know about personality assessments, MBTI, leadership style, self-reflection, and self-awareness. (20 minutes)
- *In the one-on-one interview, you will be asked to reflect and share your experiences taking the MBTI and about your leadership style. (1 hour)
- The second survey will ask you to further reflect on what you have learned or put into practice and identify whether your participation has increased your self-awareness. (40 minutes)

Your participation in this study will take a total of 2 hours.

III. Foreseeable risks or discomforts

Sometimes when people are asked to think about their feelings, they feel sad or anxious. If you would like to talk to someone about your feelings at any time, you can call toll-free, 24 hours a day:

San Diego Mental Health Hotline at 1-800-479-3339

University of San Diego Counseling Center (Monday-Friday, 8:30am - 5:00pm) at 619-260-5644; 24/7 Hotline at 619-260-5644

IV. Benefits

While there may be no direct benefit to you from participating in this study, the indirect benefit of participating will be knowing that you helped researchers better understand student leadership development and self-reflective practices.

Appendix B

Survey #1

Survey #1 (VGurrola Action Research Project)

 ExpertReview score **Fair**

▼ Survey #1 (VGurrola Action Research Project)

Q9

...

I would like to thank you for participating in this study. I invite you to complete this survey, which is aimed at gathering basic information and preexisting notions you may have regarding personality assessments, MBTI, leadership style, self-reflection, and self-awareness. Your responses to this survey are important. The approximate time it will take to complete this survey is 20 minutes. Your responses will remain strictly confidential and only aggregate data will be used.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Valerie Gurrola at vgurrola@sandiego.edu or Valerie's action research project faculty advisor: Dr. Kecia Brown at keciabrown@sandiego.edu. At the end of this survey you will be asked to opt-in to participate in a one-on-one interview with me where we will talk more in depth about leadership and your experience with the MBTI.

----- Page Break -----

Q6



Please provide the following information:

Name	<input type="text"/>
Email address	<input type="text"/>
Major	<input type="text"/>
Minor	<input type="text"/>
Year (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, Super Senior)	<input type="text"/>

Q10

How many years of student leadership experience do you have (including high school and college)?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-2 years
- 3-4 years
- 5-6 years
- 7 or more years

Q5

Have you taken any type of personality assessment before?

- Yes
- Maybe
- No

Q7



▼ [Display this question](#)

If **Have you taken any type of personality assessment before? Yes** Is Selected

Or **Have you taken any type of personality assessment before? Maybe** Is Selected

Please list the personality assessments you have taken.

----- Page Break -----

Q10

Prior to TPB Training Fall 2021, had you taken the MBTI before?

- Yes
- Maybe
- No

Q9



▼ [Display this question](#)

If Prior to TPB Training Fall 2021, had you taken the MBTI before? Yes Is Selected

Or Prior to TPB Training Fall 2021, had you taken the MBTI before? Maybe Is Selected

Prior to taking the MBTI for TPB Training Fall 2021, what were the four letters that described your preferences? (E/I, N/S, T/F, J/P). Type "N/A" if you do not remember the four letters.

Q11



▼ [Display this question](#)

If Prior to TPB Training Fall 2021, had you taken the MBTI before? Yes Is Selected

Or Prior to TPB Training Fall 2021, had you taken the MBTI before? Maybe Is Selected

Please share about your previous experience taking the MBTI.

Q11



▼ [Display this question](#)

If Prior to TPB Training Fall 2021, had you taken the MBTI before? Yes Is Selected

Or Prior to TPB Training Fall 2021, had you taken the MBTI before? Maybe Is Selected

Prior to taking the MBTI for TPB Training Fall 2021, when had you previously taken MBTI?

----- Page Break -----

Q12



Please describe your leadership style.

Q13



Please rate the following statement.

	A great deal	A moderate amount	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
How often do you engage in self-reflection or mindfulness practices?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q14



What types of self-reflection or mindfulness practices have you engaged in?

Q15



Please rate the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I can confidently identify my leadership style.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can confidently identify my personality preferences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can confidently name at least three of my strengths.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>


----- Page Break -----

Q16



Please rate the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I believe that my leadership can help create meaningful impact at USD.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe that I am a self-aware leader.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q17 

What are you hoping to gain by learning about MBTI and personality preferences from your participation in this project?

----- Page Break -----

Q18

Do you wish to continue participating in the next phase of this study? If so, please select "Yes" (In the near future, you will receive an email to schedule a one-on-one interview with Valerie Gurrola).

Yes

No

▲

Add Block

End of Survey

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey! Your time and input are very important.

Next, Valerie Gurrola will schedule a one-on-one interview—if you opted-in to participate—please be on the lookout for that email.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Valerie Gurrola at vgurrola@sandiego.edu or Valerie's action research project faculty advisor: Dr. Kecia Brown at keciabrown@sandiego.edu

Appendix C

1:1 Interview Script

One-on-one interview script

Greeting: Hello, how are you?

Thank you for meeting with me today! This will be a one-on-one interview between you and me. I will take notes, but your responses will remain strictly confidential and only aggregate data will be used. For educational purposes, an audio recording may be made of this interview.

We are meeting today to discuss your experience with the MBTI and any reflection or thoughts you had since then. I will also ask you to do some reflection during this interview. Feel free to share whatever you feel comfortable sharing.

Questions:

- After taking the MBTI for TPB Training Fall 2021, what were the four letters (E/I, N/S, T/F, J/P) that described your preferences?
 -
- How was the overall experience of taking the MBTI (Taking the assessment, reading about your specific type, then reflecting about your specific type)?
 -
- After participating in the group session (which was facilitated by a Career Advisor from USD's Career Development Office) did any of the four letters of your MBTI type change? If so, why do you think that happened?
 -
- Please name a few helpful things from learning about your personality preferences through taking the MBTI.
 -

Next, I will ask you to reflect on some of your experiences thus far.

Questions:

- Talk about a time when...
 - You practiced Leadership
 - What were you doing?
 -
 - How were you practicing leadership?
 -

- Why did you do it?
 -
- You participated in an event (planning or attending)
 - What was that like?
 -
 - What was your role?
 -
 - How did you feel about that role?
 -
 - How did you execute/perform that role?
 -
- You interacted with another student(s) causing conflict (or potential conflict)
 - What happened?
 -
 - Why did it happen?
 -
 - How did you become involved in that conflict?
 -
 - What did you feel?
 -
 - What steps were taken and by who?
 -
 - What would you do differently?
 -
- You advocated for a position or cause
 - What position or cause did you advocate for?
 -
 - Was that position or cause for you or someone else?

- Why did you decide to advocate for that position or cause?
- What inspires you to lead?
 -
- Why does that inspire you to lead?
 -
- Talk about a time that impacted you when you saw someone (other than yourself) practicing leadership
 - What did they do?
 -
 - If you know why they did it, could you please share?
 -
 - Why did that impact you?
 -
 - How did you feel its impact?
 -
- Think about a Mentor that was influential for you.
 - What leadership style do they have that resonates with you?
 -
 - Why does that resonate with you?
 -
- What connections do you see between the scenarios you just described and the MBTI?
 -

Take a few seconds to pause and take a couple deep breaths. As you are doing so, notice what is coming up for you. Please share what you are feeling and thinking, as long as you feel comfortable sharing.

○

This concludes the end of the questions I have for you; do you have any lingering questions for me?

○

We have reached the end of this interview. Thank you for your time, honesty, and input. I hope that this study encourages you to dig deeper, explore more of yourself as a leader, and increase your self-awareness.

In a few weeks, you will receive an email from me asking you to take the second and final survey to wrap up this study. I would very much appreciate it if you completed the survey upon receiving that email.

If you have any questions, please contact Valerie Gurrola at vgurrola@san Diego.edu or Valerie's action research project faculty advisor: Dr. Kecia Brown at keciabrown@san Diego.edu

Appendix D

Survey #2

Tools ▼ Saved Dec 15, 2021 at 8:26 PM Published 🔍 Preview Publish

Survey #2 (VGurrola Action Research Project) 💡 ExpertReview score Great

Survey #2 (VGurrola Action Research Project) ▼

Q3 ⋮

I would like to thank you for participating in this study. I invite you to complete this survey, which is aimed at gathering information to follow-up with your experiences and learning.

Your responses to this survey are important.

The approximate time it will take to complete this survey is 20 minutes.

Your responses will remain strictly confidential and only aggregate data will be used.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Valerie Gurrola at vgurrola@sandiego.edu or Valerie's action research project faculty advisor: Dr. Kecia Brown at keciabrown@sandiego.edu

----- Page Break -----

Q13 💡


Please write your name.

Q4


You have grown and changed in many ways over the past few months. This survey is designed to be given at the end of the study for your reflective capacity at the conclusion of our time together. This survey will ask you a series of questions. Please reflect on your experiences participating in this study before beginning this survey.

Q2 💡

Please reflect on your participation in this study and share your thoughts and experiences. This can include what you learned about yourself, your leadership style, things you can name about your experiences, things you processed, etc.

Q5 


As a result of participating in this study, how would you describe your leadership style?

 X→


Please rate the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
As a result of participating in this study, I can confidently articulate my leadership style.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As a result of participating in this study, I have engaged in more self-reflection.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As a result of participating in this study, I have increased my self-awareness.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As a result of participating in this study, I have enhanced my leadership development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>


----- Page Break -----

Q7 


Describe what you have learned about your self-awareness.

Q8 

Describe how this work (participation in this study plus any reflection you've done) has influenced/impacted/affected your leadership.



Q9 

What impact do you want to have on your organization/constituents/the community through your leadership (student leader role or leader in general)?

Q10 

Where else can your leadership have impact?


----- Page Break -----

Q11  

Please rate the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am able to identify my personality preferences after participating in this study.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I plan to engage in more self-reflection practices.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I intend to take the lessons I learned from this process and practice them in my student leadership role.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can use the lessons learned from this process and apply them in a professional work setting.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

----- Page Break -----

Q12 

Any other insight or comments you would like to share?

Add Block

*Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey! Your time
and input are very important.*

*This survey concludes your participation in this study. I hope that
this study helped increase your self-awareness and encouraged
you continue on the journey of leadership development and self-
development.*

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Valerie

Gurrola at vgurrola@sandiego.edu or Valerie's action research

project faculty advisor: Dr. Kecia Brown at

keciabrown@sandiego.edu

Appendix E

Participant Recruitment Email



Valerie Gurrola <vgurrola@sandiego.edu>

****Soliciting Participants for Valerie Gurrola's Action Research Project****

Valerie Gurrola <vgurrola@sandiego.edu>

Tue, Oct 19, 2021 at 9:00 AM

Cc: I

Bcc:

Hello,

My name is Valerie Gurrola. I am a graduate student in the School of Leadership and Education Sciences at the University of San Diego, San Diego, CA. I am conducting a research study about student leaders' reflective practices and their leadership styles, and I would like to invite you to participate.

The purpose of this research study is to explore how student leaders' self-awareness, in terms of leadership styles, changes through engaging in self-reflection. You are being asked to participate because you are a USD student with a Torero Program Board student leader role.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete two online surveys (one survey at the beginning and the second survey at the conclusion) and participate in a one-on-one interview. You will be asked things like: "Please describe your leadership style." You will also be asked a few questions about yourself, such as your class year, years of experience in a student leadership role, your major/minor, and what your MBTI type is. Your participation in this study will take a total of two hours spread over the course of three months.

This study involves no more risk than the risks you encounter in daily life. Your responses will be kept confidential.

Taking part in this study is entirely optional. ***Choosing not to participate will have no effect on your employment status, grades, or any other benefits to which you are entitled.*** You may also quit being in the study at any time or decide not to answer any specific questions. Should you decide to participate, **please print out a copy of this page for future reference.**

If you would like to participate, please click on [this link](http://usd.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3juRITDZoR11zr8) to begin the study: http://usd.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3juRITDZoR11zr8

Additionally, attached is the adult consent form. Please read and sign if you would like to participate.

Please complete the survey linked above by Sunday, October 31, 2021. Then, one-on-one

interviews are anticipated to occur in November, and the final survey will be sent out in December.

I will be happy to answer any questions you have about the study. You may contact me at vgurrola@sandiego.edu. You can also contact my faculty advisor: Dr. Kecia Brown at keciabrown@sandiego.edu

Thank you for your consideration.

—

Respectfully,

Valerie Gurrola, Esq.

(Phonetically: VAL-uh-ree GOO-rrr-oh-la)

Pronouns: She/ella

2nd year, Higher Education Leadership Masters Program

Graduate Assistant, Student Activities & Involvement— Torero Program Board


SOLES Ambassador

Safe Space Ally

University of San Diego

vgurrola@sandiego.edu

Please know that I honor and respect boundaries around personal time, well-being, caretaking, and rest. Should you receive correspondence from me during a time that you are engaging in any of the above, please protect your time and wait to respond until you are next working or in front of a computer. Prioritize joy, not email, when and where you can.

 **adult-consent-form-VGurrolaAR final.pdf**

98K

Appendix F

Participant Email Announcing Survey #2



Valerie Gurrola <vgurrola@sandiego.edu>

****Final Survey is Live - Participants for Valerie Gurrola's Action Research Project****

Valerie Gurrola <vgurrola@sandiego.edu>
Bcc:

Wed, Dec 1, 2021 at 8:30 AM

Hello,

Thank you for your continued participation in my action research project. I am conducting a research study about student leaders' reflective practices and their leadership styles, and I invite you to participate in this second and final survey.

Your participation in Survey #2 will take approximately 40 minutes. ***The deadline to complete the survey is Tuesday, December 20th.***

If you would like to participate, please click on [this link](http://usd.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8nRGsSKGyY9Sj3M) to begin the study: http://usd.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8nRGsSKGyY9Sj3M

Please complete the survey linked above by Tuesday, December 20, 2021.

I will be happy to answer any questions you have about the study. You may contact me at vgurrola@sandiego.edu. You can also contact my faculty advisor: Dr. Kecia Brown at keciabrown@sandiego.edu

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Valerie Gurrola, Esq.

(Phonetically: VAL-uh-ree GOO-rrr-oh-la)

Pronouns: She/ella

2nd year, Higher Education Leadership Masters Program

Graduate Assistant, Student Activities & Involvement— [Torero Program Board](#)

SOLES Ambassador

[Safe Space Ally](#)

University of San Diego

vgurrola@sandiego.edu

Please know that I honor and respect boundaries around personal time, well-being, caretaking, and rest. Should you receive correspondence from me during a time that you are engaging in any of the above, please protect your time and wait to respond until you are next working or in front of a computer. Prioritize joy, not email, when and where you can.

Appendix G

Participant Email Announcing Survey #2 Deadline Extension



Valerie Gurrola <vgurrola@sandiego.edu>

****Final Survey is Live - Participants for Valerie Gurrola's Action Research Project****

Valerie Gurrola <vgurrola@sandiego.edu>
Bcc:

Thu, Dec 16, 2021 at 12:00 PM

Hello,

I wanted to let you know that I am extending the deadline for participation in the survey linked below. The new deadline is Wednesday, December 29th.

(If you already completed the [survey](#), thank you very much and please disregard this email)

Thank you for your continued participation in my action research project. I am conducting a research study about student leaders' reflective practices and their leadership styles, and I invite you to participate in this second and final survey.

Your participation in Survey #2 will take approximately 20 minutes. **The deadline to complete the survey is Wednesday, December 29th.**

If you would like to participate, please click on this link to begin the study: http://usd.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8nRGsSKGyY9Sj3M

Please complete the survey linked above by **Wednesday, December 29, 2021.**

I will be happy to answer any questions you have about the study. You may contact me at vgurrola@sandiego.edu. You can also contact my faculty advisor: Dr. Kecia Brown at keciabrown@sandiego.edu

Thank you. Good luck with your final exam studies.

Respectfully,

Valerie Gurrola, Esq.

(Phonetically: VAL-uh-ree GOO-rrr-oh-la)

Pronouns: She/ella

2nd year, Higher Education Leadership Masters Program

Graduate Assistant, Student Activities & Involvement— Torero Program Board

SOLES Ambassador

Safe Space Ally

University of San Diego

vgurrola@sandiego.edu

Please know that I honor and respect boundaries around personal time, well-being, caretaking, and rest. Should you receive correspondence from me during a time that you are engaging in any of the above, please protect your time and wait to respond until you are next working or in front of a computer. Prioritize joy, not email, when and where you can.