

THE PARTICIPANT'S JOURNEY TO PROFESSIONAL TRANSFORMATION OF
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

By

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship (HHH) Program selects international participants for a one-year residency in the United States. The HHH program provides an opportunity for participants to engage in a 10- month, non-degree study in leadership development that includes networking opportunities and professional collaborations with U.S. organizations and entities. The fellowship program is highly selective, and applicants must be able to articulate how their professional goals and participation in this program will serve to advance communities in their home country as well as align to national interests. The Peabody College of Education and Human Development at Vanderbilt University has served as a program site for the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship program since 2010 and is the organizational sponsor for this capstone project.

Problem of Practice

While the HHH program director collects feedback and data on program participants and their experiences, the program leader is unsure if the data collected adequately captures the participants' experiences. With a small staff program, the program leader faced the challenge of understanding individual professional identity development. Therefore, this capstone investigates the HHH participants from 2015-19 cohorts' perceptions of their development as a result of participating in the program. Based on these findings of this investigation, this capstone seeks to provide program leaders recommendations to enhance the participant experience and eventual impact of the program.

Conceptual Framework

I used Ibarra, Snook, & Ramo's (2010) development framework to delineate the process of professional identity development. The identity-based framework addresses three critical questions related to identity development: 1) What changes? 2) How does it change? 3) What conditions made a difference? (Ibarra et. al, 2010). This model of identity-based development as shown in is nonlinear and integrates separation (possible selves), transition (provisional selves), and incorporation (professional selves) in which liminality is the state between social roles/and or identities (see Figure 1). Ibarra et al. articulate elements of this leader development process that leaders undergo as they experience identity change.

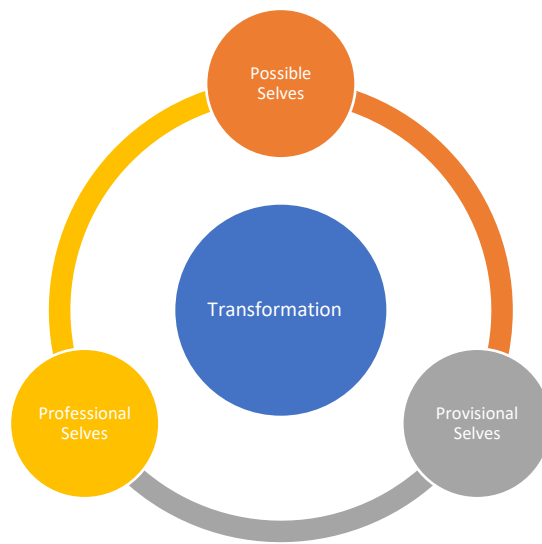


Figure 1 Elements of the Identity Development Process

For the purposes of this capstone, the following are defined as:

- a. Possible selves – How the participant assesses what to develop (vision/goals) and what development could take place (experiences).

- b. Provisional selves - How the participant experiments, practices, and gains exposure to new experiences and roles.
- c. Professional selves - How the participant receives confidence and confirmation by others on their development (learning and change) and new role.

Research Questions

To investigate the focal challenge, I designed the following research questions:

- 1) What reasons did HHH program participants cite for seeking out professional identity development opportunities and to what extent did their work organization in their home county and the HHH program understand these reasons?
- 2) What conditions made a difference in HHH program participant's professional identity development of their possible, provisional, and professional selves?
- 3) Did/How did the HHH participants perceive their professional identities transform as a result of participating in the program?

Study Method/Analysis

To answer the research questions above, I pursued a form of case study that allowed explicit focus on HHH program and a bounded set of participants over time (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 1998). The case study method offered me an approach to explore participants' perceptions of the program inclusive of the relationships, experiences, and processes within the program. The data collection for this case study occurred across 4 phases with multiple sources of evidence to help understand the participants' perceptions of the program (Yin, 2006). I used 3 methods to collect data for our research questions: interviews with the participants and the

program director, surveys of the participants, and secondary data analysis of a national level program evaluation to capture the participants' perceptions. I used the program director interview data and the participant survey data to inform the design of semi-structured interview protocol with the participants (Brenner, 2006). After transcribing the interviews, I conducted a combination of sequential and categorical coding to the qualitative interview data (Saldana 2009) Finally, I conducted a document review of the 2018 Humphrey Program documents to test and corroborate the findings from the prior rounds of analysis.



Figure 2 Research Timeline

Findings

First, I asked what influenced participants to seek out professional development opportunities.

Finding 1

Overall, the participants applied to the program for new opportunities to experience professional identity development.

Participants reported that program director wanted to understand the participants' goals and reasons for applying to the HHH program. There was no indication, however, that the participants communicated their goals to their work organization.

Next, I asked what conditions made a difference in the participant's professional identity development of their possible provisional, and professional selves.

Finding 2

Although program experiences were designed by HHH staff to meet program aims, the experiences were sometimes not aligned with individual participant goals.

Participants created goals and had many new experiences because of participating in the program. The program experiences were curated to meet program aims, but did not necessarily align with individual goals

Finding 3

Participants described ways that the program director understood participant goals and was able to provide support as participants experimented provisional selves.

Participants reported that the program director made a difference in their provisional selves (experimented and practiced new roles). Despite the program constraints, there is evidence the program director made efforts to individualize experiences for participants. The program director's expertise and understanding of the participants helped her assess the participants and to shape their experiences to meet program goals.

Finding 4

The participants reported that their relationships impacted their program experiences only under certain conditions.

Participants reported relationships forged outside of the with HHH team had an impact on their experiences. Relationships impacted experiences to the extent these relationships: understood the participant goals and provided them experiences to experiment in new roles.

Finally, I asked how did the participants perceive their professional identity change as result of participating in the program?

Finding 5

Overall, participants reported learning new skills, knowledge, and practices but found they were not able to enact new identities when returned to their home country.

Participants reported learning new skills, knowledge, and practices, but they were not able to enact new identities in their learning in their professional settings on their return home. There was evidence of one participant who enacted a new professional identity by including organizational stakeholders throughout her program experience.

Recommendations

Given the findings of the investigation, I recommend the following potential interventions for the program's consideration.

Recommendation 1

If program directors have a shared understanding of participant goals and experiences within the program, then this leads to participant development.

As the findings show, if program experiences align with participant goals then this leads to participant development. For program leaders to build on their shared understanding with

participants of their goals, program leaders offer additional experiences in assessment to develop participants' possible selves.

Recommendation 2

If all program stakeholders had a shared understanding of their roles and responsibilities, participants are likely to encounter more opportunities to develop provisional selves.

Through defining roles, communicating responsibilities, and creating accountability measures, stakeholders can support participants through new experiences in their development of their provisional selves.

Recommendation 3

If participants, program leaders, and their work organizations co-construct goals, then the participants enact new identities when they return to their home countries.

If organizational stakeholders impact the participants' transfer of learning and leading organizational change, Organizations and participants can construct the goals, and program leaders can include this conversation in their pre-arrival meeting.

Recommendation 4

If participants offer academic resources for coaching and networking after participants return home, then this supports them in enacting their identity development.

If participants need support in their transition back to their home country, then program leaders can facilitate coaching and networking opportunities. An initial step is for program leaders to

conduct the exit meeting in the participant's home country. Through these opportunities' participants keep their motivation and commitment to their work.

Recommendation 5

If participants build repertoire of learning resources from the program and network connections, then they can gradually move towards monitoring and tracking their own short-term, middle, and long-term development.

With initial coaching support, participants can start to monitor their own development as they move into their professional selves.

INTRODUCTION

Daft (2008) captures the zeitgeist of our current age in the assertion that our world is “...undergoing a transformation more profound and far reaching since the Industrial Revolution” (p.832). In the past, for employees to be successful in their jobs, they had to have the right answers, make the right decisions in order to ascend the career ladder toward a leadership position. With this premise, the role of the leader was to directly teach employees required skills and evaluate their performance (Ibarra & Scoular, 2019). In recent years, globalization has altered the role of the leader. Faced with rapid and constant change, leaders now find themselves supporting organizations that often endure economic, environmental, and ethical challenges and growing interdependence among different sectors (business, government, and social) (DeRue & Myers, 2014). Presently, leaders and organizations must respond to unprecedented challenges from a global pandemic that has revealed economic, racial, and health disparities.

If the world is changing at a rapid pace, how do leaders develop the agility and readiness to meet this change? Ibarra’s (2015) *Act Like A Leader, Think Like A Leader* found that, currently, researchers have identified effective leaders by who they are and what they do – independent of circumstances. While these studies consistently prove that effective are self-aware, purposeful, and authentic, there are limited insights and research on how leaders become this way and an understanding of their personal journeys (Ibarra, 2015). Before leaders can develop their employees, they must first understand how their journeys of becoming these leaders.

SITE CONTEXT

“From time to time, our nation is blessed by the presence of men and women who bear the mark of greatness, who help us see a better vision of what we can become. Hubert H. Humphrey was
such a man”

-President Jimmy Carter in his eulogy for Hubert H. Humphrey

Founded on the tenets of U.S. Vice President Huber H. Humphrey’s legacy and career, the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship (HHH) selects international participants for a one-year residency in the United States. The participants engage in 10- month, non-degree study of leadership development and engage in professional collaborations with US counterparts. As noted in the Executive Summary, HHH is highly selective and applicants must be able to articulate how their professional goals serve to advance their home communities and countries. Since 1978¹, the 2018 Hubert H. Humphrey Program² has hosted over 6,000 participants from 172 countries to increase awareness and understanding of emerging issues that face a globalized landscape.

The mission statement of the HHH Fellowship seeks to build capacity³ in developing democracies through the participants by:

1. Fostering and strengthening the professional development of experienced mid-career professionals in critical fields.

¹ <https://www.humphreyfellowship.org/program-history>

² [Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program Evaluation Report \(state.gov\)](#)

³ <https://www.humphreyfellowship.org/program-design>

2. Fostering change in the participants' sector whether in their individual country or geographic region, and/or globally.
3. Fostering an intellectual exchange that encourages networking and collaboration between participants and U.S. citizens and universities.

The HHH fellowship selected the leading universities in their fields to serve as program sites. Each program site hosted 7-15 participants who are placed in cohorts with global peers at host universities⁴ across the United States to address their countries' development needs in key areas including public health, education, sustainable development, and democratic institution-building (Semali & Buchko, 2014).

The Vanderbilt University Peabody College of Education⁵ and Human Development is one of two U.S. educational sites, in Nashville, Tennessee has hosted the HHH Fellowship program since 2010. For the 2019- 20 year, Vanderbilt hosted its 10th cohort⁶ of participants. The participants represented 12 different countries: Argentina, Belize, Djibouti, Georgia, India, Kazakhstan, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Nigeria, and Pakistan. The fellowship program⁷ falls under Peabody's office of International Affairs and is led by the program director and supported by a program coordinator and two Vanderbilt graduate students. From interviews with the program director following their acceptance, participants receive notification of their

⁴ <https://www.humphreyfellowship.org/host-universities>

⁵ <https://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/>

⁶ https://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/admin-offices/international-affairs/hubert_h_humphrey_fellowship_program/meet_our_fellows.php

⁷ https://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/admin-offices/international-affairs/hubert_h_humphrey_fellowship_program/about_our_program.php

assigned city and program site. Upon fellow assignment to Peabody, the HHH Fellowship team began its journey in leadership development with the participants. The HHH program staff, then, becomes the main point of contact and support through the phases of the program: pre-arrival, the duration of the 10-month fellowship program, and the fellow's return to their home country

The HHH team facilitated and encouraged collaboration between the fellow and the Vanderbilt and Nashville communities. In the interview with the director, she shared the relationships and networks that the participants developed during the program (see Figure 3).

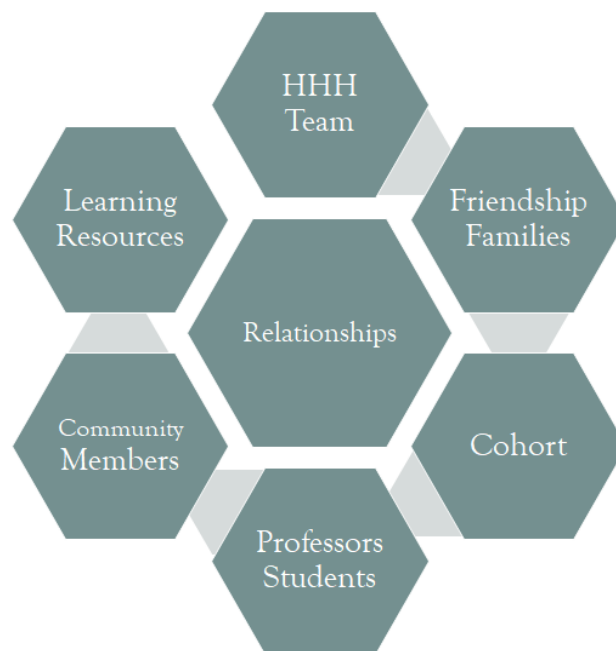


Figure 3 *Relationships in HHH Peabody Program*

As a part of the program requirement, participants attended courses and university events and interacted with professors and Vanderbilt students. The participants each had a faculty advisor who advised them during the fellowship. The HHH program also partnered with local community colleges who serve as available resources and relationships for learning. The HHH

team connected participants with “friendship families” who serve to support the participants during their transition and to create relationships for mutual exchange of culture and experiences.

The program director led a seminar course, and each week invites different members of the Nashville community to lead professional development sessions. Each participant also participated in an internship and developed relationships with the team there. Throughout the program, the HHH team coordinated outings, meals, and events for the participants and Nashville community members. There is an opening and closing reception to welcome and celebrate the participants with the Nashville and Vanderbilt communities.

While the requirements for the program are derived from the program aims, each host university has autonomy in its construction of the design and delivery of the fellowship requirements. During the fellowship, participants participate in several components that enhance their academic, professional, and personal development that are facilitated and led by the HHH program staff. From the HHH program’s welcome packet, I adapted HHH Peabody Program Experiences (see Figure 4).

Program Experiences	Individual Program Plan (IPP) reflection tool
	Humphrey Seminar Series – Speakers, Site Visits, Workshops
	Humphrey Impact Plan – Connecting new learning to their context
	Academic Program – Audit 2-3 Courses
	Professional Development Activities – conferences, meetings, and activities
	Professional Affiliations – Organization work 240 Hours
	Cultural Experiences
	Service Work
	Washington DC Global Forum
	Opening and Choosing Retreats

Figure 4 *HHH Peabody Program Experiences*

The HHH program staff led by the program director is responsible for the design and the delivery of the requirements, the facilitation, and the execution of the program components. Furthermore, the program staff is also responsible for supporting the participants’ growth toward leadership development and assessing the program’s impact and outcomes for each participant as well as the overall program at the site.

PROBLEM OF PRACTICE

While the HHH program director at Peabody College has evaluated participant experiences through surveys, the leader has observed that the surveys, alone, did not capture how individual experience the leadership development program in response to the professional identity development. With a reduced program staff allocated to other responsibilities, the program currently did not have the capacity to conduct an evaluation of participant's development. The program director engaged the capstone to investigate the Humphrey Fellowship participants from 2015-'19 cohorts' perceptions of their development as a result of participating in the program. Based on these findings of this investigation this capstone seeks to provide program leaders with recommendations to enhance the participant experience and eventual impact on participants' communities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The focal problem in this capstone required an investigation into the role of context, relationships, and identity in leadership development. In what follows; therefore, I will unpack extant literature that conceptualizes the professional identity development process and the factors involved with leadership identity development.

With this literature review, it is important to identify the practices that developmental programs offer individuals to change and to become effective leaders? Traditional training and coaching focused on changing individuals through introspection and reflection. (Ibarra, 2015). They encouraged individuals to reflect on their self- awareness and their purpose to guide their development journey. Ibarra (2015) claimed that these traditional approaches are limited, and she made the argument supported by social psychology researchers "... that individuals change their minds by first changing their behaviors" (Ibarra, 2015, p. 2). Singularly, introspection could impede individuals from change by anchoring them in past and habitual patterns. Ibarra explained, "you don't unearth your true self; it emerges from what you do" (Ibarra, 2015, p. 5). Thus, for individuals to change and to increase their self-knowledge, they must start by participating in new experiences, interacting with new networks, building relationships, and experimenting with new ways (Ibarra, 2015).

As individuals experience change, how do leaders define and understand the identity development process? An individual's identity is socially constructed through meanings given by self and others (Gecas, 1982). By extension, professional identities are claimed and granted in social interaction and are how individuals define their professional selves (Ibarra et. al 2010). These professional identities are not just historical constructions, but instead have evolved over an individual's career and hold their future possibilities (Ibarra et. al, 2010). For leaders to

develop individuals to these future possibilities, they must first understand how the individuals change and transform in their professional journeys, Ibarra et. al (2010) proposed 3 questions to conceptualize identity development process:

- 1) What changes?
- 2) How does it change?
- 3) What conditions make a difference?

The following sections attempt to address and answer each question.

What Changes?

Through different periods of their professional development, individuals encounter experiences that motivate them to change. Schien (1978) suggested that the impetus for change is key events, “crucible” periods, and transitions in their careers. As individuals take on new professional roles, they learn new skill sets, behaviors, and interactions (Schein 1978). As participants pursue change, their contexts determine their access to practices, resources, and relationships to make the change (Ibarra et. al. 2010). This access to practices, resources, and relationships that individuals can draw from “... create new repertoires of possibilities, aspects of one professional identity that may be relatively stable may change markedly (Ibarra, 1999, p. 765). Therefore, the change that is possible for an individual becomes a negotiation within themselves and between themselves and their context.

How Does it Change?

Ibarra et. al (2010) conceptualized this process of negotiation and identity development through models of how the self-changes. From these theories including Van Gennep’s (1960) rites of passage, identity development is rooted in the “... a process involving separation from

established identities, transition, and integration of new self-concepts” (p. 664). Ibarra et. al (2010) defined these stages in the identity development process as possible selves, provisional selves, professional selves, and transformation which will be defined and expanded upon in the following sections (see Figure 1). It is important to note that these stages are not linear, but instead are iterative in nature and occur across an individual’s professional career.

Possible Selves

In Markus & Nurius’s (1985) self-concept research, possible selves is the knowledge that an individual needs to think about their future selves. Our future selves hold “...cognitive components of hopes, fears, goals, and threats (Markus & Nurius, 1985, p. 954) and are the images of who individuals want, like, or fear of becoming in the future (Ibarra et. al 2010). Possible selves are not meant to be task-specific goals to create and cause individuals to change (Markus & Nurius 1985). Possible selves are visionary pursuits that are motivating but not necessarily attainable. Instead, it is an opportunity to highlight the interdependence between the individual’s self-concept with their motivation to change. In this stage, individuals can create any variety of possible selves because their views of self “... have not been verified by and confirmed by social experience” (Markus & Nurius, 1985, p. 951).

Provisional Selves

In the identity development process, individuals can change only to the extent that they put their possible identities into practice and ground these identities in experience (Ibarra et. al., 2010). Ibarra et. al (2010) defined provisional selves as an identity transition process where “...people disengage from central behaviorally anchored identities while exploring new possible selves and eventually integrate a new, alternative identity (p. 662). In this transitional phase, individuals bridge the gap between their current capabilities and the capabilities expected in their

new roles through participation and experimentation. This transitional process is also referred to as a liminal space. The work of provisional selves happens in a liminal space which implies a time where individuals are between social roles and identities. In this space of liminality, the roles are rooted in legitimate roles that require guidance and support from relationships. Ibarra et. al (2010) describe these liminal spaces as psychologically safe spaces, so individuals can be free to “play” or experiment new roles.

Professional Identities

Incorporation or integration is a gradual process “...by which external interactions between self and others are taken in and replaced by internal representations of these interactions” (Ibarra et. al, 2010, 667). Individuals move from needing outside support to having more mechanisms to evaluate their own behaviors (Ibarra et. al 2010). With experience and practice, individuals gain an emerging understanding of their identity in a new situation (Ibarra et. al 2010). As participants grow in their professional identity, they then seek for others to accept and confirm identity in their professional role, so they can take on more responsibilities for change and progress within the organization (Ibarra et. al 2010).

Change Agents

In this stage of the identity development process, Huisig (2006) concluded that individuals who transformed not only had access to roles with greater responsibilities, but they also gained the power to start thinking about system-level change. In their transformation, these individuals not only learned new skills but more importantly, they learned new ways of thinking. These ways of thinking allowed individuals to move from partial understandings of their organization to become “systems thinkers.” With this systemic thinking, they had a greater understanding of the organization’s purpose and future possibilities. Huisig (2006) explained

that this transformation positioned individuals to become change agents who were less attached to their organization's old ways of thinking who now considered and sought out new experiences to lead organizational change.

What Conditions Make a Difference?

What are the affordances that support individuals toward transformational growth in leadership development? In the following sections, I identified and expanded upon 2 conditions that make a difference: context/developmental experiences and relationships that supported individuals through their identity development process. human development occurs in social and cultural contexts that are inextricably linked with the contexts and relationships of an individual (Dewey,1986; Van Velsor & McCauley, 2004).

Context/Developmental Experiences

Formal development programs cannot afford to exclusively focus on building individual skills and abilities. To effectively support the development of individuals, program design must consider and incorporate the identity development process and the context in their program design (Ibarra et. al 2010). McCauley & Guthrie (2008) called for intentional learning design that aligns the participants' objectives with the program processes, and with an underlying commitment to center the learner and to expand the learner's capacity to change and to develop. In this context, individuals need access to developmental experiences designed with the following elements: offering new experiences, assessing the learner's readiness, creating a safe space to experiment, considering bookends, and providing optimal experiences. In the following sections, each element is defined with a short description.



Figure 5 *Developmental Experiences*

Offering new experiences Individuals need new developmental experiences to understand what is possible (Markus and Nurius 1985), and to be afforded opportunities to experiment with their new provisional roles. Throughout their identity development process, new experiences are critical for change, growth, and development. “By doing new things and interacting in different networks, people make meaning of who they are and who they want to be” (Ibarra, et al., 2010, p. 665).

Considering the Learner’s Readiness The extent individuals were able to capitalize on the variety of new developmental experiences depended on their level of readiness and their ability to learn from the experience (Van Velsor & McCauley 2004). An individual’s developmental stage affects “...how open a person is to experiencing confirming and disconfirming information as well as his or her capacity to recognize and take advantage of developmental opportunities” (Ibarra et. al p.668). Ibarra et. al note that over an individual’s career their professional identities continue to evolve and “... they tend to come up for revision and questioning at critical junctures in the adult life cycle” (p. 669). Individuals who choose to attend development programs and trainings tend to be more developmentally ready and open to self-examination, reflection, and separation (Ibarra et. al 2010).

Goal Setting As individuals experiment with new experiences, Ibarra (2015) suggested they focus on learning goals over performance goals. In her psychology research, Dweck (2007)

studied individuals learning new and unfamiliar roles and found that individuals driven by performance goals “... prefer tasks that will help them look good, as opposed to tasks that will help them learn” (Ibarra, 2015, p.152). These individuals tend to stick with familiar approaches and are less likely to accept feedback on their weaknesses. For individuals to meet learning goals. Ibarra (1999) explained that individuals must experiment with their provisional selves through an iterative process of trying new experiences, making sense of these experiences, and evaluating these experiences for future learning (Ibarra et. al 2010).

Considering “Bookends” of Programs “Bookends” focus on the “takeoff” (before entering the program) and the “reentry” (after returning from the program) (Snook 2008). The “bookends” experiences are often overlooked, and Snook proposes a greater understanding of these experiences leads to a greater understanding of an individuals’ transformation. Individuals may experience great personal learning during a program, but “...transferring that learning back home – to the team, unit, or organization – is much harder, if it happens at all” (Ibarra et. al 2010). For this reason, developmental programs must consider incorporating more work around “bookends” in both their design of the program and their understanding of program outcomes (Ibarra et. al 2010).

Providing Optimal Experiences A rich program context comes from meaningful developmental experiences that support individuals in their learning. Programs need to design and integrate developmental experiences that give individuals access to learning that meet their developmental needs. This is a shift in program design moving away from events-based to a more systematic approach of offering individuals curated developmental experiences (Van Velsor & McCauley, 2004).

Developmental experiences are critical for individuals because they can motivate them and focus their efforts on their learning, growth, and change. These experiences also provide individuals with the "... the raw material for learning: the materials for learning the information, observation, and reactions that lead to a more complex understanding of the world (Van Velsor & McCauley, 2004, p. 5). Van Velsor and McCauley (2004) explained their theory of leveraging the impact of each developmental experience through 3 elements: assessment, support, and challenge.

Assessment provides individuals with experiences to understand their current strengths, their performance, and their developmental needs through formal and informal structures (Van Velsor & McCauley, 2004). Individuals gain a better understanding of their current self through multiple perspectives from skill inventories to feedback from their leaders (McCauley & Guthrie, 2008). These experiences motivate individuals by helping them understand the gap between their current self and possible self. Through these clarifications and data, individuals can improve learn and change by learning new skills and behaviors.

Challenge requires individuals to learn in new situations and move out of their habitual ways (Van Velsor & McCauley, 2004). These experiences force "...disequilibrium causing people to question the adequacy of their skills, frameworks, and approaches" (Van Velsor & McCauley, 2004, p. 7). Individuals often face challenges in new situations when they have the skills and abilities to face the challenges or beyond their capacity. "Challenging situations motivate by causing disequilibrium and then capitalize on people's need for mastery" (Van Velsor & McCauley, 2004, p. 10). For individuals to change and grow from these challenges, they first need to understand what is required of them to make the transitions and then the resources from learning new perspectives and from opportunities to experiment and to meet the

challenge. Without access to these resources, individuals face the additional challenge of seeking out resources (Ibarra et. al, 2010) As individuals spend time on new tasks in this provisional space, they may struggle with feelings of inauthenticity. They also may struggle with identity loss that results from the learning. New behaviors mean that they have fewer opportunities to engage in activities and relationships that defined them in their previous professional identity (Ibarra et. al, 2010). Hardships stretch individuals and them how to preserve, grow, and change. As individuals face challenging experiences, they learn to develop into versatile leaders (Van Velsor & McCauley, 2004).

The experiences of assessment and challenge are most powerful when they are included with the element of support. As individuals learn their areas of weaknesses and trying out new behaviors, support plays a critical role in affirming their efforts to grow and change. For support, relationships provide the greatest resource by providing the roles of “... people who can listen to stories of struggle, identify with challenges, suggest strategies for coping, provide needed resources, reassure in times of doubt, inspire renewed effort, celebrate even the smallest accomplishments, and cheer from the sidelines” (Van Velsor & McCauley, 2004, p. 10). Support offers individuals feedback that confirms and clarifies their learning. Different relationships offer different kinds of support especially those close developed relationships where an individual can turn in difficult situations. Close relationships provide individuals with the support, motivation, and resources to change, grow, and develop. Support increases an individual’s feeling of self-efficacy, the belief that one can grow and learn. This is how individuals can persevere through challenges (Bandura, 1986).

Relationships

Relationships play a critical role in ensuring individuals optimize their developmental experiences. McCauley & Guthrie (2010) identified for each element (assessment, challenge, support) in the developmental experience the corresponding roles that relationships provide individuals in learning, change and development. Table 1 includes

Table 1 *The Roles of Relationships in Developmental Experiences*

Element	Role	Function
Assessment	Feedback Provider	Ongoing feedback as person works to learn and improve
	Sounding Board	Evaluation of strategies before they are implemented
	Point of Comparison	Standards for evaluating own level of skill or performance
	Feedback Interpreter	Assistance in integrating or making sense of feedback from others
Challenge	Dialogue Partner	Perspectives of points of view different from own
	Assignment Broker	Access to challenging assignments (new jobs or changes in current job)
	Accountant	Pressure to fulfill commitment to development goals
	Role Model	Examples of high competence in areas being developed
Support	Counselor	Examination of what is making learning and development difficult

	Cheerleader	Boost in own belief that success is possible
	Reinforcer	Formal rewards for progress toward goals
	Cohort	Sense that you are not alone in your struggles and that if others can achieve their goals, you can too

Different relationships support individuals through their growth, change, and development. McCauley & Guthrie (2008) categorized the different relationships that supported individuals in developing learning programs: learning coaches, peer partners, and learning resources. In order to leverage these relationships within a program design, each relationship needs to be clearly defined, understood by all stakeholders, and have mechanisms to ensure the accountability and effectiveness of each relationship as it relates to an individual's development trajectory (McCauley & Guthrie, 2008).

Learning Coaches, in this sense, are experienced practitioners in a particular domain who play a central role in developing the individual through coaching. They assess individuals. Learning coaches help participants challenge constraints with new experiences. To provide support, learning coaches work to ensure accountability and support for reaching goals and sustaining development (Ting & Scisco, 2006). Oftentimes, the learning coaching meets 1-1 with participants providing ongoing coaching sessions throughout the participant's development process (McCauley & Guthrie, 2008).

Peer Partners are small groups and dyads who support individuals with ongoing learning. They support individuals by building accountability and support to meet developmental goals, by being an empathetic partner in the learning, by motivating peers, and by providing feedback.

While there are multiple opportunities for peer partners to support their peers, McCauley & Guthrie (2008), recognize challenges with peer partners that need to be addressed in program design. Participants vary in skill and motivation, and peer partners need to be taught partner skills. They need opportunities to build relationships of trust to ensure there is a mutual exchange of diverse viewpoints (McCauley & Guthrie, 2008). Peer partners do not have to be members of the same cohorts, and alumni groups can also benefit from a continued mutual exchange of sharing insights and renewing motivation and commitment to change and development (McCauley & Guthrie, 2008). Learning resources are usually people in leadership roles who have the experience, expertise and perspectives that could be valuable for participants in reaching developmental goals. They are often outside of the organization. Learning Resources are most effective when the relationships are aligned with the overall goals of the program and have an intentional place in the larger program design (McCauley & Guthrie, 2008).

To leverage these relationships for participants to change and development, these relationships that function as learning coach, peer partners, and learning resources need to be embedded in the leadership program design. Although some studies of long-term apprenticeship programs suggest effective coaching can emerge organically (Lave and Wenger, 1991), most development programs must design for processes that facilitate relationships. In order to conceptualize how relationships can function to guide participants through a process of identity development, Peterson (2007) describes such a process. If coaching is a process then the focus is on the "...change within the individual, rather than for a set of activities that the coach would engage in" (Peterson, 2007, p.265). Peterson provided a framework for program leaders called the *Developmental Pipeline* using 5 systematic conditions for learning:

- a. Insight: What needs to be developed?

- b. Motivation: What is the time commitment and energy?
- c. Capabilities: What are the skills and knowledge needed?
- d. Real-World Practice: How are the skills and knowledge applied at work?
- e. Accountability: What are the mechanisms to ensure change and meaningful consequences?

Peterson (2007) used the conditions to build a pipeline metaphor. The pipeline is a constraint model (Peterson 2007) which means "... the amount of change a person can make is constrained by where the pipeline is most narrow" (Peterson, 2007, p. 265). Using this pipeline, Peterson proposed that participants gain insight, motivation, and capabilities throughout the program, but then lack the opportunity to apply the learning in the real-world practice and lack the accountability to continue developing (see Figure 7).

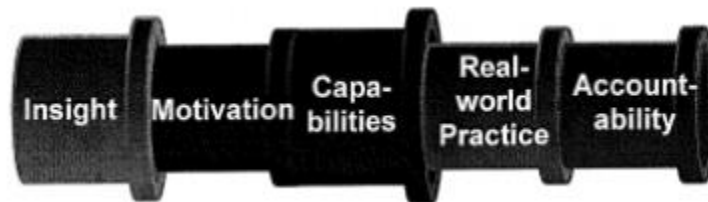


Figure 6 Peterson's (2007) Developmental Pipeline

The conditions from the development pipeline combined with the participants' culture impacts the participants' development and change. While Peterson (2007) encouraged coaches to consider the culture of the participants, ultimately program design must recognize each participant "... as a unique human being rather than forming opinions based on generalizations and stereotypes about the person's cultural background (Peterson, 2007, p. 262). It is important for the relationships and programs to understand the participant's path to ensure participants

change and develop throughout the development pipeline (Peterson 2007). This understanding combined with a sense of trust offers participants relationships that have “. . . an open attitude of curiosity and interest, who meet people where they are, who accept them for what they are, and who project a genuine desire to helpful to each person on their terms (Peterson, 2007, p. 269).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) What reasons did HHH program participants cite for seeking out professional identity development opportunities and to what extent did their work organization in their home county and the HHH program understand these reasons?
- 2) What conditions made a difference in HHH program participant's professional identity development of their possible, provisional, and professional selves?
- 3) Did/How did the HHH participants perceive their professional identities transform as a result of participating in the program?

RESEARCH METHOD

To answer the research questions above, I pursued a form of case study that allowed explicit focus on the HHH program and a bounded set of participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 1998) over time. The case study method offered me an approach to explore participants' perceptions of the program inclusive of the relationships, experiences, and processes within the program.

Data Collection and Analysis

I collected data for this case study in 4 phases with multiple sources of evidence to help understand the participants' perceptions of the program (Yin 2006). I used 3 methods to collect data for our research questions: interviews with the participants and the program director, surveys of the participants, and secondary data analysis of a national level program evaluation to capture the participants' perceptions of program aims.

Phase 1 Interview with Program Director

As I set forth to build my understanding of participant perceptions, I started with semi-structured interviews with the program director to understand a) the history and chronology of the program processes b) how she currently developmental experiences to support the participants in meeting the program processes and program aims. This data helped me answer research question two, what conditions made a difference in the participants' experience.

Through semi-structured interviews, the program director offered program context as well insight on her perceptions of her role and relationship with the participants. Using the McCauley & Guthrie's (2008) *Designing Relationships for Learning. Roles Played by Others in Relationships for Learning*, I adapted the table into interview questions to understand how

program directors used the elements of assessment, challenge, and support to design the relationships within the program (see Appendix A). In this interview the program director revealed while she has supported the participants that she has not designed relationships with these specific roles, so we discontinued the interview. She wanted to use the interview as a tool to define relationships and roles and to design these relationships within the program.

Using Ibarra et. al (2010), I adapted the identity development process questions to design interview questions. The program director's responses helped me understand program context and to frame my interview and survey questions for the participants (see Appendix A). There were 4 interviews that focused on the 4 phases of the participant's journey: pre-takeoff, semester 1, semester 2, and reentry and landing.



Figure 7 *Phases of the HHH Program*

The program director supported my next phases of study by providing me with participants contact information and identifying cohorts of participants to interview. We identified Peabody HHH alumni from 2015-19 cohorts to participate in the research study. In the

interviews with the program director, I learned that before the next cohort arrived, she engaged in program improvement. Therefore, perceptions of later cohorts would offer more current insight to inform her coaching practices. There are a total of 10 cohorts who have currently completed the program at the Peabody site. Due to Covid-19, the 2019-20 cohort returned home before program completions, so they were not included in the study

All interviews with the program director were hosted on Zoom and I received her permission to record and safely store interview transcripts.

Phase 1 Interview with Program Director Analysis

After conducting each interview with the program director, I used thematic coding and analyzed for emergent themes using Ibarra et. al's (2010) 3 questions to conceptualize identity development process. For the question "what happened", the program director shared information by her program components: logics, mutual exchange, professional development, leadership development, and logistics. I included a list of thematic codes that emerged from qualitative coding by each phase of the program (see Table 2). The data from this section supported my understanding of the next 3 phases as it provided me program context to understand participant responses and conduct document review.

Table 2 *Analysis of the Interview with Program Director*

Pre-arrival Summer 2015-19	Semester 1 Fall 2015-19	Semester 2 Spring 2015-19	Take-off May 2015-19
<p>What happened? -Site Selection -Needs assessment -HHH Staff Planning</p> <p>What changed? -Mutual Exchange- Staff Turnover -Changing Cohorts and Needs</p>	<p>What happened? -Seminar -Grant Proposal Process</p> <p>Condition that made a difference -Developmental Readiness</p>	<p>What happened? -Evaluating Reflections -Cohort Dynamics -Internships/Impact Plans</p> <p>Conditions that made a difference. Application of course content</p>	<p>What happened? -Relationships -Emails/Social Media -10-year survey</p>

Phase 2 Surveying Participants

For the next phase of data collection, the program director provided me with the email addresses for 41 participants from 2015-19 cohorts. I emailed these participants an invitation letter to participate in the research study and a survey link (See Appendix B). I had two reasons for creating the survey. In the first part of the survey, I asked for demographic information including their cohort year, home country, and if they would be interested in being interviewed. I wanted to use this information to ensure that I got the perceptions of the participants that represented both the cohort years and geographic locations (see Table 3).

Table 3 *Participant Demographic Information from Surveys*

Survey Demographic Questions	Survey Responses
How many surveys completed?	12 out of 41
Gender	Male -7 Female-5 Other -0
Cohort Years	2015-'16 – 3 2016-'17 – 3 2017-'18 – 3 2018-'19 -3

For the second part of the survey, I designed survey questions to include a larger subset of participants and to include those who might not be able to attend the interviews due to extenuating circumstances (work/family commitments, Covid-19...) 12 participants completed the survey and 100% wanted to participate in the interview. In the second part of the survey, I used the Van Velsor & McCauley's (2004) Elements of Developmental Experiences to design questions to help me answer research question 2 (see Table 4).

Table 4. *Participant Survey Questions*

<u>Survey Questions/</u>	<u>Conceptual Framework</u>
Who supported your growth in your program? How did they support you?	McCauley & Guthrie (2008)– Roles Played by Others in Relationships for Learning (see Table 1)
Who helped you assess your sense of self? How did they help you assess your sense of self?	McCauley & Guthrie (2008)– Roles Played by Others in Relationships for Learning (see Table 1)
Who challenged your development? How did they challenge your development?	McCauley & Guthrie (2008)– Roles Played by Others in Relationships for Learning (see Table 1)

Phase 2 Surveying Participants Analysis

For the survey analysis, I first gave the descriptive information (e.g., e-mail address of respondent cohort year, home country) and open-ended comments their own cells in an Excel matrix. For the survey questions that asked the participants who supported, assessed and challenged participants, I applied categorical coding to the qualitative data (Saldana 2009) by sorting their responses using McCauley & Guthrie’s (2008) three types of relationships: learning resources, peer partners, and learning coach. In my analysis the participants’ answers for challenge and assessment were often interpreted as support. I realized that I needed to revise what it was I was trying to express in the interviews. Using McCauley & Guthrie’s (2010) roles

for each relationship, I noticed an emerging theme that the participants felt the program director supported them in multiple roles which was not the same for the other relationships. This connected to the program director's interview that the relationships were not intentionally designed or defined within the program.

I used the survey analysis to answer research question 2 – what conditions made a difference in the participant's professional identity development of their possible, provisional, and professional selves.

Phase 3 Participant Interviews

For this next phase, I conducted semi-structured interviews with the participants to explain and to explore the participants' views in more depth (Creswell, 2003). To design the interview questions with the participants, I used the 4 phases of the program (see Figure 8). The Pre-Takeoff or Phase 1 occurred in the participants' home countries, and it was the period from acceptance to their arrival to the US. Semester 1 or Phase 2 was the period of entry and landing and included the timeframe from arrival to the US winter holiday break. Semester 2 or Phase 3 was the period from winter break to the completion of the program. Reentry and Landing or Phase 4 was the period after the participants returned to their home countries.

Next, I referred to my research questions and conceptual frameworks to design the interview questions (Merriam, 1998). I wanted to understand from the participants' perspectives what happened a) during the program that supported the participants in fostering their professional identity development b) what happened after the program to understand how they fostered change in their sectors (see Appendix C). This data could then be analyzed to understand how the participants changed during the program, what conditions make a difference, and how does it change? This data supported my understanding of all 3 research

questions: What reasons did participants cite for seeking out professional development opportunities? What conditions made a difference in the participant's professional identity development of their possible, provisional and professional selves? Did/How the participants perceive their professional identity change because of participating in the program?

I contacted all the participants who responded to the survey to schedule semi-structured interviews. Many of the participants spoke English as their second language. Since I was uncertain about their language proficiency, I provided them the interview questions in advance to give them the opportunity to reflect and to collect their thoughts. I was able to interview 9 participants and refer to Table 5 for their demographic information. Each interview took 30-45 minutes, and all the participants came to the interview prepared to answer the interview questions

Table 5 *Participant Interviews Demographic Information*

Interview Demographic Questions	Interview Statistics
Total Interviews	9
Gender	Male -5 Female-4 Other -0
Cohort Years	2015-'16 – 2 2016-'17 – 2 2017-'18 – 3 2018-'19 -2

I hosted all participant interviews on Zoom and I received her permission to record and safely store interview transcripts.

Phase 3 Participant Interview Analysis

After the interviews with the participants, I used thematic coding and analyzed for emergent themes for each phase (see Table 5, 6, and 7).

Table 6 *Emerging Questions from Pre-Take-Off*

Emerging Questions from Pre Take-Off
Why were the participants interested in applying to the program?
How did the participants want to change their communities?
What did the participants do to prepare for their US arrival?

Table 7 *Emerging Questions from Semester 1 and 2*

Elements of Identity Development Process/Program Phases	Emerging Questions from Interviews
Possible Selves/Semester 1 and 2	Which relationships did participants report supported their understanding of their goals? What experiences in the program did participants report supported them in meeting their goals?
Provisional Selves/Semester 1 and 2	Which relationships did participants report supported them during their experimentation of new roles? What experiences in the program did participants report supported them in their experimentation of new roles?
Professional Selves/Reentry & Landing	How did the participants transition back to their professional roles? How did their organizations respond to the program?

Table 8 *Emerging Questions from Re-entry and Landing*

Emerging Questions from Re-entry and Landing
What were the challenges (reverse culture shock) for the participants upon re-entry in their home countries?
Did the participants return to their job following the program?
How did the participants transfer new learning to their program?

Phase 4 2018 Program Evaluation

In phase 4, I concluded my data collection for the case study by reviewing the *Hubert. H. Humphrey Fellowship Program Evaluation Report* that was published in 2018 and examining program documents. I used the 2018 Program evaluation to understand how my data, findings, and recommendations in the evaluation collection corroborated and challenged my data in the

first three phases. The evaluation report offered another perspective to inform my data collection and to validate my findings since the evaluation was conducted at a larger scale (Johnson 2014). While the evaluation report offered insights, the data is not specific to my program site and included other participants and program objectives. Also, the purpose of my study is to understand the participants' perceptions of their journey into the fellowship program which is different than the 2018 program evaluation (Johnson 2014).

For the National 2018 program evaluation, researchers used 3 methods of data collection. There were in-depth interviews with 60 participants. There were 2 web-based surveys. One survey was for the participants and 1,042 participants completed the survey. Refer to figure 14. Profile of Humphrey Alumni which was taken from the 2018 Evaluation Report for a profile of participants who completed the surveys.

For examining program documents, I focused on the welcome packet which defined program experiences. The data in the earlier phases indicated less visibility of the program on the participant's return to home country. I analyzed this document for discourse on participant reentry back to country.

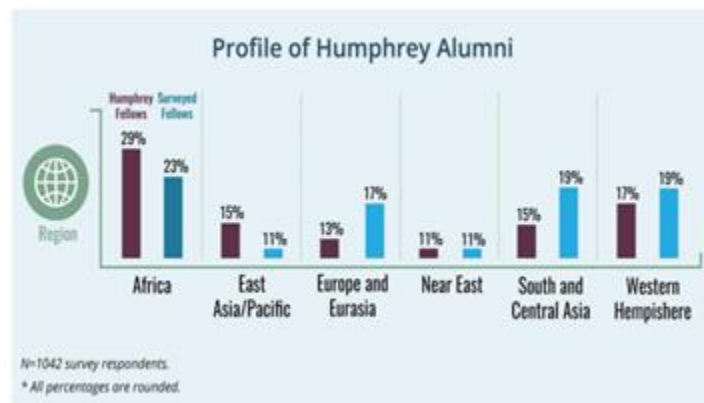


Figure 1: Demographic Profile of Humphrey Alumni

Figure 8 2018 Program Evaluation Profile of HHH Alumni

Phase 4 2018 Program Evaluation Analysis

In reviewing the 2018 program evaluation, I used thematic coding and analyzed for emergent themes (see Table 8).

Table 8 *Evaluation Report Section*

Research Question	Evaluation Report Sections
<p>Research Question 2: What conditions made a difference in the participant’s professional identity development of their possible, provisional and professional selves?</p>	<p>Developing and Applying New Skills</p> <p>Strengthening Participants’ professional development</p>
<p>Research Question 3: Did/How the participants perceive their professional identity change as a result of participating in the program?</p>	<p>Findings- Changing Lives and Institutions – Career Progression</p> <p>Institutional, National, and International Impacts</p> <p>Potential Areas of Action -Post Program Resources and Career Integration</p> <p>Recommendations – Strengthening fields of study and institution</p>

FINDINGS

Research Question 1

What influenced participants to seek out professional identity development opportunities and to what extent did their work organization in their home country and the HHH program understand these reasons.

Finding 1

Participants sought out professional identity opportunities for the following reasons: new opportunities that were not available in their home countries, new challenges, new relationships and experiences, and new professional roles. Participants shared what motivated them to apply to the program (see Table 9). As stated in my literature, I wanted to understand how the participants continued to understand their possible selves and their visions to construct a narrative for change and their access to practices to support them in their professional identity development process (Ibarra et. al 2010).

Table 9 Participants Reasons for Applications

Opportunities not available in their home country

- "I could not find another program at home... I decided this program met my professional development expectations with their learning approaches."

New Challenges

- "I'm the kind of person that is very fascinated with this kind of challenge. So when I had the opportunity to go somewhere else and meet new people, I learned about different professional settings and get new knowledge. I wanted to go."

Professional Roles/Career Transition

- "I was with that company for about 10 years and that made me feel that I need to understand what, how can I further improve myself and that is the time I learned about Humphrey."

Feeling Stuck/Not Growing

- "I felt that I needed new ideas, fresh ideas that I was very scared of that after many years were kind of like not growing. And so I wanted that exchange. I want a meeting with the people from different parts of the world being in an academic environment again."

Before the participants arrived, the program director's first action step was to read their applications to understand their goals and visions. In interviews, the program director explained the participants' reasons for participating in the program changed in the time between the application and the acceptance to the program. Based on this observation, the program director created a needs assessment during the take-off phase to gain a better understanding of the participant's goals and interests. The program director said, ". . . what they wrote in an application is one thing, but what they really want can be totally different. So, having that interest and needs assessment gives us a sense of what they're interested in not interested in. And that's also just as good, just kind of figuring out what this person has no interest in now. And then we can figure out if it's because I just have never heard of it or because I already know it." This aligns with Ibarra et. al 's (2010) research on possible selves where participants' goals and visions evolve through new experiences. Also, new relationships, such as the program director and staff, support participants' in understanding their blind spots to access new experiences. The program director and her team provided the participants these opportunities to develop their possible selves. The program director said she learned over the years to encourage participants not to commit to goals early, but instead she asked participants, to be observant of the new experiences. Additionally, she changed her program design to include multiple opportunities during semester 1 for participants to learn how to craft and to change their goals and visions.

During the interviews with the participants and their organizations, participants did not share their goals before and during the program with their work organization at home.

Research Question 2

What conditions made a difference in the participant's professional identity development of their possible provisional, and professional selves.

Finding 2

Although program experiences were designed by HHH staff to meet program aims, the experiences were sometimes not aligned with individual participant goals.

Participants created goals and had many new experiences because of participating in the program. The program experiences were curated to meet program aims, but did not necessarily align with individual goals. As stated earlier, the HHH national office mandates that all program sites include certain program experiences including academic coursework and action planning. In my analysis, of course and action plans, the participants shared the conditions that made a difference in developing their possible selves.

Courses As a part of the program requirements, participants audited courses in the fall and spring terms. Some participants shared the courses did not contribute to their development because they were not linked to their individual objectives. One of the participants shared participants could not get into the classes they needed and therefore took classes that were tangentially related or not connected to their program objectives. She said, “The first semester I wanted to go to courses, and I was not admitted because the professors did not allow because of other students already in the classes.”

The participants’ level of English proficiency and academic readiness impacted them to participate in coursework and discussion. One participant shared, “My barrier that I couldn’t pass was speaking English... and I could not take advantage of talking with others in classes.” The program director and participants shared in their interviews that “readiness” was an important factor that impacted their goals and their experiences.

Action Plans The second program condition was the action plans that the participants developed during their seminar class. I examined 2 different responses.

In the first response, the participant reported that the action plans helped him become more specific and systematic about achieving their objectives. He perceived that action planning aligned with development goals. Throughout the interview, he stated that he had frequent conversations with the program director during and after the program with the program director. He said, “It's a very systematically designed program. Once you go there, then you are asked to prepare your project plan.... I changed completely because I was initially talking in a much more general manner, but at the end of the program. I became very focused and specific.”

In the second response, the participants shared that the action plans could be connected back to their jobs (this varied depending on if the participants had jobs on their return or how invested their jobs were with fellowship). One participant shared that she had to resign from her position, and semester 2 she felt concerned about finding a job. This participant shared that action planning was difficult for her because she was not returning to a job on her return. She said, “The fellowship assumes that that you had one session and that at the end of the fellowship, you will return to your country and you will have again the same position in the same home that you had. Some of the participants left their jobs to attend the program and others return to different jobs on their return, so many of them learned the skills and knowledge for creating action plans but did not have an organization to implement these plans on their return home.

Finding 3

Participants described ways that the program director understood their goals and was able to provide support as participants experimented with provisional selves.

Participants reported that the program director made a difference in their provisional selves (experimented and practiced new roles). Despite the program constraints, there is evidence the program director made efforts to individualize experiences for participants. The program director's expertise and understanding of the participants helped her assess the participants and to shape their experiences to meet program goals. In the surveys and interviews, the participants shared the importance of relationships in their development during the program.

One participant said he would advise a future participant, "the more you interact. The more you learn." Overall, the participants shared their most important relationship was with the program director which the Center for Creative Leadership also found in their research that the program director or learning coach was the most important relationship in a program. The participants reported that the program director provided the element of assessing, challenging, and supporting them in their experiences and in the development of their provisional selves.

Assessment The participants shared that the program director was already playing the role of helping them assess their skills and learning as they moved through the program. One of the participants mentioned a strengths profile that helped them reflect on strengths and new perspectives saying, "I still remember that first analysis we did about strengths or profile. It says a lot about me that I already knew, but it added a couple of new perspectives." The weekly review was an email the program director sent with her staff to the participants to summarize and to reflect on the weekly learning and with additional resources. A participant shared that the weekly review helped them assess their academic learning. Lastly, a fellow mentioned the program director providing coaching. "[Program Director] has been the person who helped me in assessing my sense of self through improving my critical thinking, reasoning, and setting the goals for any task I was performing." McCauley & Guthrie (2008) explained that the role of the

learning coach to collaborate with individuals to assess and understand them and their learning goals, and the program director fulfilled this role.

Challenge The participants' perceptions were that the program director played the role of challenging them in the program. The participants shared that the program director-initiated projects that required them to think critically and independently. They also shared that the program director challenged them individually. One of the participants shared that the program director frequently asked "... if I completed my assignment and asked for more out of me. She does it positively and privately. Great leader." Another fellow shared, "she pushed us to be the best version of ourselves..." The participants also shared that the program director challenged them by pushing to try new opportunities. One of the participants shared that the program director made them feel "... everything was accessible" and started to reach out to people regardless of their professional position. Throughout the interviews and surveys, the participants shared that the fellowship experiences challenged them both professionally and personally, and the program director was instrumental in helping them both challenges and to challenge themselves. McCauley & Guthrie (2018) confirmed these findings that the role of the learning coach in this case the program director was to challenge individuals' constraints and help them explore new possibilities.

Support Of the three elements (assessment, challenge, and support), the participants wrote the most about how the program director supported them during the program from personal skills to professional development. From their comments, it was clear that the program director was available to them and supported them on a range of topics that were pulled from their response- providing encouragement to building their confidence. The word cloud includes more of the participants' descriptions and word cloud.

Figure 9 *Program Director Word Cloud*



The participants shared that they felt supported during the program by the program director. Referring to question 1, the participants reported needed more support after they returned home from the program. McCauley & Guthrie (2008) refer to the coaching as an ongoing event rather than an individual event. Learning coaches support individuals in reaching their goals and sustaining their development. In one example, the participants shared that she was afraid to speak up in meetings in her context. She shared this fear with the program director. The program director provided her opportunities first with their cohort and in larger groups and gave her feedback. When she returned home, she shared with pride how she was able to speak up in meetings. This was one example of how well the program director understood the participants' identity goals that led to their change and development.

Finding 4

The participants reported that their relationships impacted their program experiences only under certain conditions.

Participants reported relationships outside of the HHH team had an impact on their experiences. Relationships impacted experiences to the extent these relationships: understood the participant goals and provided them experiences to experiment in these new roles. In the interviews, participants shared that courses, internships, and presenting conferences with professors were opportunities to experiment in new roles with the support of relationships outside of the HHH team. For each experience, the participants shared in the interviews the conditions that made a difference that led to meaningful experiences.

Courses The participants shared that the conditions that made a difference in their courses depended on their relationships with professors. Some of the professors were available to meet with the participants to understand their goals and contexts of their work in their home countries. One participant shared that she wanted feedback on her assignments to improve her skills and knowledge as well as her writing skills, but she was disappointed to not receive the feedback. She said, “And some professors didn't give me feedback. So, I work on my assignments, because I wanted to learn but didn't get feedback. That was tough.”

The participants also shared that the class discussions with their peers and their professors were not relevant to their work contexts and experiences. The participants frequently mentioned that the course work was theoretical, but they wanted more practical approaches on how to take the knowledge and skills back to their home country. He said, “three hours in the class and just talking and discussing issues happening here, so maybe we didn't do so much practical things that get my attention from beginning to end.”

Internship The second program process was the internships another program requirement. The participants shared with the support of the program director they found an internship that

they completed during their spring term. They listed conditions that contributed to their professional learning. One of the participants shared that his goal was to learn how to set up vocational and entrepreneurial opportunities for students in his home country. The internship organization immediately took interest in his goals upon return and supported his understanding by teaching him how to apply for grants to set up the program and trained him to teach in the program. The internship helped him make connections between the theoretical knowledge he learned in his courses and apply them in his internship. He said, “I had time to apply learning from Vanderbilt to my field. I could test some of my solutions on how to connect the theoretical and practical.”

Another condition was if the internship connected to the professional objectives and the relationships, they developed at their internships intentionally included them in the work. One participant how the internship aligned with her work in her home country. Through the internship, she had opportunities at first to shadow and then practicing these new skills with the support of her internship director. He said, “I felt I was really useful because...I worked with the head with the director of the academy I shadowed him all the time... and I learned how to evaluate colleagues and teachers... That is my area of expertise.”

Global Leadership Forum/Conferences Throughout our interviews, the participants mentioned how the Global Leadership Form that they attended in Washington DC along with outside conferences that supported their development. The conditions that made a difference were the new opportunities to discuss with peers, collaborate with professors, and to learn new ideas. The forum and conferences offered them opportunities to discuss new ideas and approaches to both global and to their specific country issues with other participants from both around the world and their countries. While the participants valued opportunities to talk with

participants around the world, they also valued the opportunity to discuss and network with participants from their home countries. One participant said, “You get a feel of what the global issues, challenges, could be and what are the ways through which you can drive it through and what how you can play a role.”

One participant shared that before he arrived at the program that he had not considered negotiation as a role he needed as a leader. He attended the negotiation workshop, and he shared that it was one of the most important experiences in the program because negotiation helped him with relationships inside and outside of the organization, but he was able to teach his employees these negotiation skills to support the organization. Of the workshop he said, “How to negotiate... What preparation, you should make so it was not only theoretical, but it was a very practical approach so that also gave me a lot of learning and was a great exposure for me. So that, to me, was the biggest difference.”

Some of the participants had the opportunity to present with professors at the conference. With the professor, they learned how to create presentations and to present, and they found these skills and knowledge invaluable. One participant said, “My professor (name) -show me so much patience that it makes me think how I can treat visitors and strangers better in life.”

Research Question 3

How did the participants perceive their professional identity change as result of participating in the program?

Finding 5

Overall, participants reported learning skills, knowledge, and practices but found they were not able to enact new identities when they return to their home country.

Participants reported learning new skills, knowledge, and practices, but they were not able to enact new identities and their learning in their professional settings on their return home. There was evidence of one participant who transferred learning by including organizational stakeholders throughout her program experience.

In our interviews, the participants also reported varying abilities to foster change, and the condition that made a difference was the level of investment their employer had in their fellowship experience. Participants reported fostering change was increasingly difficult for those who resigned from their position before attending the program. I chose three experiences to illustrate how organization input was critical for participants to enact their new identities.

Experience 1 – Organizational Support for Participant In the interviews, one participant shared her experience of her employer being invested in her participation in the program, and how it led to a positive transition back to her home country. Upon acceptance, the participant's manager encouraged her and paid her during the leave. Her organization encouraged her to focus on the fellowship, but she continued to stay connected with her work. She expressed her relief to return home to a secure job and the possibility of a promotion at work. Within the program, the participant shared that she learned skillsets that supported her promotion. The participant expressed that the program director was instrumental in her success by providing her advice such as setting up a file for resources for their work. She said, "You know, that was a relief for me because I knew that when the scholarship was over. I was coming back to my place and I would have my job, or maybe a better one."

Experience 2 – Facing Organizational Resistance to Share Learning One of the emerging themes from the 2018 evaluation is the organizational resistance, the participants faced. In my

interviews, one of the participants shared the same barrier on the return home. The participants reported struggling to share new learning with their colleagues, and their organizations also resisted the recommended changes. There was a lack of support, funding, resources, and opportunities to utilize their new skills. The participant felt surprised that the ideas of change were not readily accepted by their colleagues, employers, and organizations. Instead, the participant initially tried to share new ideas and perspectives to improve their work, but colleagues got tired of hearing about their program experiences. He said, “I wanted to share as much as I could... If you are not allowed to be very open with your ideas, you feel limited. By the virtue of this old setup in the system that we have... I was not getting that encouragement and I got into this complex why these people are not encouraging me.” Eventually, the participant stopped sharing. It was a painful realization that just because he had changed did not mean he could enact changes at his organization. The participant felt their organization was supportive of their change, but not necessarily ready for them to make changes at the organizational level. The systems they were returning to were not ready for this change. Organizational resistance was a barrier for this fellow to foster change.

Experience 3– Fellow returning home without a job In the interviews, the participants described returning home and their transition back to their home country. They shared that finding a job was a challenge that they faced before they arrived back home. A few of the participants shared in their interviews that they resigned from their positions to attend the fellowship. The participants sought out positions that recognized their fellowship experience and utilized their knowledge and skills. One fellow expressed that they spent a lot of time networking and taking meetings to find the right opportunity and had to take part-time consultancy work instead of a full-time job. He said, “I had left my job. There was of course a concern within me

that what it would be like after coming back. So that was a major concern for me because I had a family. So I was thinking what to do and how should I go about it.”

LIMITATIONS

While 41 participants were given the opportunity to participate in the surveys and/or the interviews, there were 12 participants who completed the surveys and 9 participants who participated in the interviews. This small sample may be attributed to time constraints due to COVID-19. Also, many of the participants were English Language Learners, and it was possible that participants opted out because all surveys and interviews were all conducted in English. Both the time constraints and language barrier may have created a sample bias that excluded potential participants.

At the beginning of all interviews, I stated that the interviews were confidential. However, the participants stated several times how valued their experiences at Vanderbilt University. Since I am currently a graduate student at Peabody College and worked directly with the program director on this project, I considered participants only wanted to share their positive experiences

Due to my time constraints, I only interviewed 12 participants. Multiple rounds of interviews, rather just one interview with each participant would have allowed me a greater breadth of reactions and responses which made it more challenging to make broad categorizations and generalizations which in turn made it more difficult to answer research questions.

I also was the only researcher analyzing the interviews, and there is a greater room for bias and error in data interpretation and analysis. Ideally, I would have conducted a systematic process of developing inter-rater reliability (Yin, 2009). Although I worked with a colleague and advisor at certain points to develop and test coding categories, I did not regularly test the reliability of my coding application. These findings cannot be extended to wider populations

with the same degree as quantitative analysis because the research did not test for the findings being statistically significant.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I based my recommendations on leveraging the developmental experiences and relationships that participants noted as conditions for identity development noted above, so that future participants can strengthen their development of their possible, provisional, and professional selves.

Recommendation 1

If program directors have a shared understanding of participant goals and experiences within the program, then this leads to participant development.

As the findings show, if program experiences align with participant goals then this leads to participant development. For program leaders to build on their shared understanding with participants of their goals, program leaders offer additional experiences in assessment to develop participants' possible selves. Van Velsor & McCauley (2004) explained that in assessment, program leaders and participants have a mutual understanding of assessing the person, performance, and context. For person, this assessment entails an understanding of the participant's interests, strengths, aspirations, and motivations. For performance, this assessment entails the feedback (informal and formal) participants receive that is linked to behaviors, skills, and knowledge to meet their developmental goals. For context, this part of assessment requires the participant to determine what to develop and what experiences are available to the participant (Ting & Scisco, 2006).

In the interviews and in the findings, the program director and the participants both mentioned the needs assessment prior to arrival and a strengths inventory on arrival as experiences that supported participant development. The program director provided the participants informal feedback as they worked towards their developmental goals, but the data

did not indicate a formal system for participants to receive feedback and discuss how they were meeting their developmental goals. For context, the data indicated that the participants had opportunities on what to develop in Nashville, but data did not indicate that this discussion of participant development extended to their home country. As for the experiences available for the participant, the data indicated that national level mandated experiences that supported some participants more than others. While the participants shared that the program director was available and supportive in finding additional experiences, the data did not indicate that participants and the program leaders had a shared understanding of how participants' goals were met by program experiences.

Therefore, I recommend program leaders and participants need a formal system that includes iterative opportunities for participants to complete the assessments and to discuss with program leaders the experiences needed to meet these goals. Participants needs these assessments and discussions to take place at each phase of the program to ensure that participants continue to develop their goals and for participants to consider and to choose the experiences available for participants in both Nashville and in their home country for continued development of their possible selves.

Recommendation 2

If all program stakeholders had a shared understanding of their roles and responsibilities, participants are likely to encounter more opportunities to develop provisional selves.

Relationships outside of the HHH program team impacted the participants' development of their provisional selves under certain conditions. Through defining roles, communicating responsibilities, and creating accountability measures, stakeholders can support participants

through new experiences in their development. As the findings show, if program stakeholders have a shared understanding of their roles and responsibilities, then this leads to participant development. For stakeholders to build on their shared understanding of their roles and responsibilities, program leaders need to define and communicate roles and responsibilities to develop participants' provisional selves. As participants develop their provisional selves, they need relationships to support them through the challenge of new roles and experiences (Ibarra et. al 2010; McCauley & Guthrie 2008).

From the interviews and findings, the participants indicated the program director support them through challenges before and during the program. However, on their return home participants needed additional support. Therefore, my recommendation is for a shared understanding between program leaders and participants on the role of the program leader in supporting through challenges as they return to their work context.

The relationships outside of the program team provided the participants support through challenging experiences to the extent these relationships understood their roles and understood how these experiences supported the participants in reaching goals. As stated earlier, the program director and team invested time in finding relationships for the participants, but in the interview these relationships had not yet been included in the program design. Therefore, my recommendation is for program leaders to define these roles within program experiences and share with stakeholders to support participants through provisional experiences.

Recommendation 3

If participants, program leaders and their organizations co-construct goals, then the participants enact new identities when they return to their home countries.

If the participant's work organization in their home context impacts the participant's ability to enact new identities, then the participant's work organization needs to be involved in the participant's program experience. According to the interviews and findings, the participants created individual goals that did not include their work organization. For some participants, they were not returning to work organizations. Participants need both long-term strategies and short-term tactics to enhance the participant's development that is consistent with their visions and goals (Ting & Scisco, 2006). Therefore, my recommendations are for program leaders to encourage participants to co-construct goals with their work organizations prior to arrival. The program leaders, participants, and work organizations also need a shared understanding of the participant's long-term goals with their work organization and how the short-term tactics in the program connect to these long-term goals. Participants communicate with their work organization how their short-term tactics are meeting long-term goals. If the participants are not returning home to an organization, then participants co-construct goals with the program leaders prior to arrival. The participants and program leaders select experiences that support the participant's long-term goals.

Recommendation 4

If participants receive academic resources for coaching and networking after participants return home, then this supports them in enacting their identity development.

If participants faced challenges in their transition back to their home country, then participants need additional supports on their transition home. As the findings show, the participants faced challenges and wanted additional supports on their return home as they continue to develop their professional selves. Ting & Scisco (2006) found that program leaders and participants have a shared understanding of supports needed including motivation,

resources/strategies, wins/setbacks, and a sustainable learning agenda. For motivation, the participants can lose momentum during changes, and they need support in reevaluating motivations. For resources/strategies, participants need relationships to locate external resources to meet their goal, and they also need relationships to tap into internal resources such as their capabilities to accomplish a goal. For wins and setbacks, participants need relationships to support setbacks to maintain motivation and to celebrate short and long-term goals. For sustainable learning agenda, how participants can move from knowledge and skills to action. Considering the program has a small staff, my recommendations start with changing the exit meeting in the participant's home country. Referring to McCauley & Guthrie's work, peer partners can support motivation and sustainable learning during transitions. The program leaders can facilitate these sessions between alumni cohorts, and there is also an opportunity for the new cohort and alumni cohorts to network and work together. The participants-built relationships with US stakeholders and are their continued opportunities for both to sustain a partnership and to support the participants' work on return to their home country.

Recommendation 5

If participants build repertoire of learning resources from the program and network connections, then they can gradually move towards monitoring and tracking their own short-term, middle, and long-term development.

With initial coaching support, participants can start to monitor their own development as they move into their professional selves. The program director shared in her interview that tracking results is a challenge. In their evaluation, Rotem et. al (2010) proposed in their framework for evaluating the impact of the UN System Fellowships that performance stories be used to describe the participant's journey within a fellowship program. These performance stories include short-

term and long-term milestones or goals to monitor and ascertain the participant growth and change. Earlier steps in the performance story aim to understand how the program supported participants in their development and growth. The performance story then has benchmarks on the participant's return and evidence of their growth and changes at work. As participants move into their professional selves, they take on more ownership of their performance stories. Therefore, my recommendations are for program leaders to create a performance story with each participant for a shared understanding of how the participant grows and development throughout the phases of the HHH program. Overtime participants learn from experiences and from feedback from relationships to begin monitoring their results and development.

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APPENDIX A: Interview Questions for Program Director

The researchers will interview Vanderbilt Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Fellows from 2015-2019. Approximately, three fellows from each of the four identified cohort years, for a total of twelve, will be invited to participate in a 30 to 45-minute interview.

Phase 1: The critical three questions from Ibarra et al.'s identity-based framework will form the foundation of this discussion to explore potential changes in their interpersonal and intrapersonal capacities:

- 1) What changes?
- 2) How does it change?
- 3) What conditions make a difference?

Phase 2: The researchers will incorporate as needed the following questions adapted from McCauley and Guthrie's (2008) table, *Roles Played by Others in Relationships for Learning*. These interviews will be hosted online, and transcripts recorded with participant's permission.

Element	Role	Interview Questions
Assessment	Feedback Provider	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who are the stakeholders who provided your ongoing feedback? 2. How do these stakeholders give your ongoing feedback?
Assessment	Sounding board	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who are the stakeholders that helped you evaluate your understanding of learning before it is implemented? 2. Were there opportunities for you to debrief after implementation of new learning?
Assessment	Point of Comparison	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who are the stakeholders who evaluated you on their level of skills or their performance? 2. How did the stakeholders evaluate your level of skills or your performances?
Assessment	Feedback Interpreter	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who are the stakeholders who assisted you in making sense of feedback from others? 2. How did these stakeholders assist you in making sense of the feedback from others?
Challenge	Dialogue Partner	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who are the stakeholders who challenge you to think of perspectives of point of view different than your own? 2. How did the stakeholders challenge you to think of perspectives other than your own?
Challenge	Assignment Breaker	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where did you access challenging assignments in the program? 2. Who supported you with challenging assignments in the program?

		3. How did you make sense of these challenging assignments?
Challenge	Accountant	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What were developmental goals that you committed to in the program? 2. Who are the stakeholders who helped you commit to your development goals? 3. How did the stakeholders support your commitment to the development goals?
Challenge	Role Model	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who are the stakeholders of high competence who supported your development? 2. How did these stakeholders support your development?
Support	Counselor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who were the stakeholders who supported you in examining what is making learning and development difficult? 2. How do these stakeholders support you in examining making learning and development difficult?
Support	Cheerleader	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who are the stakeholders who boosted your belief that success is possible? 2. How did the stakeholders boost your beliefs that your success is possible?
Support	Reinforcer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who are the stakeholders who acknowledged and gave you formal awards for progress towards your goals? 2. What are the formal awards that fellows received for progress towards goals?
Support	Cohort	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who are stakeholders who gave you a sense that you were not alone in their struggle and that if others can achieve their goals that you can too? 2. How do the stakeholders give you a sense that you are not alone in your struggle and that if other others can achieve their goals that you can too?

APPENDIX B: Invitation Letter to HHH Program Participants Cohorts 2015-19

Dear [Name],

We hope this message finds you well. In these challenging times it is our hope that you are safe. We realize this is a difficult time and we are aware that these factors may impact your ability to respond to our request. As doctoral students in the Leadership, Learning and Organizations program at Vanderbilt University, we invite you to participate in a research study on the Impact of International Leadership Development Programs.

Why have I been contacted?

Based on your participation in the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program during the years of 2014-2019 you have been identified as a candidate for this study.

What would we like you to do?

There are two parts to this study. In the first part, a survey will be emailed to all program participants from 2014-2019. During the second part of the study, we will randomly select twelve interested participants and conduct semi-structured interviews online via Zoom which will take approximately 30-60-minutes.

Do I have to participate?

Participation is voluntary. Your responses will be kept confidential and you have the option not to respond to any questions you choose not to answer. Participation or nonparticipation will not impact your relationship with the Hubert H. Humphrey program.

Confidentiality

During this study the information that is collected will be maintained in a secure virtual space that is password protected. All information gathered is confidential and access is restricted to individuals directly related to this research project. With your permission, interviews over zoom will be recorded as a transcript. The transcripts will not contain your name or any information that would allow you to be identified. It is possible that comments or quotes may be included in a report on the study, but these will be completely anonymous. We want to emphasize that your participation and support strengthens the program practices and subsequently, the experience for future fellows.

Informed Consent

Responding to this correspondence will be interpreted as your informed consent. Please note that you must be 18 years or older to participate.

Questions/Contact Information

If you have any questions about the research, please contact the Principal Investigators: Jenni Kincaid at jenni.i.kincaid@vanderbilt.edu and Pallavi Reddy at Pallavi.k.reddy@vanderbilt.edu or our faculty advisor, Dr. Tracey Armstrong at tracey.m.armstrong@vanderbilt.edu. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact the Vanderbilt Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (615) 322-2918.

APPENDIX C: Interview Questions for Vanderbilt Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Fellows from 2015-2019

The researchers will interview Vanderbilt Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Fellows from 2015-2019. Approximately, three fellows from each of the four identified cohort years, for a total of twelve, will be invited to participate in a 30 to 45-minute interview.

Phase 1: The critical three questions from Ibarra et al.'s identity-based framework will form the foundation of this discussion to explore potential changes in their interpersonal and intrapersonal capacities:

- 1) What changes?
- 2) How does it change?
- 3) What conditions make a difference?