

Running head: IDENTITY LEADERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE

Leading 'us' to be active: A two-wave test of relationships between identity leadership, group
identification, and attendance

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25 The physiological and psychological benefits of physical activity are well
26 documented and include reduced risk of contracting several non-communicable diseases
27 (e.g., heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, colon and breast cancers) and improved cognitive
28 functioning, self-esteem, and mood (Biddle, Mutrie, & Gorely, 2015). Despite these benefits,
29 and numerous public health campaigns to increase population awareness of physical activity
30 benefits and guidelines (e.g., ‘Change4Life’ and ‘Live Well’), physical *inactivity* levels
31 remain high. Recent global statistics indicate that over a quarter of adults (27.5%) worldwide
32 are insufficiently active (Guthold, Stevens, Riley, & Bull, 2018), while substantially higher
33 rates of insufficient activity (>90%) have been reported from objective accelerometer data
34 (Tucker, Welk, & Beyler, 2011).

35 Recent attempts to understand and promote physical activity have been characterized
36 by an increasingly broad approach, with various individual, environmental, policy, and social
37 factors considered (e.g., see Bauman et al., 2012; Garcia, Healy, & Rice, 2016). Within this
38 research, promising preliminary evidence has emerged for the benefits of individuals
39 developing strong social identities in physical activity settings (Stevens et al., 2017). More
40 specifically, a positive relationship has been observed between the strength of individuals’
41 sense of social identity (or *group identification*) as a member of a particular physical activity
42 group and their participation in group-relevant activities (e.g., their participation in group
43 training sessions and events; Stevens, Rees, & Polman, 2018; Strachan, Shields, Glassford, &
44 Beatty, 2012). Building on this, recent research further suggests that, by engaging in *identity*
45 *leadership* (Haslam, Reicher, & Platow, 2011), physical activity leaders can foster group
46 members’ group identification and thereby facilitate greater rates of attendance in group
47 sessions (Stevens, Rees, Coffee, et al., 2018). The present study sought to build on this
48 research—which, to date, has relied on cross-sectional designs—by examining relationships
49 between identity leadership, group identification, and attendance over time. In particular, the

50 study focused on these relationships in the context of a structured form of physical activity:
51 amateur sport. The most recent data suggest that over 15 million adults aged 16 and over in
52 the United Kingdom (34.2% of all adults) engage in physical activity through sport at least
53 twice a month (28 days; Sport England, 2018), and that over 3 million of those are aged 16-
54 24 (equivalent to 49.2% of this population). Given these statistics, gaining a greater
55 understanding of the factors that drive physical activity participation through sport
56 (particularly in young adults) represents an important avenue for research.

57 **Theoretical Framework**

58 According to the *social identity approach* (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, Hogg,
59 Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987), individuals can categorize themselves, and behave, in
60 terms of both their personal identity (i.e., as ‘I’ and ‘me’) and their various social identities
61 (i.e., as ‘we’ and ‘us’). The consequences of individuals categorizing themselves in terms of
62 social identities (e.g., as a member of a particular sports team)—and, in particular, of
63 developing a strong sense of *group identification*—have been the focus of considerable
64 research. For example, this research has confirmed the importance of social identity and
65 social identification for a range of behaviors including individuals’ commitment to group
66 projects (Haslam et al., 2006), productivity (Worchel, Rothgerber, Day, Hart, & Butemeyer,
67 1998), and engagement in various health-related behaviors (including physical activity;
68 Falomir-Pichastor, Toscani, & Despointes, 2009; Stevens, Rees, & Polman, 2018; Strachan et
69 al., 2012; Terry & Hogg, 1996). Much of this work speaks to a key assertion of the social
70 identity approach that categorizing oneself in terms of a particular social identity is associated
71 with a desire to align personal behaviors with behaviors that are representative of in-group
72 members (i.e., group norms; Turner et al., 1987).

73 For example, and of particular relevance in the present context, research has indicated
74 that in physical activity groups—where regular participation is normative—individuals’

75 desire to engage in identity-congruent behaviors may promote greater levels of participation
76 in group-relevant activities. Specifically, Strachan et al. (2012) found that the strength of
77 runners' identification as members of a running group was positively associated with the
78 percentage of total runs that they conducted with the group, and negatively associated with
79 their confidence to continue running should their group disband. In a separate cross-sectional
80 study, Stevens, Rees and Polman (2018) also found a positive relationship between
81 individuals' running group identification and their objectively assessed participation.

82 Building on these promising findings, recent research has examined the role that
83 physical activity leaders can play in fostering members' group identification, and thus greater
84 rates of attendance in group sessions (Stevens, Rees, Coffee, et al., 2018). Extending growing
85 evidence from organizational (Steffens, Yang, Jetten, Haslam, & Lipponen, 2017), political
86 (Steffens & Haslam, 2013) and sports performance (Slater & Barker, 2018) domains, this
87 research points to the benefits of leaders engaging in *identity leadership* (Haslam et al.,
88 2011). That is, leaders acting to *represent, advance, create, and embed* an identity that is
89 shared by members of the particular group they lead (Haslam et al., 2011; Steffens et al.,
90 2014). Specifically, in addition to providing further evidence of a positive relationship
91 between individuals' sport or exercise group identification and their participation in group-
92 relevant activity, researchers have found (1) a positive association between group members'
93 perceptions of their leaders' engagement in identity leadership and their own group
94 identification, and (2) that the positive relationship between members' perceptions of their
95 leaders' engagement in identity leadership and members' attendance is mediated by their
96 group identification (Stevens, Rees, Coffee, et al., 2018). Moreover, these effects have been
97 observed for multiple facets of identity leadership, providing preliminary evidence that
98 physical activity leaders should strive (1) to represent and embody the particular qualities and
99 attributes that define the group and set it apart from other groups (i.e., be seen as a

100 *prototypical* group member), (2) to champion the group's identity and interests (i.e., to be
101 seen to engage in identity *advancement*), (3) to play an active role in creating and shaping the
102 group's identity and a collective sense of 'we' and 'us' (i.e., to act as *identity entrepreneurs*),
103 and (4) to devise activities that make the group matter, and allow its shared identity to be
104 lived out (i.e., to act as *identity impresarios*).

105 **The Present Research**

106 Given the promising findings summarized above, further tests of relationships
107 between identity leadership, group identification, and participation are warranted. In
108 particular, given the exclusively cross-sectional nature of previous research concerning these
109 relationships (Stevens, Rees, Coffee, et al., 2018; Stevens, Rees, & Polman, 2018; Strachan et
110 al., 2012), there is a clear need for research that sheds light on the way in which these
111 relationships unfold over time. The present study represented the first attempt to address this
112 issue. Specifically, by using a two-wave design (and assessing identity leadership, group
113 identification, and attendance at both time points), it extended previous cross-sectional
114 research in several important ways. For while cross-sectional studies are useful for
115 identifying associations and often provide a valuable foundation for further research (Mann,
116 2003), cross-sectional designs can produce biased estimates of effects in correlation (Lindell
117 & Whitney, 2001) and mediation (Maxwell, Cole, & Mitchell, 2011) analyses. Moreover,
118 cross-sectional designs fail to take into account the (often strong) relationship between past
119 and future behavior (e.g., past and future physical activity participation; Gollob & Reichardt,
120 1987). Two-wave designs provide a more rigorous analysis of causal relationships between
121 variables than cross-sectional designs (Ployhart & Ward, 2011), and a means of assessing the
122 directionality of relationships (Selig & Little, 2012). Indeed, given indications that
123 relationships between group identification and participation, in particular, may be reciprocal

124 (Stevens, Rees, & Polman, 2018), a two-wave study represents an important advancement on
125 current research in this area.

126 Building on the foregoing discussion, the research tested three hypotheses. First, in
127 line with the social identity approach to leadership (Haslam et al., 2011), and extending
128 previous research (Stevens, Rees, Coffee, et al., 2018), we hypothesized that group members'
129 perceptions of their leader's engagement in identity leadership at Time 1 would predict
130 members' subsequent greater group identification at Time 2, controlling for their initial group
131 identification at Time 1 (H1). To advance current understanding of the relative importance of
132 the four facets of identity leadership, we examined each separately. Second, in line with a key
133 assertion of the social identity approach that a strong sense of group identification is
134 positively associated with a desire to align personal behaviors with those of representative
135 group members (i.e., by participating in group sessions regularly; Turner et al., 1987), and
136 previous research indicative of this effect (Stevens, Rees, & Polman, 2018; Strachan et al.,
137 2012), we hypothesized that group members' group identification at Time 2 would be
138 associated with their greater group-relevant attendance at Time 2, controlling for their
139 attendance at Time 1 (H2)¹. Finally, extending previous research (Stevens, Rees, Coffee, et
140 al., 2018), we hypothesized an indirect effect of perceptions of leader engagement in each of
141 the four identity leadership facets at Time 1 on members' attendance at Time 2 through group
142 identification at Time 2, while controlling for initial levels of group identification and
143 attendance at Time 1 (H3). Figure 1 provides a schematic overview of the relationships that
144 we examined.

145 **Methods**

¹ We considered it most appropriate to test and report a model in which group identification and attendance were measured at the same time point because, from a theoretical perspective, we would expect individuals' attendance at any given time to be driven by their group identification at that same time (rather, or at least to a greater extent, than by their group identification at an earlier time).

146 **Participants and Procedure**

147 The sample consisted of 396 university students (252 males, 144 females; aged 16 to
148 41, $M_{\text{age}} = 18.83$, $SD = 2.40$; 83.3% White British) recruited from first year sports courses at
149 four universities in the United Kingdom. Participants were eligible for the study if they (1)
150 had joined at least one amateur sports team (either within or outside university) in the period
151 between starting university and the start of the study (Time 1 data collection), and (2) were
152 still a member of at least one team that they had joined when Time 1 data collection took
153 place. Time 1 data collection took place in the third week of each university's first semester
154 (giving participants time to engage in team activities beforehand) and Time 2 data collection
155 eight weeks later. This eight-week period represented the longest consistent time lag possible
156 before the end of students' first semester (at which time, in most cases, team activities were
157 suspended for approximately four weeks). In total, 209 participants completed the second set
158 of measures, yielding a response rate of 52.7%. Of the 209 participants who completed the
159 Time 2 measures, 23 indicated they were no longer a member of the sports team they had
160 answered the Time 1 measures in relation to, leaving a final sample of 186 participants (107
161 males, 79 females; aged 16 to 41, $M_{\text{age}} = 18.81$, $SD = 2.24$; 78.0% White British; from 27
162 different sports).

163 All Time 1 measures were distributed during university lectures in paper form. At
164 Time 1, participants were asked to identify a particular sports team they had joined and were
165 still part of, followed by an instruction to answer the remaining questions in relation to that
166 team. Time 2 measures were also distributed during university lectures in paper form (i.e.,
167 subsequent lectures for the same groups of students). At Time 2, a member of the research
168 team or a fully briefed course leader was present (1) to ask participants to complete the
169 measures in relation to the same team, and (2) to remind participants of their chosen team if
170 necessary (using a list of participants' precise Time 1 responses that was compiled after Time

171 1 data collection). Participants were also instructed to identify their sports team at Time 2,
172 and responses were subsequently checked to ensure the responses that participants gave on
173 the two sets of measures matched. Although all participants' responses gave confidence that
174 they had answered the measures in relation to the same team, responses such as: "Men's
175 Football 1sts" were common. It was therefore unclear whether different participants were
176 referring to the same team, precluding a detailed breakdown of how participants were nested
177 within teams. Participants were asked to provide their email address at Time 1 and those
178 participants not present during Time 2 data collection were emailed (having given consent to
179 be contacted for this purpose at Time 1) a request to complete the second set of measures
180 electronically (i.e., to insert or highlight their responses in a Word processed version of the
181 measures and return this via email)². Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the
182 first author's institutional human research ethics board on 7th September 2016 (project
183 reference ID 12699). Anonymity was assured and the decision of participants to complete the
184 measures represented their provision of informed consent.

185 **Measures**

186 *Identity leadership.* The 15-item Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI; Steffens et al.,
187 2014) was used to measure participants' perceptions of their sports team leaders' engagement
188 in identity leadership. Given inconsistencies regarding the presence of coaches in amateur
189 sports teams, and to ensure all participants responded in relation to an individual who held an
190 identical leadership role, participants were asked to respond with reference to their team's
191 captain³. The ILI items were adapted to reflect this by replacing 'leader' with 'captain' in all
192 question stems. The ILI includes four items measuring prototypicality (e.g., "This captain is a
193 model member of the group"), advancement (e.g., "This captain acts as a champion for the

² Only four participants completed the second set of measures electronically.

³ At Time 1, potential participants were verbally instructed to refrain from completing the measures in relation to a team for which they were the captain.

194 group”), and entrepreneurship (e.g., “This captain develops an understanding of what it
195 means to be a member of the group”), and three items measuring impresarioship (e.g., “This
196 captain arranges events that help the group function effectively”). Scales were anchored from
197 1 (not at all) to 7 (completely) and mean scores were obtained for each subscale.

198 **Group identification.** Participants’ identification as a member of their sports team
199 was measured using the Four Item Social Identification scale (FISI; Postmes, Haslam, &
200 Jans, 2013; e.g., “Being part of this sports team is an important part of how I see myself”).
201 Items were scored on a scale ranging from 1 (fully disagree) to 7 (fully agree).

202 **Attendance.** Having identified a particular sports team they had joined since starting
203 university, participants were asked: “In a typical week, how many times does the sports team
204 that you have identified meet?” and “In a typical week how many of these sessions do you
205 attend?” A measure of attendance was obtained by dividing the number of sessions attended
206 by the total number of sessions (Stevens, Rees, Coffee, et al., 2018).

207 **Analytic Strategy**

208 Cross-lagged panel analyses offer a means of (1) assessing whether effects occur in
209 both directions (i.e., X_1 to Y_2 and Y_1 to X_2), and (2) comparing the relative strength of cross-
210 lagged effects (Selig & Little, 2012). Lagged regression analyses are one form of cross-
211 lagged panel analysis and have been widely used in applied psychology (e.g., Baillien, De
212 Cuyper, & De Witte, 2011; Ganster, Fox, & Dwyer, 2001), including recently to study the
213 unfolding effects of identity leadership (Steffens et al., 2017). A minimum ratio of ten
214 participants per parameter to be estimated is recommended in structural models with latent
215 variables (Schreiber, Nora, Stage, Barlow, & King, 2006). Thus, given our final sample size
216 ($N = 186$), a latent variable testing approach would have been inappropriate for many of our
217 models (e.g., models in which either Time 1 prototypicality, advancement, or
218 entrepreneurship were proposed to predict Time 2 group identification, controlling for Time 1

219 group identification, where there were 31 parameters to be estimated). To maintain
220 consistency throughout our analyses, we therefore conducted a series of lagged linear
221 regression analyses (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003) to test H1 and H2—that is, to
222 assess the extent to which (1) participants' perceptions of their leader's engagement in
223 identity leadership was related to their own subsequent group identification and, (2)
224 participants' group identification was related to their attendance⁴.

225 To test the indirect effect proposed in H3, we examined the extent to which the
226 impact of group members' perceptions of their leader's engagement in identity leadership at
227 Time 1 on group members' attendance at Time 2 was mediated by their greater group
228 identification at Time 2. For these analyses, we used the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes,
229 2013; Preacher & Hayes, 2008; Model 4). This uses bootstrapping to calculate confidence
230 intervals (CIs) for the indirect effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable,
231 through a mediating variable, with a significant indirect effect indicated if the CI does not
232 cross zero (Zhao, Lynch, & Chen, 2010). In the present instance, we used bias-corrected
233 bootstrapping with 5000 resamples to calculate 95% CIs. We controlled for inter-individual
234 stability in our mediator and dependent variables by entering Time 1 group identification and
235 Time 1 attendance as covariates.

236 **Power Analyses**

237 Power analyses were conducted to determine appropriate sample sizes for regression
238 and mediation analyses. For regression, effect sizes (Cohen's f^2) were calculated using r -
239 values for the relationships between each identity leadership facet and group identification,

⁴ Because participants were nested within teams, a multilevel approach would have been the optimum framework for our analyses. However, in addition to the ambiguous responses regarding participants' teams that precluded this (see Participants and Procedure section), such analyses would not have been appropriate in the present instance given recommendations for a minimum of 50 groups and 30 people in each group for multilevel analyses (Maas & Hox, 2005).

240 and group identification and attendance reported by Stevens, Rees, Coffee, et al. (2018).
241 Taking the smallest r -value these researchers reported for any of these relationships in their
242 sports team sample (.23, which equates to an f^2 of .06), and using an alpha of .05, power of
243 .80, and two predictors sample size estimates (G*Power; Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang,
244 2009) indicated that $N = 164$ would be required. For mediation, Monte Carlo power analyses
245 were conducted in the MARlab application (Schoeman et al., 2017) using the parameter
246 estimates between, and standard deviations of, identity leadership (measured as a global
247 concept), group identification, and attendance reported by Stevens, Rees, Coffee, et al.
248 (2018). With an alpha of .05 and 5000 replications, sample size estimates indicated $N = 138$
249 would be required to achieve power of .80⁵.

250

Results

251 Preliminary analysis

252 Cronbach's α internal consistency values (Cronbach, 1951) for each of the identity
253 leadership subscales and the group identification measure across the two time points were as
254 follows: Time 1 prototypicality = .90; advancement = .79; entrepreneurship = .84;
255 impresarioship = .83; group identification = .86; Time 2 prototypicality = .95; advancement =
256 .90; entrepreneurship = .94; impresarioship = .88; group identification = .92. Non-responders
257 at Time 2 did not differ significantly from those who completed both sets of measures on any
258 of the study variables at Time 1 (all $ps > .05$). For participants who completed both Time 1
259 and Time 2 measures, although Little's (1988) Missing Completely at Random test was
260 significant ($\chi^2[323] = 383.795, p = .011$), only 0.002% of all possible data points were
261 missing and a maximum of 1.1% of values (i.e., two participant responses) were missing for

⁵ Current software packages do not allow control variables to be included in mediation power analyses and this should therefore be considered an approximate estimate. Nevertheless, these results give confidence that our final sample size ($N = 186$) was sufficient for both the regression and mediation analyses.

262 any particular item. Given this small number of missing values, listwise deletion was used for
263 missing data (Schafer & Graham, 2002).

264 Assumptions of regression analyses were satisfied as follows. Across all models there
265 were never more than 12 standardized residuals greater than 2 in absolute value (6.5% of
266 participants who completed Time 1 and Time 2 measures) and never more than 4
267 standardized residuals greater than 3 in absolute value (2.2% of participants who completed
268 Time 1 and Time 2 measures). Moreover, across all models, only two cases had a Cook's
269 distance greater than 1, suggesting that outlier cases did not have a substantial influence on
270 our models (Field, 2017). The assumption of independent errors was satisfied, with values for
271 the Durbin-Watson statistic (1.843–2.062) all close to 2 (and well within the acceptable >1
272 and <3 range; Field, 2017). The assumption of no multicollinearity was also met with no
273 intercorrelations between independent variables greater than .404 (i.e., substantially less than
274 the typical .80 cut-off; Berry & Feldman, 1985), variance inflation factor values ≤ 1.119
275 (substantially below the recommended upper threshold of 10; Hair, Anderson, Tatham, &
276 Black, 1995), and tolerance values $\geq .834$ (substantially above the minimum threshold of .2;
277 Menard, 1995). The assumptions of homoscedasticity, normally distributed errors, and
278 linearity were satisfied with the residuals normally distributed, and randomly and evenly
279 distributed, for each of our models.

280 Means, standard deviations, and correlations between all variables across the two time
281 points are presented in Table 1. The inter-individual stability of variables was moderate to
282 high, with correlations between variables at Time 1 and Time 2 ranging from .344 (for
283 attendance) to .572 (for advancement). Correlations between identity leadership at Time 1
284 and group identification at Time 2 were significant for prototypicality ($r = .360, p < .001$),
285 advancement ($r = .303, p < .001$), and entrepreneurship ($r = .314, p < .001$), but marginally
286 non-significant for impresarioship ($r = .143, p = .069$). The correlation between group

287 identification at Time 2 and attendance at Time 2 was significant ($r = .482, p < .001$).

288 **Main Analyses**

289 ***Tests of H1: Relationship between identity leadership and group identification***

290 As shown in Table 2, across all models, participants' group identification at Time 2
291 was associated with their prior group identification at Time 1 (prototypicality $\beta = .467$,
292 advancement $\beta = .466$, entrepreneurship $\beta = .469$, impresarioship $\beta = .470$, all $ps < .001$),
293 with small differences due to slight variation in the sample (as a result of using listwise
294 deletion for missing data). Results from lagged linear regression models for each identity
295 leadership facet, controlling for Time 1 group identification, are presented in Table 2. As
296 Table 2 shows, supporting H1, perceptions of leaders' engagement in identity prototypicality,
297 advancement, and entrepreneurship at Time 1 significantly predicted members' greater group
298 identification at Time 2 ($ps = .004, .023$, and $.015$), and accounted for 3.5%, 2.2% and 2.6%
299 of additional variance above and beyond Time 1 group identification. Time 1 identity
300 impresarioship did not significantly predict Time 2 group identification over and above Time
301 1 group identification ($p = .566$), accounting for only 0.1% of additional variance.

302 ***Test of H2: Relationship between group identification and attendance***

303 As shown in Table 2, results indicated that participants' attendance at Time 2 was
304 associated with their prior attendance at Time 1 ($\beta = .344, p < .001$). Supporting H2,
305 participants' group identification at Time 2 was significantly associated with members'
306 attendance at Time 2, and accounted for an additional 18.7% of total variance above and
307 beyond Time 1 attendance ($\beta = .438, R^2 = .305, \Delta R^2 = .187, p < .001$).

308 ***Tests of H3: Indirect effect of identity leadership on attendance through group*** 309 ***identification***

310 Supporting H3, the CI around the indirect effect of identity leadership at Time 1 on
311 attendance at Time 2 through group identification at Time 2 did not include zero in the

312 prototypicality ($b = .021$, CI [.007, .046], SE = .009, $R^2 = .313$, $F = 20.127$), advancement ($b =$
313 $.018$, CI [.001, .046], SE = .011, $R^2 = .309$, $F = 19.825$), or entrepreneurship ($b = .018$, CI
314 [.002, .044], SE = .010, $R^2 = .311$, $F = 19.983$) models. A significant indirect effect was not
315 observed for the impresarioship model ($b = .004$, CI [-.010, .022], SE = .008, $R^2 = .313$, $F =$
316 20.284). In all cases, the direct effect of Time 1 identity leadership on Time 2 attendance was
317 non-significant (prototypicality: $b = -.011$, CI [-.040, .019], SE = .015, $p = .483$; advancement:
318 $b = -.009$, CI [-.041, .022], SE = .016, $p = .566$; entrepreneurship: $b = .002$, CI [-.028, .032],
319 SE = .015, $p = .896$; impresarioship: $b = -.006$, CI [-.030, .018], SE = .012, $p = .625$)⁶.

320 Sensitivity Analyses

321 To explore the possibility of reverse causality, we examined pathways from Time 1
322 group identification to Time 2 perceptions of identity leadership, and from Time 2 attendance
323 to Time 2 group identification. As shown in Table 3, results indicated inter-individual
324 stability for each of the identity leadership facets such that participants' perceptions of their
325 leader's engagement in identity leadership at Time 2 was associated with their prior
326 perceptions of their leader's engagement in identity leadership at Time 1 (prototypicality $\beta =$
327 $.499$, advancement $\beta = .572$, entrepreneurship $\beta = .479$, impresarioship $\beta = .427$, all $ps <$
328 $.001$). With the exception of the entrepreneurship facet, when we controlled for perceptions
329 of leaders' engagement in identity leadership at Time 1, members' group identification at
330 Time 1 did not significantly predict perceptions of leaders' engagement in identity leadership
331 at Time 2 (see Table 3). Thus, in general, despite some evidence of a reciprocal relationship
332 between group identification and perceptions of leaders' identity entrepreneurship, findings
333 suggest that relationships between perceptions of leaders' identity leadership and members'
334 group identification are predominantly in the hypothesized direction. Indeed, with regard to

⁶ Full details of relationships between all variables included in these analyses, but not reported in this section, are presented in the supplementary material (many of these relationships were tested within the preceding lagged regression analyses).

360 Supporting H2, analyses further indicated that members' group identification at Time 2 was
361 associated with their attendance at Time 2, while controlling for their initial attendance at
362 Time 1. Moreover, supporting H3, for the prototypicality, advancement, and entrepreneurship
363 facets, analyses indicated significant indirect effects for the relationship between perceptions
364 of leader engagement in identity leadership at Time 1 and members' subsequent attendance at
365 Time 2, through members' group identification at Time 2, while controlling for initial group
366 identification and attendance at Time 1. Finally, sensitivity analyses indicated (1) that
367 relationships between identity leadership and group identification predominantly occurred
368 and (with the exception of the impresarioship facet) were consistently stronger, in the
369 hypothesized direction, and (2) that the relationship between group identification and
370 attendance was reciprocal but stronger in the hypothesized direction.

371 Our findings have important theoretical and practical implications, and lay a
372 foundation for further research regarding identity leadership and group identification within
373 and outside physical activity settings. First, in line with the identity leadership approach
374 (Haslam et al., 2011), and building on previous research (Stevens, Rees, Coffee, et al., 2018),
375 findings further demonstrate the role that physical activity leaders can play in fostering
376 members' group identification. In particular, findings point to the benefits of sports team
377 leaders (in this case, captains) behaving in a way that is perceived to *create, represent, and*
378 *advance* a shared group identity, with leaders' perceived prototypicality emerging as the
379 strongest predictor of members' subsequent group identification in the present study (as
380 indicated by the largest standardized beta values in the second step of regression models and
381 ΔR^2 values from the first to the second step of regression models). Two things should be
382 noted in relation to these findings. First, correlations between the prototypicality,
383 advancement, and entrepreneurship facets of identity leadership, in particular, were high,
384 suggesting that the actions and behaviors of leaders that group members associate with these

385 separate facets of identity leadership may overlap. Second, mean scores for many of our
386 measures were toward the upper end of their scales. Ceiling effects (and associated range
387 restriction) may therefore have attenuated some of our parameter estimates (i.e., so that true
388 effects are actually larger than those observed; e.g., see Wang, Zhang, McArdle, & Salthouse,
389 2008). Nevertheless, results clearly indicate that the extent to which leaders are perceived to
390 initiate activities that embed the group's identity in reality is not associated with members'
391 greater subsequent group identification. This nuanced finding points to the need for further
392 research to ascertain the relative importance of leaders engaging in the individual identity
393 leadership facets across different contexts, with such research potentially informing the
394 development of more effective context-specific leadership training programmes. For
395 example, while the efficacy of the 5R programme—a leadership training programme based
396 on the key principles of the identity leadership approach—to improve organizational and
397 sporting leaders' capacity to engage in identity leadership has been demonstrated (Haslam et
398 al., 2017; Slater & Barker, 2018), the programme's effectiveness (in these and other settings)
399 may be improved by a greater understanding of the relative importance of the four identity
400 leadership facets in the particular context in which the programme is being delivered.
401 Specifically, the first 'Readying' phase of the 5R programme—in which leaders are informed
402 about the importance of social identity processes for leadership—could be adjusted to reflect
403 context-specific differences in the relative importance of the four facets, potentially resulting
404 in more favourable outcomes for group members (i.e., that stem from their greater group
405 identification).

406 Second, findings align with a large body of evidence indicating various benefits
407 associated with individuals developing strong social identities (e.g., see Haslam et al., 2006;
408 Worchel et al., 1998). Most notably, our findings extend indications of a positive relationship
409 between members' greater group identification and their engagement in health-related

410 behaviors (Falomir-Pichastor et al., 2009), including group-relevant physical activity
411 (Stevens, Rees, & Polman, 2018; Strachan et al., 2012). Indeed, by controlling for previous
412 group-relevant attendance, the present study provides the most robust evidence to date of a
413 positive relationship between group identification and group-relevant attendance. From a
414 theoretical perspective, the present findings therefore support suggestions that physical
415 activity behaviors are driven not only by a person's sense of themselves as an (isolated)
416 individual, but also by their sense of themselves as a *group member* (Stevens et al., 2017)—
417 not least as a result of their desire to align their personal behaviors with those of
418 representative members of the groups that are important to them (Turner et al., 1987). This
419 also has important practical implications. Specifically, findings support suggestions that the
420 power of groups may be harnessed to *promote* physical activity participation (e.g., Harden et
421 al., 2015; Stevens et al., 2017), and point to the potential benefits of physical activity
422 interventions that attend to individuals' identities (see also Beauchamp et al., 2018; Hunt et
423 al., 2014). Indeed, evidence of reciprocity in the relationship between group identification
424 and attendance further indicates the potential of such interventions, with greater attendance
425 seemingly acting to reinforce and strengthen members' group identification as part of a
426 virtuous upward spiral. Incorporating strategies to foster identity development within group-
427 based physical activity interventions would therefore appear one way to improve their
428 effectiveness. For example, structuring sessions so that participants exercise with others with
429 whom they share membership in a particular social category (e.g., as women or people of a
430 similar age) and encouraging participants to interact outside structured sessions (e.g., by
431 providing refreshments and a designated space for this) are both strategies that have been
432 used successfully (Beauchamp et al., 2018).

433 Along the same lines, results from our mediation analyses further emphasize the
434 benefits of group identification in physical activity settings, and the potential value of efforts

435 to increase members' group identification by targeting physical activity leaders as the point
436 of intervention. Growing evidence points to the potential impact of physical activity leaders
437 on group members' attendance. For example, Ntoumanis et al. (2017) found that fitness
438 instructors' use of a motivationally adaptive communication style was positively associated
439 with increases in group members' intentions to remain in fitness classes. Findings from our
440 mediation analyses build directly on evidence that physical activity leaders can promote
441 group members' greater attendance by engaging in identity leadership (Stevens, Rees,
442 Coffee, et al., 2018), and point to improved group identification as a key mechanism through
443 which this positive relationship operates (with significant indirect effects observed in three of
444 our four mediation models and no significant direct effects observed). Moreover, our
445 mediation analyses offer more nuanced guidance for physical activity leader training
446 programmes. In particular, supporting indications from our lagged regression analyses,
447 mediation analyses suggest that leaders' identity impresarioship has limited bearing on
448 members' group identification and subsequent attendance. For physical activity leader
449 training programmes based on social identity principles (e.g., following the 5R model;
450 Haslam et al., 2017), the present findings therefore suggest that particular attention should be
451 devoted to developing leaders' awareness of the importance of, and ability to engage in,
452 identity prototypicality, advancement, and entrepreneurship. Indeed, here there are several
453 strategies that physical activity leaders could deploy to demonstrate their identity leadership
454 and promote members' identification without extensive training. These include wearing, and
455 encouraging members to wear, group or team branded clothing (Slater, Coffee, Barker, &
456 Evans, 2014), developing group slogans with members (Høigaard, Boen, De Cuyper, &
457 Peters, 2013), and using collective (as opposed to personal) language (i.e., referencing 'we'
458 and 'us', rather than 'I' and 'me'; Steffens & Haslam, 2013).

459 Limitations and Future Research

460 Despite representing a clear advancement on previous physical activity research
461 related to both identity leadership and group identification, some potential limitations of this
462 study and avenues for further research should be noted. First, although the present study
463 provided the most rigorous test of relationships between identity leadership, group
464 identification, and attendance to date, further time-series analyses (including studies
465 conducted over longer periods), and research employing experimental and intervention
466 designs, are needed to fully understand, and establish, the causal effects of identity leadership
467 and group identification in physical activity settings. Indeed, although (certainly from an age
468 perspective) our sample was demographically representative of many typical sport
469 participants, its composition—(predominantly White British) university students from sports
470 teams—limits the generalizability of our findings. Further research in other physical activity
471 settings (e.g., exercise groups), and with more demographically diverse samples (e.g.,
472 participants of wide-ranging socio-economic status, clinical populations) is therefore needed.
473 This would shed light, for example, on whether the benefits of identity leadership vary as a
474 function of (1) context, and (2) the barriers to participation that different groups face (e.g., a
475 perceived lack of time versus major health problems). Addressing a limitation of the present
476 study, such research—focusing on attendance as an outcome variable—should also seek to
477 measure this objectively (e.g., by recording the precise amount, or percentage, of team or
478 group sessions participants attend over a designated period).

479 From a methodological perspective, future research could aim to conduct multilevel
480 modelling to account for the nested structure of data gathered from different sport or exercise
481 groups. This would allow the proportion of variance that can be accounted for at individual
482 and group levels to be calculated. However, given recommendations for a minimum of 30
483 participants per group for multilevel modelling (Maas & Hox, 2005), and the number of

484 players in typical sports teams (often much fewer than 30), such research would most likely
485 need to be conducted in the context of large exercise groups. We note too that, in the present
486 study, there was a relatively high ratio of different sports represented in our sample to our
487 sample size (approximately 1:6; i.e., 27 sports, 186 participants). This, coupled with the
488 variety of geographical locations from which participants were recruited, suggests that the
489 shared variance in leadership perceptions within the present sample would have been
490 minimal (i.e., very few participants would have completed our measures in relation to the
491 same team, and therefore captain).

492 Finally, it is important that future research examines the consequences of other formal
493 and informal physical activity leaders (besides sports team captains) engaging in identity
494 leadership. Although in the present instance ensuring all participants responded in relation to
495 their captain yielded specific insights regarding leaders who hold this particular role, it is
496 plausible that leaders in different roles (e.g., coaches, exercise group leaders, informal
497 leaders) will exert varying degrees of influence on members' group identification and health-
498 related outcomes. Indeed, further research is needed to examine the relative, and collective,
499 consequences of formal leaders, and individuals who are viewed as leaders by their fellow
500 members, engaging in identity leadership. This is especially the case in light of evidence
501 from sports teams that (1) leadership is often shared between members, and (2) informal
502 leaders within teams often fulfil important leadership roles (i.e., as a task, motivational,
503 social, or external leader; Fransen, Vanbeselaere, De Cuyper, Vande Broek, & Boen, 2014).

504 **Conclusion**

505 This study extends understanding regarding relationships between identity leadership,
506 group identification, and group-relevant participation in physical activity settings.
507 Specifically, the significant effects observed in our lagged regression analyses, and
508 significant indirect effects observed in our mediation analyses point to the potential for

509 leaders to promote increased group member attendance by fostering members' group
510 identification. Findings also extend understanding regarding the relative importance of the
511 individual facets of identity leadership for promoting members' greater group identification
512 (and thus group-relevant attendance) in physical activity settings. They point to the particular
513 importance of leaders' perceived prototypicality, advancement, and entrepreneurship. To
514 encourage group members to continue to take part in physical activity, it thus appears to be
515 important for the leaders of those groups not only to create 'a sense of us' but also to be seen
516 'as one of us' and as 'doing it for us'.

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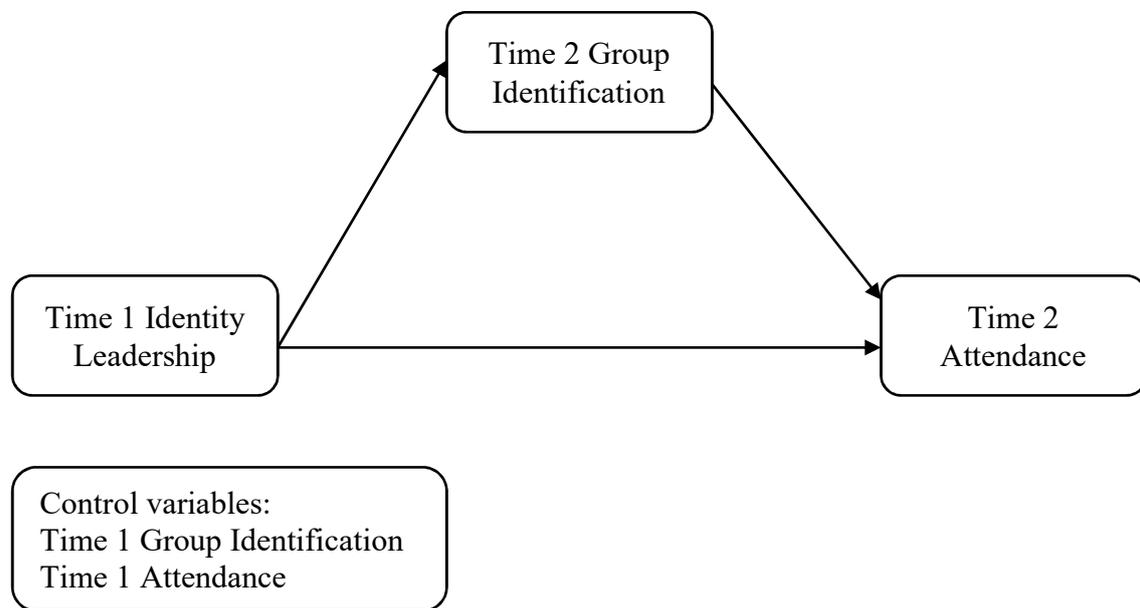
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686 Figure 1. Overview of the relationships between identity leadership, group identification, and
687 attendance tested in the present study.

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705 Table 1. Means, standard deviations and correlations between variables at Time 1 and Time 2
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Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<i>Time 1</i>														
1. Prototypicality	6.05	.91	-	.76**	.80**	.59**	.40**	.12	.50**	.52**	.47**	.38**	.36**	.13
2. Advancement	6.01	.83		-	.81**	.70**	.35**	.14	.47**	.57**	.51**	.38**	.30**	.12
3. Entrepreneurship	6.07	.87			-	.66**	.35**	.12	.42**	.50**	.48**	.37**	.31**	.15*
4. Impresarioship	5.89	1.02				-	.23**	-.05	.41**	.51**	.41**	.43**	.14	<.01
5. Identification	6.07	.96					-	.23**	.30**	.29**	.30**	.18**	.47**	.19**
6. Attendance	.91	.16						-	.03	<.01	<-.01	-.02	.16*	.34**
<i>Time 2</i>														
7. Prototypicality	5.79	1.10							-	.87**	.85**	.66**	.62**	.20**
8. Advancement	5.88	1.02								-	.84**	.72**	.58**	.16*
9. Entrepreneurship	5.86	1.09									-	.74**	.59**	.19*
10. Impresarioship	5.64	1.13										-	.39**	.07
11. Identification	5.96	1.10											-	.48**
12. Attendance	.88	.20												-

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 708 Notes: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

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721 Table 2. Results of linear regression (cross-lagged) analyses testing Hypotheses 1 and 2.
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723	Relationship	R^2	β [95% CI's]	t	p
724	<i>Prototypicality</i> → <i>group identification</i>				
725	Step 1: Intra-individual stability (group identification T1)	.218	.467 [.322, .612]	7.124	<.001
726	Step 2: Predictor (T1 prototypicality)	.253	.203 [.058, .375]	2.894	.004
727	<i>Advancement</i> → <i>group identification</i>				
728	Step 1: Intra-individual stability (group identification T1)	.217	.466 [.321, .611]	7.106	<.001
729	Step 2: Predictor (T1 advancement)	.239	.159 [.014, .304]	2.300	.023
730	<i>Entrepreneurship</i> → <i>group identification</i>				
731	Step 1: Intra-individual stability (group identification T1)	.220	.469 [.325, .613]	7.173	<.001
732	Step 2: Predictor (T1 entrepreneurship)	.246	.170 [.026, .314]	2.467	.015
733	<i>Impresarioship</i> → <i>group identification</i>				
734	Step 1: Intra-individual stability (group identification T1)	.221	.470 [.326, .614]	7.195	<.001
735	Step 2: Predictor (T1 impresarioship)	.222	.039 [-.105, .183]	.575	.566
736	<i>Group Identification</i> → <i>attendance</i>				
737	Step 1: Intra-individual stability (attendance T1)	.118	.344 [.199, .489]	4.922	<.001
738	Step 2: Predictor (T2 group identification)	.305	.438 [.293, .583]	6.960	<.001

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740 Notes: $N = 183-185$; sample sizes—and therefore model statistics for step 1 intra-individual stability identity leadership models—vary slightly
741 due to missing data; β = standardized beta.
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753 Table 3. Results of linear regression (cross-lagged) analyses testing reverse causality.
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755	Relationship	R^2	β [95% CI's]	t	p
756	<i>Group identification</i> → <i>prototypicality</i>				
757	Step 1: Intra-individual stability (prototypicality T1)	.249	.499 [.354, .644]	7.755	<.001
758	Step 2: Predictor (T1 group identification)	.260	.112 [-.033, .257]	1.593	.113
759	<i>Group identification</i> → <i>advancement</i>				
760	Step 1: Intra-individual stability (advancement T1)	.327	.572 [.428, .716]	9.402	<.001
761	Step 2: Predictor (T1 group identification)	.335	.098 [-.046, .242]	1.516	.131
762	<i>Group identification</i> → <i>entrepreneurship</i>				
763	Step 1: Intra-individual stability (entrepreneurship T1)	.230	.479 [.335, .623]	7.366	<.001
764	Step 2: Predictor (T1 group identification)	.249	.147 [.003, .291]	2.141	.034
765	<i>Impresarioship</i> → <i>group identification</i>				
766	Step 1: Intra-individual stability (impresarioship T1)	.183	.427 [.283, .571]	6.378	<.001
767	Step 2: Predictor (T1 group identification)	.190	.090 [-.054, .234]	1.305	.194
768	<i>Attendance</i> → <i>group identification</i>				
769	Step 1: Intra-individual stability (group identification T1)	.221	.470 [.326, .614]	7.179	<.001
770	Step 2: Predictor (T2 attendance)	.379	.406 [.262, .550]	6.800	<.001

771
772 Notes: $N = 183-184$; sample sizes vary slightly due to missing data; β = standardized beta.
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