2018

The Relationship Between Peer Accountability Within Social Greek Organizations and Violations of the Student Conduct Code

Danielle L. Burden

Eastern Illinois University

This research is a product of the graduate program in College Student Affairs at Eastern Illinois University.
Find out more about the program.

The Graduate School

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Thesis Maintenance and Reproduction Certificate

FOR: Graduate Candidates Completing Theses in Partial Fulfillment of the Degree
          Graduate Faculty Advisors Directing the Theses

RE: Preservation, Reproduction, and Distribution of Thesis Research

Preserving, reproducing, and distributing thesis research is an important part of Booth Library's responsibility to provide access to scholarship. In order to further this goal, Booth Library makes all graduate theses completed as part of a degree program at Eastern Illinois University available for personal study, research, and other not-for-profit educational purposes. Under 17 U.S.C. § 108, the library may reproduce and distribute a copy without infringing on copyright; however, professional courtesy dictates that permission be requested from the author before doing so.

Your signatures affirm the following:

• The graduate candidate is the author of this thesis.

• The graduate candidate retains the copyright and intellectual property rights associated with the original research, creative activity, and intellectual or artistic content of the thesis.

• The graduate candidate certifies her/his compliance with federal copyright law (Title 17 of the U. S. Code) and her/his right to authorize reproduction and distribution of all copyrighted materials included in this thesis.

• The graduate candidate in consultation with the faculty advisor grants Booth Library the nonexclusive, perpetual right to make copies of the thesis freely and publicly available without restriction, by means of any current or successive technology, including but not limited to photocopying, microfilm, digitization, or internet.

• The graduate candidate acknowledges that by depositing her/his thesis with Booth Library, her/his work is available for viewing by the public and may be borrowed through the library's circulation and interlibrary loan departments, or accessed electronically. The graduate candidate acknowledges this policy by indicating in the following manner:

X̲   Yes, I wish to make accessible this thesis for viewing by the public

_____No, I wish to quarantine the thesis temporarily and have included the *Thesis Withholding Request Form*

• The graduate candidate waives the confidentiality provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U. S. C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) with respect to the contents of the thesis and with respect to information concerning authorship of the thesis, including name and status as a student at Eastern Illinois University. I have conferred with my graduate faculty advisor. My signature below indicates that I have read and agree with the above statements, and hereby give my permission to allow   and distribute my thesis. My adviser's signature indicates concurrence to

Graduate Candidate Signature

Danielle L. Burden

Printed Name

COLLEGE STUDENT AFFAIRS

Graduate Degree Program

Jon K. Coleman

Printed Name

5/14/18

Date

Please submit in duplicate.

The Relationship between Peer Accountability within Social

Greek Organizations and Violations of the Student Conduct Code

(TITLE)

BY

Danielle L. Burden

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

Master of Science in College Student Affairs

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

2018

YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING
THIS PART OF THE GRADUATE DEGREE CITED ABOVE

5/2/18
DATE

5/8/18

DEPARTMENT/SCHOOL CHAIR   DATE
OR CHAIR'S DESIGNEE

6/2/18

DATE   THESIS COMMITTEE MEMBER   DATE

5/2/18

DATE   THESIS COMMITTEE MEMBER   DATE

The Relationship between Peer Accountability within Social Greek Organizations and

Violations of the Student Conduct Code

Danielle L. Burden

Eastern Illinois University

May 2018

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In my journey, there have been many people who have assisted me in vast amount of ways in the completion of this study and my overall development through life and within student affairs. To my mother, thank you for always being my best friend and encouraging me to do anything and everything I set my mind to. You have always been by my side and pushing me to achieve the things I wanted for myself, and to take the risks that you never did. I can never express enough the gratitude I have for you playing the roles of mother, father, and best friend for me for all of my life.

To my thesis chair, Dr. Coleman, thank you for joining me halfway through this process and helping me to maintain my positivity and momentum throughout the remainder. I am grateful for all of the insight and knowledge that you have provided me, as well as the time and effort you have contributed to my process and this thesis.

To Dr. Kniess, although you were unable to help me in the finishing stages of this process, thank you for helping me lay a solid foundation of which to build upon. Thank you for supporting me and making me feel supported during my first year of graduate school. I can confidently say that you are one of the most impactful mentors I have had in my journey through student affairs, and I am truly thankful that our paths crossed.

To Nathan and Dr. Webb, thank you for being so invested in this topic along with me. It is frightening to take on a study that has never been done, but with individuals like you supporting me and encouraging me, this process has been nothing short of rewarding. I appreciate every suggestions and criticism you have both provided to help this thesis be nothing short of amazing. You are both professionals that I wish to emulate in my

everyday practices, and I am grateful for you lending your time and talents to help me achieve my goals.

To the "coheart", without each and every one of your different personalities, this process for us all would not have been the same. I have taken inspiration from each and every one of you throughout this process, and I am thankful to call you all my colleagues, and even more, my friends. I would not have wanted to go through this process with anyone else and I will forever cherish the laughter, fun, and tears that we shared during our class times.

Finally, to Tyler, thank you for being my rock and my supporter, not just through this process, but in life. Graduate school was just one of the many adventures life is going to bring us, and I am so very thankful that I had someone like you by my side through it all. Your constant encouragement and support has allowed me to pursue my goals and achieve them. I cannot wait for the rest of our lives together. Thank you.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between violations of the student conduct code and the perception of peer accountability within social Greek organizations. The researcher hypothesized that members of Greek organizations would report high perceptions of peer accountability within their organizations, and because of that there would be an effect on violations of the student conduct code. A quantitative study was conducted, surveying the entire Greek population at a mid-sized, Midwestern, 4-year, public institution. A Likert scale was used to measure questions about perceived peer accountability within organizations, students also provided demographics and self-reported violations of the student conduct code. Out of 750 surveys sent out, the researcher received a total of 75 responses, with 57 (68.3% female and 31.7% male) responses being complete and usable for the study. The study found overwhelmingly that there was a perceived factor of peer accountability within organizations with five out of nine questions scoring higher than a 4.40 out of 5.00, three of which were a 4.50 or higher out of 5.00. The results also suggested that there was a difference between male and female participants, with men reporting higher scores of peer accountability in terms of holding others in their chapter accountable. The study also found that attending a student conduct code meeting resulted in a heightened perception of peer accountability amongst members and their organization, providing that the student conduct process successfully enforces accountability of oneself and others in their organizations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Chapter I

Introduction

Social Greek organizations can be traced back in the history of higher education in the United States to 1776, when the first fraternal organization had its founding at the College of William and Mary (Anson & Marchesani, 1991). Throughout the next 150 years, fraternities and sororities would be founded and chartered at hundreds of colleges and universities throughout the country. Organizations are founded with different aims and purposes but since the creation of Beta Theta Pi, established with the goal that fraternal organizations should be a place for intellectual and moral expansion and growth, fraternities and sororities have sought to create well-rounded men and women from the collegiate environment and experience. The Inter-Sorority Conference, now the National Panhellenic Conference, was founded in 1902 and the National Interfraternity Conference was founded in 1909 to create organizations that would unify all member organizations and foster better relationships with the colleges and universities that are host to collegiate chapters (History of College Greek Life, 2014).

In the United States throughout history, members of Greek organizations have gained the reputation of being chronic troublemakers within the communities where they reside. Members are seen as risk takers, underachievers, and disrespectful members of their communities. Kingree and Thompson (2013) found that individuals who joined a fraternity within their first two years of college were more likely to accept peer approval for forced sex and high risk drinking patterns than those who were not members of fraternities. This data supports the impression generally held that fraternity members are more likely to commit offenses involving sexual misconduct or excessive/illegal

drinking activities. One study found that chapters that are known for drinking habits characterized as "heavy" are considered to be in a higher social standing in terms of their campus reputation (Caudill et al., 2006). Critics of Greek organizations would say the main priority of these groups is to provide an outlet to party with no regard to the welfare of the entire campus and local community.

Much research has been done to support quite the opposite ideal. One study found that for members of fraternal organizations, there were five main espoused values they commonly associated with their membership; civic engagement, integrity, pursuit of knowledge, fostering community, and commitment to organization (Matthews et al., 2009). Asel, Seifert, and Pascarella (2015) found that members of Greek organizations were more likely to be a part of other co-curricular activities than their unaffiliated peers. These authors also found that they completed more community service on average than their unaffiliated peers (Asel et al., 2015). These studies support findings that are contrary to popular beliefs about members only desiring to party. Studies like this show that members of fraternities are more often than not more involved in other campus groups and activities than their unaffiliated peers. They also are typically more involved in community service events throughout their campuses, as well as the communities that surround their university. According to Matthews et al. (2009) members of fraternities would appear to have a greater sense of civic duty to their communities, and therefore may have more to lose if violations of the student conduct code did occur.

Every Greek organization has a set of core values that are upheld by every member of the organization. When these values are not upheld, there are often internal

procedures that take place to prevent the event from occurring again. This sense of "brotherhood"/"sisterhood" appears to be a type of peer accountability system that may be a driving factor of good behavior among members. The values set in place by the organization are seen as a set of guidelines to abide by to be a good member of the organization. The desire to uphold these values in order to avoid disappointing the other members of the organization is a primary factor in whether or not Greek students commit and recommit violations of the student conduct code.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine if there is a perception of peer accountability within social Greek letter organizations. The principle investigator also sought to find whether the perception of peer accountability within organizations plays a role in the discouragement of violating the student conduct code. The study was a quantitative design that utilized an anonymous survey distributed to students through email.

Research Questions

The researcher sought to find if membership in a social fraternity or sorority lowered the probability that a student would commit violations of the student conduct code due to the perception of peer accountability present between members of their organization. This was done by answering the following questions:

1. What is the percentage of social fraternity/sorority members that report having committed violations of the conduct code?

2. Do members perceive the presence of peer accountability within their

organization?

3. Is there a correlation between student conduct violations and reporting a

perception of peer accountability within their organization?

4. Is there a difference between members of fraternities and sororities in terms of

perception of peer accountability within their respective organizations?

Hypothesis

1. A high percentage of members of fraternal organizations will report some type of

violation of the student conduct code.

2. Members will report the presence of peer accountability within their organizations.

3. There will be a positive correlation between the perception of peer accountability

within their organization and offenses of the student conduct code.

4. There will be a significant difference between fraternities and sororities in the

reported perception of peer accountability and the impact on student conduct.

Significance of the Study

By studying the effect that peer accountability within social fraternities has on

students' probability of violating the student code of conduct it could be determined if

membership within a social fraternity helps students have a better understanding and

respect for the student conduct code.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of this study included the possible lack of honesty while completing the survey. The findings would not be accurate if the respondents were not completely honest or accurate with their responses on the survey instead of giving answers that they felt were more acceptable or what was socially desirable. They also may have been completely unaware of the existence of peer accountability within their organizations.

Another limitation of the study might be the low participation for the survey. With a smaller sample size, the data may not have been representative of the population. Lack of respondents may also be a contributor to another limitation, types of respondents. The idea that the respondents received may not have been representative of the population of social Greek organization members.

Finally, was the difference in size between the different councils and individual organizations may be a limitation. National Pan-Hellenic Council organizations on campus represent a much smaller percentage of the social Greek population than those who are a member of either Inter-Fraternity Council organizations or National Panhellenic Conference Organizations. A low response rate resulted in an insufficient sample size of National Pan-Hellenic council members for the study.

Definitions of Terms

Fraternity: A men's student organization formed chiefly for social purposes having secret rites and a name consisting of Greek letters (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

Sorority: A club of women; specifically: a women's student organization formed chiefly for social purposes and having a name consisting of Greek letters (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

National Inter-Fraternity Conference: The NIC serves to advocate the needs of its member fraternities through enrichment of the fraternity experience; advancement and growth of the fraternity community; and enhancement of the educational mission of the host institutions (NASPA, n.d.)

National Panhellenic Conference: the umbrella group for 26 national and international sororities that are autonomous social organizations. (National Panhellenic Conference, n.d.)

National Pan-Hellenic Council: The National Pan-Hellenic Council, Incorporated (NPHC) is currently composed of nine (9) International Greek letter Sororities and Fraternities: Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc., Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. (National Pan-Hellenic Council, , n.d.)

Peer accountability: The existence of a relationship between members of organizations that encourages members to abide by expectations of membership

Summary

This study identified the relationship between perception of peer accountability within social Greek organizations and offenses/repeat offenses of the student conduct code, or lack thereof. Historically these organizations have been associated with bad behavior, ranging from alcoholic tendencies to disrespect of their fellow students, community members, and their institutions as a whole. This study will explore the perception of peer accountability within these organizations, and how it may in fact

deter members from recommitting offenses due to their values they have agreed to uphold and represent.

Chapter one identified differences between what popular beliefs and research perceive the actions, values, and beliefs of members of Greek organizations entail and the reality of the amount of civic responsibility and organizational pride and integrity members perceive to integrate into their daily lives. The role of peer accountability within Greek social organizations may be a driving factor for good behavior, rather than typically associated bad behavior.

Chapter II
Review of the Literature

The review of literature provides an overview of the histories of student conduct and social fraternities in higher education. Additionally, it explores the relationships between Greek membership and common conduct issues, involvement on campus, and moral development. The final section focuses on identifying peer accountability and the effects that it has on members of groups. This is in an effort to understand how membership in a fraternity plays a role in the decision-making and development of students on campus.

Student Conduct

Lake (2013) stated that until the 1960s, universities had a stance in terms of conduct and all other aspects of student life as part of the philosophy of "in loco parentis." This meant that universities took a parental role in the lives of their students while they were on campus, and in the 1960s and 1970s, students rebelled against the "in loco parentis" role. The first case to display a need for role change was Dixon V. Alabama State Board, after which students began to advocate more for their rights on college campuses across the United States (Lake, 2013). Opening a series of cases where students were viewed legally as adults by courts (Lake, 2013). Stoner (2004) stated that during this time is when the switch to the idea of providing "due process" to students was implemented to ensure that students received a fair hearing process of their disciplinary cases prior to sanctioning. The role of the university focused on the concept of duty to the students, that universities have a duty to protect the rights and the well-being of their students. The understanding of this role is ever changing and different at every institution. Because of this ever-changing role, administrators of collegiate institutions

have written codes of conduct, outlining expectations for all students of their institution (Stoner, 2004).

Ed Stoner (2004) discussed the dual role of college administrators as educating students through leadership to help develop students into good citizens, while also having the task of responding to behaviors that threaten to damage the living or learning communities on campuses. Specifically, Stoner (2004) discussed the student conduct code processes of today, and how they are designed to educate students about their responsibilities as a student by assigning educational sanctions that are designed in order to help the student learn from their mistakes in order to make improvements to work towards their future success as a student of the institution. This concept of promoting the education of students to promote their development into more well-rounded students and citizens is related to the values and processes that members of individual fraternal organizations have been expected to uphold on college campuses across the country (Jackson & Iverson, 2009).

Social Greek Organizations in the United States

Prior to the creation of the American fraternity/sorority, secret literacy societies were formed to create a group setting for students to find a social outlet as a break from their academic experience during their college career (Torbenson, 2009). Fraternities first became a part of the American collegiate experience when Phi Beta Kappa was formed in 1776 at the College of William and Mary (Torbenson, 2009). The history of sororities, or female fraternities, began with the Adelphean Society (Alpha Delta Pi) in 1851(History of Greek Life, 2014). Since the founding of the first fraternities and sororities over 365 organizations have been created across the United States, however,

many of these organizations have either gone inactive or combined to form other groups. In 1902, 7 women's fraternities got together and created the Inter-Sorority Conference, which is known today as the National Panhellenic Conference, to encourage members of different organizations to come together and support each other in their fraternal endeavors; the men's organization would follow this example in 1909 when they created the National Interfraternity Conference (History of Greek Life, 2014). Across the twentieth century, organizations grew to a peak of over 700,000 total members across the country (Torbenson, 2009).

Greek organizations were originally created with the purpose of students feeling like they had some amount of control over their college life during a time when university officials had much of the control over their students (Torbenson, 2009). Students found comfort in these secret societies, because they were seen as an escape from the controlling or overbearing nature of the college faculty during the early years of higher education (Syrett, 2009). Fraternities and sororities, much like today, were founded with a group of values and documents that set forth the goals and purposes for their organizations, such as expectations of high standards, community involvement, and citizenship (Torbenson, 2009). Almost all Greek organizations are founded on the tenet of "brotherhood/sisterhood", which is something that most members or potential members hold in high regard and carry with them through not only college years, but throughout the duration of their life (Syrett, 2009). These organizations were used as a social outlet to connect with other students and find a way to take a break from their academic responsibilities at school. Many students even say that one of the main factors

for joining was to find a place and a feeling of belonging and acceptance on a new/larger campus (Syrett, 2009).

Common Conduct Issues and Influences of Members of Greek Organizations

Fairlie, DeJong, Stevenson, Lavigne, and Wood (2010) found that members of Greek organizations report behaviors related to alcohol use that are consistent with the behaviors of their unaffiliated peers. However, many other studies have found that there are certain types of potential conduct issues that members of a fraternity may be more prone to experiencing due to the relationships and ideals that exist in fraternities (Capone, Wood, Bosari, & Laird, 2007, Caudill, Crosse, Campbell, Howard, Luckey, and Blane, 2006, Kingree & Thompson, 2013, Larimer, Turner, Mallett, and Geisner, 2004, Long, 2014, Park, Sher, Wood, and Krull, 2009, Sasso, 2015, Sasso & Schwitzer, 2016, and Scott-Sheldon, Carey, Kaiser, Knight, and Carey, 2016). Capone, Wood, and Bosari (2007) conducted a study to observe the impact of three factors on alcohol use during the first two years of college. The three influences include: alcohol offers, perceived norms, and social influences. Capone, et al. (2007) found that those affiliated with Greek organizations, especially men, were more at risk for having problems with alcohol use prior to coming to college. Park, Sher, Wood, and Krull (2009) found that higher level drinking in the first semester was much more prevalent amongst fraternities and sororities where there were higher rates of alcohol-related peer norms. Inversely, Larimer, Turner, Mallett, and Deisner (2004) found that while both members of fraternities and sororities reported that descriptive and injunctive norms within their organizations predicted drinking habits of members, members of sororities reported much lower rates of drinks per night and alcohol-related consequences.

Kingree and Thompson (2013) noted the influence of attitudes, peer influences, and risky-type behaviors of fraternity men and the correlation of those attitudes with sexual aggression acts committed by members of these organizations. The researchers hypothesized that joining a fraternity would contribute to increased ideals of sexual aggression. The study used a sample recruited from 1,472 first year men that were enrolled full-time at a large public university located in the Southeast region of the United States and that members of fraternities had a higher rate of alcohol use, which contributed to a higher rate of sexually aggressive ideals among members (Kingree & Thompson, 2013).

Membership alone may not be the only factor that plays a role in alcohol issues, but Greek housing may also contribute to the role of substance abuse amongst fraternity members. Long (2014) studied the effects of living in different types of housing on student risks and successes, and specifically studied the relationship between different housing options and reported alcohol use. The sample was taken from a population of 2,885 upperclassman students, made up of 239 men living in fraternity houses, 193 women living in sorority houses, and 2,453 students residing in residence halls on campus. The study found that members of fraternity/sorority organizations residing in Greek affiliated housing were more satisfied with their peer interactions than their on-campus residing counterparts. They also reported consuming alcoholic beverages more frequently than their on-campus counterparts (Long, 2014). Caudill, Crosse, Campbell, Howard, Luckey, and Blane (2006) also found that members who lived in their fraternity chapter house reported having higher rates of consumption of alcoholic beverages compared to students who lived in other types of student housing, on- and off-campus.

Greek Membership and Involvement

One of the most prevalent effects memberships in a fraternity has been found to have on students is increased overall campus and community involvement (Asel, Seifert, and Pascarella, 2015, Martin, Hevel, Asel, and Pascarella, 2011, Jackson & Iverson, 2009, and Strayhorn & Colvin, 2006). Asel, Seifert, and Pascarella (2015) examined the relationship between affiliation or membership in a fraternity/sorority and other involvements and experiences on campus. The institution was a large, midwestern university with approximately 20,300 undergraduate students. Fraternity/sorority members made up about 10% of the campus population, and fraternity/sorority members were found to have higher rates of co-curricular activities and community service completed than those unaffiliated (Asel et al., 2015).

The claim that Greek students are more involved on campus because of their involvement in an on-campus Greek organization is supported by Eyler and Giles, as cited by Jackson and Iverson (2009) who stated that students who feel connected to the community they are a part of are more motivated in overall involvement in that community. Strayhorn and Colvin (2006) similarly found through their study that many students felt that their membership in a Greek organization played a key role in their overall attainment of leadership experiences and skills throughout their college experience.

Greek Organizations and Gender Roles

Much of what may be perceived as peer accountability among Greek members may also be attributed to the idea that members feel an immense pressure to conform to

views that are perceived to be normal. Many fraternity men have been found to feel pressure to conform to traditional hyper masculine roles that are typically associated with members of fraternities (Sasso, 2015, Seabrook, Ward, and Giaccardi, 2016, and Taylor, 2015).

Edwards and Jones (2009) researched masculinity and the ways that men feel that societal norms dictate that way they are expected to react and respond to situations. Many of the men discussed that they felt that masculine norms had been assigned to them since they were children, and had slowly evolved and altered over the course of their life. They described the feeling of needing to be "tough" and "not cry" as boys, later they were expected to be "strong", "competitive", and felt that they were expected to sleep with girls in order to maintain their societal status (Edwards & Jones, 2009). These men described that they often felt that they are wearing a mask or putting on a show for the world, in order to hide their true self to fit in with those around them (Edwards & Jones, 2009).

Seabrook, Ward, and Giaccardi (2016) conducted a study on a population of 9,512 undergraduate men at a large Midwestern public institution where a sample of 365 participants completed an online survey (Seabrook et al., 2016). Students answered questions about rape myth acceptance, sexual deception, objection of women, conformity to masculine norms, and pressure to conform to masculine stereotypes. The results found that members of fraternities were more accepting of sexual violence because of the pressure to conform to traditional masculine roles and norms that comes from being a member of a fraternity (Seabrook et al., 2016). A similar study conducted by Scott-Sheldon, Carey, Kaiser, Knight, and Carey (2016) found that members of fraternities

associated higher levels of drinking in as a means of feeling socially accepted by their peers. They drink in order to fulfill the expectancies of those around them, and as a means to achieve the social and sexual goals set forth by their peers (Scott-Sheldon et.al., 2016).

Taylor (2015) conducted a similar study to observe performance of masculinity in members of fraternity organizations. The researcher looked particularly at the variables of sexual aggression, misogyny, homophobia, and hypermasculinity. The researcher wanted to find if there was a difference between the levels of existence of these variables between affiliated and non-affiliated male students. The study took place at a four-year university in the Midwest that contained a strong Greek community with a target population of predominately White fraternities who had been initiated within six months of the study. Surveys were sent electronically to 1,633 fraternity members and 2,800 non-affiliated males (Taylor, 2015). Taylor (2015) found that members of fraternities were more likely than their non-affiliated peers to conform or feel the need to conform to the norms of male roles. However, there was very little information that supported this feeling to be derived from their membership, but rather was present prior to their joining of the fraternity (Taylor, 2015).

Rolnik, Maddox, and Miller (2010) conducted a study with first year female students. The women answered questions pertaining to their demographics and their attitudes towards the sorority rush process. The women who participated in the sorority rush process and joined an organization reported higher levels of body shame after joining their organization than they did prior to joining.

Harris and Harper (2014) conducted a study on 50 members of a fraternity, and they found that members of this fraternity actually challenged their members to break away from traditional masculine norms. They were encouraged to stand up to each other when it came to racial slurs or disrespectful actions towards women. They stated that some members had a hard time with this expectation and development into more productive masculine identities, until they were placed into roles of chapter leadership. In these positions, they learned how to appropriately take on their masculine roles, while they also recognized their role as a leader to influence their peers (Harris & Harper, 2014).

Peer Accountability

While much of the research conducted about peer accountability has been conducted within the medical field or within law enforcement, the themes are easily applicable to any type of organized group or organization, like a fraternity or sorority. Bills, Heringer, and Mankin (2009) talked about the obligation that law enforcement officers have to hold each other accountable and confront each other if someone is suspected to have committed something morally or legally wrong. They discussed within the article that all police agencies have the responsibility to maintain the reputation of the police force in a positive way rather than letting it become negative due to lack of accountability amongst peers. This is applicable to the way that fraternity members are expected to uphold the values and reputation of their organization, and in doing so, must hold their fellow members accountable.

Articles by Forck (2011), Guidi (1995), and Lockett, Barkley, Stichler, Palomo, Kik, Walker, and O'Byrne (2015) highlight the ways that lack of peer accountability can be an issue in groups of people. Most specifically they talk about the benefits that it has within a group. Forck (2011) discussed the perception that action must be taken by "somebody", and he discussed the importance of organizations shaking this mindset, and having members hold each other accountable by expecting "everybody" to act. Forck (2011) went on to explain that when "everybody" expects "somebody" to do something or act a certain way, then "nobody" ends up following suit, and this is when bad decisions are made or tasks go uncompleted. Guidi (1995) explained how peer accountability can work both positively and negatively in groups. The study looked at structures of staff on nursing floors. Guidi (1995) found that when a few nurses missed meetings, that some would be outraged, but would not respond to their peers or hold them accountable for their actions. Instead, the other nurses would begin to get frustrated and complain about the situation, rather than take steps on their own to avoid it. The decision was made to form a group to educate staff on appropriate communication and accountability, which improved the overall work ethic and morale of the entire staff, they even formed a new support structure within their staff to help each other succeed (Guidi, 1995). These structures mirror the effects that membership in a fraternity has on students individually, as well as the effects that can occur due to a lack of accountability in organizations.

Theoretical Framework

Greek membership and moral development. Moral development is noted as an essential role of the fraternity for its affiliated members by many fraternal organizations throughout the United States (Ray & Roscow, 2012, Mathiasen, 2005, Shonrock, 1998,

Jackson & Iverson, 2009). Ray and Roscow (2012) conducted a study on the campus of a predominately White institution with about 30,000 students. Twenty percent of the white population was Greek-affiliated while 10% of the Black population was Greek (Ray & Roscow, 2012). The researchers conducted in-depth interviews with 15 white fraternity men and 15 black fraternity men. They also collected 22 informal interviews with groups of members. At the end of each interview, participants were given a paper and pencil survey to fill out. The research found that Black fraternity men had a higher belief that others held them accountable in their organization than that of the white fraternity men (Ray & Roscow, 2012). Similarly, Jackson and Iverson (2009) found that students in their study stated that membership in their respective Greek organizations helped them to make decisions based off of the values set forth by their organizations, as well as their own personal set of values. The students in the study reported that they recognized they played a role in a community much larger than themselves, and felt accountable not only to members of their organization, but also the community in which they reside (Jackson & Iverson, 2009).

Members of Greek organizations have made a commitment to uphold high ideals of moral teachings and responsibilities that the membership in their respective organization expects (Anson and Marchesani, 1991). These expectations are made clear throughout the recruitment process as found through a study conducted by Mathiasen (2005) where a theme of recruiting quality members highlighted the emphasis that the fraternity in question placed on academics within the fraternity and moral development. Specifically they highlighted that during their membership process they looked for students who were high achieving in grades, and expected members to maintain that high

achieving status throughout their time as a member. This theme tied in with the theme of moral development that arose during interviews. The members stated that they strictly followed the values set forth by fraternity, which strives for scholastic, physical, moral, and spiritual strength of members (Mathiasen, 2005).

Kohlberg's theory of moral development. Kohlberg (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, and Renn, 2010) talks about how moral development affects the decisions individuals make at every stage of their life. He specifically breaks down moral development into 3 levels, which are divided into 6 stages an individual goes through throughout their life. The stages include Blind, Instrumental, Social Relationships Perspective, Social Systems Perspective, Contractual Perspective, and Mutual Respect as a Universal Principle (Evans, et. al., 2010). The first two stages happen in early childhood and they are very similar in nature, however stage one right and wrong is determined by what is scolded and stage two right and wrong are defined by what is rewarded (Evans, et. al., 2010). Stages 3 and 4 typically occur in adolescence, and are characterized by doing what is expected of us. However, stage 3 is doing what those we associate with expect, and stage 4 is doing what society as a whole expects. The final two stages are characterized as developing one's own sense of morality, even in contradiction to societal norms, and applying those morals despite consequences (Evans, et. al., 2010).

Summary

After the transition from the "in loco parentis" role of university administrators to a more hands off approach, student conduct codes were created as a way for university

officials to outline student expectations that all students are held accountable. Fraternities and sororities were created as a way for students to gain a sense of control over their collegiate experience despite the historically controlling environment created by university faculty members and administrators.

While fraternities and sororities have been associated with creating positive outlets of social connections, they are often associated with high levels of risky behaviors. They are typically associated with heavy levels of drinking and acceptance of rule-breaking behaviors, with little regard to consequence. However, they have also been found to contribute dramatically to the moral development of their members. Many members attribute their membership in their organization with greater community involvement and high academic achievement.

While many studies focus on the negative norms that are associated with fraternities and sororities, like hypermasculenity and body-image issues, this study sought to find that these organizations actually create an environment of peer accountability that has been found through previous research within the nursing profession and other work groups in our society (Taylor, 2015, Rolnik, Maddox, and Miller, 2010)

Chapter III

Methods

Design of Study

The study was conducted utilizing a quantitative survey. Active members of social Greek organizations were contacted to complete the survey via emails provided by the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life. The survey included demographic questions, self-reported conduct history, and questions measuring the student's sense of peer accountability and the impact of the organization on behavior. The questions were a variety of close-ended questions, which are displayed in Appendix A. This chapter outlines the participants, site, instrument, means of data collection, treatment of data, and the analysis of the data.

Participants

The participants of the study were gathered from the population of members of Greek organizations at a mid-sized public institution in the Midwest. The participants were selected from those students who are members of social Greek organizations affiliated with the North-American Interfraternity Conference and the National Panhellenic Council. This included a total of 11 fraternities and 9 sororities that were active on the campus at the time it was distributed. The survey was sent out to students through Qualtrics™ by using email addresses provided by the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Programs. The total population surveyed was 686 members of fraternities and sororities. There were a total of 75 responses received, of those responses 57 responses were completed and used for the study, which equates to 8.3 percent of the total population surveyed. Of the 57 participants 68.4 percent were members of National

Panhellenic Conference sororities and 31.6 percent of participants were members of North-American Interfraternity Conference fraternities.

Site

The study took place a mid-sized, regional public university in the Midwest. The total enrollment was approximately 8,000 students. The Greek life population made up about 9 percent of the total student population at the time the study was conducted. This percentage represents two of the three Greek councils represented at the university.

Instrument

No instrument for measuring peer accountability was found to exist, as most of the existing research had used qualitative methods to measure group member perceptions of peer accountability. A locally developed survey, using Likert scale measures, was created to allow students to report their perception of peer accountability within their Greek organizations. Topics included the student's perception of behavioral expectations, attitudes towards alcohol consumption, academic performance, and campus reputation.

A quantitative design was selected to compare differences between members of different Greek organizations and gender differences in both the perception of peer accountability and its impact on student behavior under the Code of student Conduct. The survey was comprised of three sections that collect information about the student's interactions with the judicial system at the institution, demographic information about the student, and the student's perception of peer accountability within their organization.

Data collection

An online survey was sent out students with two follow up emails, one week

apart, before closing. The survey was sent in the form of an email to the participant's official school email addresses using the Qualtrics™ online survey program provided by the institution. The Office of Fraternity and Sorority Programs provided participants' email addresses to the researcher.

Data collection began in during the months of November and December of 2017. The survey was originally sent to a total of 750 members of Greek organizations at the midsized, Midwest public institution. After the collection period 75 total responses were collected, 3 responses were eliminated due to low response rate from members of National Pan-Hellenic Council affiliated fraternities and sororities. After removing incomplete responses, the amount of responses analyzed in the final study was 57.

Treatment of Data

The results of the survey were delivered to the researcher electronically through the online Qualtrics™ program. The data was also saved on an external hard drive owned by the researcher, as well as on a laptop owned by the researcher in a locked folder entitled "Thesis Data Responses".

Data Analysis

The data was exported from Qualtrics™ into Microsoft Excel. Once the data was organized and all incomplete responses were removed, the data was imported into SPSS. The frequency statistics were found for council affiliation, gender, ethnicity, year in school, if they had violated the conduct code, and if they were living in their chapter house or had in the past. Descriptive statistics were then collected to find the means and standard deviations for age, number of semesters they had been initiated, and the number of student conduct meetings they had attended. The descriptive statistics (means [M] and

standard deviation [SD]) were also found for all of the questions pertaining to the perception of peer accountability within participants' organizations.

An independent samples t-test was utilized to analyze and compare the means of participants responses to the questions about perception of peer accountability which included: analyzing the questions about being held accountable in the chapter, being held accountable on campus, holding others accountable in the chapter, holding other members accountable on campus, acceptance of drinking in social situations, different expectations when those outside the organization are present, formal process for holding others accountable, better organizational reputation compared to other groups, process for holding those accountable who violate the conduct code, and belief that members should be held accountable for violations of the student conduct code. The independent samples t-test was utilized to compare the mean of participant responses with their responses to questions about their gender, Greek council affiliation, if they had violated the student code of conduct, and if they had lived in their chapter house in the past.

Chapter IV

Results

The purpose of this study was to answer whether or not members of Greek organizations believed there was a presence of peer accountability within their organizations, and if so, if this had any effects on violations of the student conduct code. The researcher hypothesized that the perception of peer accountability amongst members in an organization would have a positive effect on violations and repeat violations of the student conduct code. The researcher believed that if members perceived that other members held them accountable, that they would then be less likely to violate the student conduct code

Descriptive Statistics

Frequency statistics were produced on the data collected, specifically in regards to council affiliation, gender, ethnicity, year in school, if they had violated the conduct code, and if they were living in their chapter house or had in the past for all participants ($n=$ 57). This was done to provide descriptive statistics as well as to answer RQ1: What is the percentage of social fraternity/sorority members that report having committed violations of the conduct code? The researcher hypothesized that there would be a high percentage of members that reported violations of the student conduct code, The data found that there were only 22.8 percent of participants who reported violations of the student conduct code, while 77.2 percent reported never having violated the conduct code. Therefore the hypothesis that there would be a high percentage who reported violations was rejected. The results of these tests are found in table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Frequency Statistics for Participant Descriptive Data

	Frequency (n)	Percent
Council Affiliation		
PHC	39	68.4
IFC	18	31.6
Ethnicity		
White	50	87.7
Hispanic	2	3.5
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	1.8
Asian	1	1.8
Black	0	0
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	0
Bi-Racial	3	5.3
Other	0	0
Gender		
Female	39	68.4
Male	18	31.6
Academic Classification		
First Year	3	5.3
Second Year	16	28.1
Third Year	20	35.1
Fourth Year or more	18	31.6
Violated the Conduct Code		
Yes	13	22.8
No	44	77.2
Living in Chapter House		
Yes	22	38.6
No	17	29.8
No, but Currently Living with Members	18	31.6
Lived in Chapter House in the Past		
Yes	34	59.6
No	23	40.4

Descriptive statistics (means [*M*] and standard deviation [SD]) were found for the

data acquired from all participants of the study ($n=57$) in regards to age, number of

semesters they had been initiated, and the number of student conduct meetings they had

attended. The results are found below in table 4.2. Descriptive statistics (means [*M*] and

standard deviation [SD]) were also found for the perception scores for the peer

accountability questions, these results are found below in table 4.3.

Table 4.2

Means and Standard Deviations for Age, Number of Conduct Meetings, and Semesters Initiated

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	56	20.41	1.187
Number of Conduct Meetings	57	1.46	1.127
Semesters Initiated	57	3.86	2.295

Table 4.3

Means and Standard Deviations for Scores of Perceptions of Peer Accountability

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Accountable In Chapter	57	4.47	.782
Accountable On Campus	57	4.44	.682
Hold Others In Chapter Accountable	57	4.65	.481
Hold Others In Chapter Accountable on Campus	57	4.53	.538
Drinking Supported in Social Situations	57	3.49	1.020
Different Expectations When Nonmembers Present	57	3.26	1.218
Formal Process For Holding Members Accountable	57	4.60	.704
Better Chapter Reputation Than Others	57	4.04	.925
Process of Accountability for Violations Of Student Conduct Code	57	4.26	.856
Required to Report Student Conduct Violations to Chapter	27	1.22	.424
Members Should be Held Accountable for Violating the Conduct Code	57	3.77	1.376

Independent Samples T-Test Results

An Independent Samples T-Test was conducted to compare the peer

accountability responses of participants and their responses of whether or not they had

attended a conduct meeting to answer RQ4: Is there a correlation between the perception

of peer accountability within their organization and offending of the student conduct

code? The group statistics and results for the independent samples t-test are found below

in Tables 4.4 and 4.5.

Table 4.4

Group Statistics for Having Attended a Conduct Meeting or Not Attended and Perception of Peer

Accountability

Peer Accountability Factor		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Accountable In Chapter	Attended	13	4.85	.376	.104
	Not Attended	44	4.36	.838	.126
Accountable On Campus	Attended	13	4.69	.630	.175
	Not Attended	44	4.36	.685	.103
Hold Others In Chapter Accountable	Attended	13	4.85	.376	.104
	Not Attended	44	4.59	.497	.075
Hold Others In Chapter Accountable on Campus	Attended	13	4.69	.480	.133
	Not Attended	44	4.48	.549	.083
Drinking Supported in Social Situations	Attended	13	3.31	.630	.175
	Not Attended	44	3.55	1.109	.167
Different Expectations When Nonmembers Present	Attended	13	3.31	1.548	.429
	Not Attended	44	3.25	1.123	.169
Formal Process For Holding Members Accountable	Attended	13	5.00	.000	.000
	Not Attended	44	4.48	.762	.115
Better Chapter Reputation Than Others	Attended	13	4.08	.862	.239
	Not Attended	44	4.02	.952	.144
Process of Accountability for Violations Of Student Conduct Code	Attended	13	4.46	.877	.243
	Not Attended	44	4.20	.851	.128
Required to Report Student Conduct Violations to Chapter	Attended	9	1.33	.500	.167
	Not Attended	18	1.17	.383	.090
Members Should be Held Accountable for Violating the Conduct Code	Attended	13	4.08	1.256	.348
	Not Attended	44	3.68	1.410	.213

Table 4.5

Independent Samples T-Test for Attended Conduct Meeting or Never Having Attended Student Conduct Meeting and Perception of Peer Accountability

Peer Accountability Factor		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (two-tailed)	Mean Dif.	Std. Dif.	95% Confidence Lower	Upper
Accountable In Chapter	Equal Variances Assumed	5.923	.018	2.01	55	.050	.483	.240	.001	.964
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			2.95	45.677	.005	.483	.164	.153	.812
Accountable On Campus	Equal Variances Assumed	.834	.365	1.55	55	.128	.329	.213	-.097	.755
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			1.62	21.117	.120	.329	.203	-.094	.751
Hold Others In Chapter Accountable	Equal Variances Assumed	23.63	.000	1.71	55	.093	.255	.149	-.044	.555
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			1.99	25.732	.057	.255	.128	-.009	.519
Hold Others In Chapter Accountable on Campus	Equal Variances Assumed	3.783	.057	1.27	55	.208	.215	.169	-.123	.554
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			1.37	22.142	.184	.215	.157	-.110	.540
Drinking Supported in Social Situations	Equal Variances Assumed	4.263	.044	*	55	.465	-.238	.323	-.886	.410
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			.735 * .983	35.666	.332	-.238	.242	-.729	.253
Different Expectations When Nonmembers Present	Equal Variances Assumed	4.944	.030	.149	55	.882	.058	.388	-.720	.835
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			.125	15.914	.902	.058	.462	-.291	1.037
Formal Process For Holding Members Accountable	Equal Variances Assumed	25.73	.000	2.46	55	.017	.523	.213	.096	.949
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			4.55	43.000	.000	.523	.115	.291	.754
Better Chapter Reputation Than Others	Equal Variances Assumed	.335	.565	.184	55	.855	.054	.295	-.536	.645
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			.194	21.425	.848	.054	.279	-.525	.634
Process of Accountability for Violations Of Student Conduct Code	Equal Variances Assumed	.023	.879	.950	55	.346	.257	.271	-.285	.799
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			.934	19.194	.362	.257	.275	-.318	.832
Required to Report Student Conduct Violations to Chapter	Equal Variances Assumed	3.125	.089	.962	55	.345	.167	.173	-.190	.523
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			.879	12.874	.395	.167	.190	-.243	.577
Members Should be Held Accountable for Violating the Conduct Code	Equal Variances Assumed	1.099	.299	.908	55	.368	.395	.435	-.477	1.267
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			.968	21.769	.344	.395	.408	-.452	1.242

An Independent Samples T-Test was conducted to compare the peer accountability responses of participants and their reported gender to answer RQ5: Is there a difference between members of fraternities and sororities in terms of perception of peer accountability within their respective organizations?. The results showed that gender had a significant effect on holding others in the chapter accountable. The results showed that members of fraternities were reported higher scores of holding others in their chapter accountable as compared to members of sororities. Therefore, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis that there is no difference between gender and peer accountability in organizations. The group statistics and results for the independent samples t-test are found below in Tables 4.6 and 4.7

Table 4.6

Group Statistics of Reported Organizational Affiliation and Perception of Peer Accountability

Peer Accountability Factor		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Accountable In Chapter	Sorority	39	4.49	.683	.109
	Fraternity	18	4.44	.984	.232
Accountable On Campus	Sorority	39	4.44	.718	.115
	Fraternity	18	4.44	.616	.145
Hold Others In Chapter Accountable	Sorority	39	4.56	.502	.080
	Fraternity	18	4.83	.383	.090
Hold Others In Chapter Accountable on Campus	Sorority	39	4.49	.506	.081
	Fraternity	18	4.61	.608	.143
Drinking Supported in Social Situations	Sorority	39	3.38	.935	.150
	Fraternity	18	3.72	1.179	.278
Different Expectations When Nonmembers Present	Sorority	39	3.26	1.352	.216
	Fraternity	18	3.28	.895	.211
Formal Process For Holding Members Accountable	Sorority	39	4.72	.605	.097
	Fraternity	18	4.33	.840	.198
Better Chapter Reputation Than Others	Sorority	39	4.00	.918	.147
	Fraternity	18	4.11	.936	.227

		N	Mean	Std.	
Process of Accountability for Violations Of Student Conduct Code	Sorority	39	4.26	.880	.141
	Fraternity	18	4.28	.826	.195
Required to Report Student Conduct Violations to Chapter	Sorority	39	1.25	.447	.112
	Fraternity	18	1.18	.405	.122
Members Should be Held Accountable for Violating the Conduct Code	Sorority	39	3.72	1.395	.223
	Fraternity	18	3.89	1.367	.322

Table4.7

Independent Samples T-Test for Organizational Affiliation and Perception of Peer Accountabili

Peer Accountability Factor		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (two-tailed)	Mean Dif.	Std. Dif.	95% Confidence Lower	Upper
Accountable In Chapter	Equal Variances Assumed	.532	.469	.190	55	.850	.043	.225	-.407	.493
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			.167	24.866	.869	.043	.256	-.485	.571
Accountable On Campus	Equal Variances Assumed	.300	.586	-.044	55	.965	-.009	.196	-.401	.384
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			-.046	38.289	.963	-.009	.185	-.383	.366
Hold Others In Chapter Accountable	Equal Variances Assumed	24.4	.000	-2.015	55	.049	-.269	.134	-.537	-.001
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			-2.225	42.630	.031	-.269	.121	-.513	-.025
Hold Others In Chapter Accountable on Campus	Equal Variances Assumed	.167	.685	-.806	55	.424	-.124	.154	-.432	.184
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			-.753	28.340	.458	-.124	.165	-.461	.213
Drinking Supported in Social Situations	Equal Variances Assumed	1.15	.288	-1.165	55	.249	-.338	.290	-.918	.243
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			-1.070	27.285	.294	-.338	.316	-.985	.310
Different Expectations When Nonmembers Present	Equal Variances Assumed	7.28	.009	-.061	55	.952	-.021	.350	-.723	.680
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			-.071	47.899	.944	-.021	.302	-.629	.586
Formal Process For Holding Members Accountable	Equal Variances Assumed	3.47	.068	1.967	55	.054	.385	.196	-.007	.776
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			1.745	25.451	.093	.385	.220	-.069	.838
Better Chapter Reputation Than Others	Equal Variances Assumed	.022	.883	-.418	55	.677	-.111	.266	-.643	.421
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			-.411	31.730	.684	-.111	.270	-.662	.440
Process of Accountability for Violations Of Student Conduct Code	Equal Variances Assumed	.351	.556	-.087	55	.931	-.021	.246	-.515	.472
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			-.089	35.147	.930	-.021	.240	-.509	.467
Required to Report Student Conduct Violations to Chapter	Equal Variances Assumed	.693	.413	.404	55	.689	.068	.169	-.279	.416
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			.412	23.027	.684	.068	.165	-.274	.410
Members Should be Held Accountable for Violating the Conduct Code	Equal Variances Assumed	.023	.880	-.433	55	.667	-.171	.395	-.962	.621
	Equal Variances Not Assumed			-.436	33.762	.666	-.171	.392	-.968	.626

Chapter V

Discussion

The research study exploring the relationship between the perceptions of peer accountability within social Greek organizations and violations of the conduct code was conducted to study the common conception that being a member of Greek organizations impacts member behaviors in a negative way. This study was done in an effort to explore whether or not there is an accountability factor that exists between members of Greek organizations which inspires and encourages responsible and respectable behaviors rather than those that are considered not in alignment with their organizational values and policies. By researching this relationship, practitioners can find better ways to address negative behaviors with members of these organizations, and work in conjunction with the organizations to encourage more socially desirable conduct amongst their community.

Peer Accountability Within Greek Organizations

This study found that there was a large overall perception of peer accountability amongst members of Greek organizations. Three questions on the survey generated mean scores of 4.50 or higher on a five point Likert scale; *It is my responsibility to hold my fellow members accountable for their behavior as a member of the chapter community* (4.65), *It is my responsibility to hold my fellow members accountable for their behavior as a member of the campus community* (4.53), and *My organization has a process for holding members accountable for their academic performance* (4.60). In addition, two other questions had high mean scores; *I feel the members in my organization hold me accountable for my actions within the chapter community* (4.47) and *I feel the members in my organization hold me accountable for my actions within the*

chapter community (4.44). All five of these questions focused on the students' perceptions regarding accountability for member behavior and the high scores demonstrate a strong belief among all participants that it is present in their organization. The only accountability question that did not follow this pattern was *I am required to report to my organization if I am called to the Student Conduct Office* which had a mean score of 1.22, the lowest mean score on any question. However it is not certain whether the participants strongly disagreed that there was a requirement to report or whether they did not feel there should be.

This study found that there was a relationship between peer accountability within Greek organizations among those who had been adjudicated for violations of the conduct code. Members who had attended a student conduct code meeting had as significantly higher perception of peer accountability within their organization on the question *My organization has a process of holding members accountable when they have violated the Student Conduct code*. These participants' mean score was a 5.0 on a 5 point Likert scale indicating that going through the judicial process significantly affected their perception of accountability over their peers who still had a rather high mean score (4.48). Long and Snowden (2011) stated most research surrounding Greek life is focused on the negative elements of Greek Life, but this study highlighted the positive aspects that result from interactions with institutional programs as well as providing support for intentional programming to raise awareness of and the importance of peer accountability within Greek organizations.

Finally, the study found that men and women had slightly different levels of perception of peer accountability within their organizations, especially in terms of

holding others accountable in their chapter. Members of fraternities had a significantly higher mean score on the question *It is my responsibility to hold my fellow members accountable for their behavior as a member of the chapter community* than did members of sororities. However, on all other questions, the mean scores of fraternity members and sorority members were very similar with minor differences. Historically there has been a shared idea that members of fraternities are more prone to engage in negative conduct (Capone, Wood, Bosari, & Laird, 2007, Caudill, Crosse, Campbell, Howard, Luckey, and Blane, 2006, Kingree & Thompson, 2013, Larimer, Turner, Mallett, and Geisner, 2004, Long, 2014, Park, Sher, Wood, and Krull, 2009, Sasso, 2015, Sasso & Schwitzer, 2016, and Scott-Sheldon, Carey, Kaiser, Knight, and Carey, 2016). This study shows that members of fraternities and sororities are very likely to hold each other accountable for their behavior both in the chapter and the campus communities.

Kohlberg's Moral Development Theory

Utilizing Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development is essential for understanding conduct, especially conduct that is negative in nature, of members of Greek organizations. Within Greek organizations, there is often a mentality relatable to stage four of Kohlberg's theory, in which what the majority believes is often what is accepted and the minorities who disagree are left either conforming or outcast from the others (Evans, et. al., 2010). This is essential in understanding what may cause certain violations of the conduct code, and why adjudication through the student conduct process may not only reduce recidivism rates of individuals, but may also encourage the implementation of peer accountability amongst members of Greek letter organizations.

When students first come to college, they are transitioning from high school

mentality to college mentality. During this transition, students learn the set of behavioral norms set forth by the institution as well as any student groups that they become a part of, including fraternities and sororities. This is a period of conformity in order to fit in and up hold the values and norms of their organization to preserve the accountability among each other. They will usually go along with the rule and guidelines set before them, because that is what is known and accepted by their peers. These roles, norms, and guidelines are a way in which the members of these organizations hold each other accountable. Each person has a role or set of expectations they are to follow and when this is not the case, members of organizations have methods for maintaining that feeling of law and order by holding each other accountable. This accountability could be enforced through honor council meetings, probationary statuses, or simple conversations explaining the purpose of upholding the values and expectations of the organization.

The conversations and reflection methods that are utilized within the conduct process, in conjunction with education and other sanctioning may play a role in helping students, specifically members of Greek organizations, develop their own moral standards. This development may assist students in holding themselves accountable and reducing their own recidivism rate for conduct violations, but it also may inspire them to hold others in their organization accountable. These processes helps students challenge the groupthink mentality traditionally found within Greek organizations and establish their own moral code and enforce it with others in their group.

Implications for Professionals

Understanding how peer accountability manifests and is affected greatly benefits all student affairs professionals, but especially those working in Greek life and student

conduct. Knowing that the conduct process increases the peer accountability factor for members who experience within student organizations, educational and preventative programing can be developed to strengthen this beneficial outcome. Relationships can be established to allow professionals in the student conduct office to collaborate with Greek Life to create programming for chapters to ignite and support peer accountability in the chapter prior to an actual violation of the student conduct code.

This study also provides student conduct professionals evidence to demonstrate that the conduct process is not only creating an environment where student behavior is challenged, but through peer accountability it may in fact act as a prevention for other students within the organization from committing similar violations.

Research Site Concerns

One factor that may have impacted the outcome of this research could be the campus climate at the time the research was conducted. At the time the survey was being collected, multiple fraternities on campus were being investigated for hazing allegations. During this time, one fraternity was found to be in violation of hazing their members and placed on suspension for two years from their national headquarters and the university. Due to the accountability standards at the university being very visible during this time, this increased awareness could have impacted participant responses of the students within the Greek community, specifically the fraternity men.

Another factor that may have affected the results is the climate of the Greek community overall. This particular institution's Greek chapters are adjusting to declining membership as a result of lower campus enrollment at the institution. Many chapters during this time experienced significant reduction in their overall numbers due to a

combination of graduation of the older members and a smaller number of incoming students to recruit from to replace those departing members. These smaller chapter sizes could have resulted in a higher perception of peer accountability within organizations due to the closer connections among members due to the smaller size of the chapters. It may also have had an adverse effect on some groups, where smaller numbers may have resulted in some organizations lacking desire to live up to their values or hold others accountable to their values. This aspect of the nature of the individual Greek organizations was not considered during this study.

Limitations

There were several limitations to this study, most notably the lack of responses from members of National Pan-Hellenic, or historically black, organizations on campus. It is unknown why these individuals chose not to participate in this study, whether due to the smaller chapter sizes or some other factor, only two individual responses were received from these Greek organizations. With such limited participation, the researcher removed the group from the study, and only considered members of organizations affiliated with the National Panhellenic Conference and North American Inter-Fraternity Conference. This lack of diversity may limit the applicability of this study.

A second limitation was the low participation rate. The goal was to originally receive at least 20 percent of the population back in responses, however due to the low participation, only 9 percent of the population, at the time the survey was issued, was represented in the responses. Lack of participation may have resulted in skewed results as many of the participants were female and members of organizations affiliated with the National Panhellenic Conference. A larger participant pool may have given a more

accurate representation of the beliefs and perceptions of those who are male and members of organizations affiliated with the North American Inter-Fraternity Conference.

The third limitation is the nature of the survey. Due to recent incidents regarding fraternity behavior, many participants may have been hesitant to answer honestly or may have been answering in a way they felt was socially desirable by the researcher. Therefore, they may not have answered accurately. The accountability climate at the university at this time surrounding fraternities and sororities may have played a role in their willingness to answer honestly or accurately due to the fear or concern of being targeted or held accountable for answering accurately for fear that their anonymity may not have been upheld.

Last, the length of time of which a student has been a member of their organization may play a role in their perceived peer accountability within their organization. Because this study was not longitudinal in nature, there was no way to study whether or not the amount of semesters a student had been an initiated member of their organization played a role in their perception of peer accountability within their organization between members.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research could begin with a more widespread application of the study to include other institutions, especially those of different sizes or types. This could give a more comprehensive look at the topic and establish application and differences dependent upon the institution size and type, as well as the overall size of their Greek community in comparison to their non-Greek population. More national approach would also provide greater generalizability.

Second, a study could focus on the overall conduct philosophy of the institution to expand the research in this area. Many schools have different approaches to conduct issues; some are more restorative while others are more punitive. Future research would benefit from looking at the conduct philosophy and testing to see if it has an effect on the overall impact of the conduct process for members, recidivism, and the igniting of peer accountability towards the other members of their organization.

Third, it would be beneficial to have the survey marketed in different ways to gather more respondents for a larger, more comprehensive participant population. The greatest benefit would come from gathering responses from a more diverse pool of the Greek population by collecting responses from members of National Pan-Hellenic fraternities and sororities and other Multicultural Greek organizations that may be on the university campus/campuses for future research studies.

Fourth, future research could benefit from the creation of an instrument that is created and tested with the primary purpose of measuring the perception of peer accountability within student organizations. For the purpose of this study, a Likert scale was used, however, if a specific instrument was created, it would benefit not only future research of this specific topic, but it could also be applied to any type of group where peer accountability is a factor to be measured. As much of the previous research that has been conducted in other areas is qualitative in nature, a quantitative instrument specifically for measuring perceptions of peer accountability could be beneficial in many working environments and areas of study.

Fifth, a qualitative component for future research studies on peer accountability within Greek organizations would be useful. This would allow for the discovery of

themes within more in depth conversation, which would allow researchers to seek out the reasons for motivations behind holding others accountable. Because this research found that those who had attended student conduct meetings reported higher rates of perceptions of peer accountability, it would be useful to expand further on that to find exactly what it is that changes for a student or their role within their organization after they participated.

Last, a longitudinal study to look at the way that attitudes for members change over time would provide valuable information for student affairs professionals. One factor that this study did not look at was the role that length of time in the organization may have had on their overall perception of peer accountability. This would be helpful to see if length of membership plays a role on violations of the conduct code and repeating violations, or if it has an effect on the overall perception of peer accountability amongst members.

Conclusion

The researcher conducted this study to find if there was a connection between perceptions of peer accountability within Greek organizations and violations of the student conduct code. The study found that members of Greek organizations had an overall high level of perceived accountability within their organizations, with the exception of having to report violations of the conduct code to their organization. The study found that there was a significant difference between men and women's responses for perceived peer accountability in terms of holding others in their chapter accountable, with men reporting higher levels of peer accountability. There was also a significant difference in peer accountability scores for members who had attended student conduct

code meetings and those who had not. The data displayed that members who had violated

the conduct code and attended student conduct code meetings had higher rates of

perceived peer accountability within their organizations, essentially showing that

attending a conduct meeting improved the awareness of peer accountability for members

within their organization. Understanding the positive impact the judicial process has on

students in fraternities and sororities should encourage professionals in both areas to

collaborate to improve the student experience.

References

Anson, J.L., Marchesani, R.F. (1991) Baird's Manual of American College Fraternities. *Baird's Manual Foundation, Incorporated.*

Asel, A.M., Seifert, T.A., & Pascarella, E.T. (2015). The Effects of Fraternity/Sorority Membership on College Experiences and Outcomes: A Portrait of Complexity. *Oracle: The Research Journal Of The Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors,* 1-12. Retrieved from EBSCO*host*

Bills, J., Ke, C., Heringer, R., & Mankin, D. (2009). Peer-to-Peer Accountability. *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, 78*(8), 12-19.

Capone, C., Wood, M.D., Borsari, B., & Laird, R.D. (2007). Fraternity and sorority involvement, social influences, and alcohol use among college students: A prospective examination. *Psychology Of Addictive Behaviors, 21(3),* 316-327. doi:10.1037/0893-164X.21.3.316

Caudill, B. D., Crosse, S. B., Campbell, B., Howard, J., Luckey, B., & Blane, H. T. (2006). High-Risk Drinking Among College Fraternity Members: A National Perspective. *Journal Of American College Health, 55*(3), 141-155.

Edwards, K. E. & Jones, S. R. (2009). "Putting my man face on": A grounded theory of college men's gender identity development. *Journal of College Student Development, 50*(2), 210-228

Evans, N. J., Forney, D. S., Guido, F. M., Patton, L. D., & Renn, K. A. (2010). *Student Development in College: Theory, Research, and Practice*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Fairlie, A. M., DeJong, W., Stevenson, J. F., Lavigne, A. M., & Wood, M. D. (2010). Fraternity and Sorority Leaders and Members: A Comparison of Alcohol Use, Attitudes, and Policy Awareness. *American Journal Of Drug & Alcohol Abuse*, *36*(4), 187-193. doi:10.3109/00952990.2010.491878

Forck, M. (2011). Peer-to-Peer Accountability: Speaking Up. *Transmission & Distribution World*, *63*(9), 64F.

Fraternity. (n.d.). In Merriam-Webster: America's most-trusted online dictionary. Retrieved from https://www.merriam-webster.com/

Fraternity & Sorority Resources (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.naspa.org/constituent-groups/kcs/fraternity-and-sorority/resources

Guidi, M. A. (1995). Peer-to-Peer Accountability. *Nursing Management*, *26*(10), 48R.

Harris, F., & Harper, S. R. (2014). Beyond bad behaving brothers: productive performances of masculinities among college fraternity men. *International Journal Of Qualitative Studies In Education (QSE)*, *27*(6), 703-723.

History of College Greek Life. (2014, October 31). Retrieved October 28, 2017, from http://www.rehobothjournal.org/history-of-greek-life/

Jackson, A., & Iverson, S. V. (2009) "Step up and do it": Fraternity and Sorority
members' beliefs about citizenship. *Oracle: The Research Journal of the
Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors, 4*(1), 1-16.

Kingree, J. B., & Thompson, M. P. (2013). Fraternity Membership and Sexual
Aggression: An Examination of Mediators of the Association. *Journal Of
American College Health, 61*(4), 213-221.

Lake, P.F. (2013). *The Rights and Responsibilities of the Modern University: The Rise of
the Facilitator University,* Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.

Larimer, M. E., Turner, A. P., Mallett, K. A., & Geisner, I. M. (2004). Predicting
Drinking Behavior and Alcohol-Related Problems Among Fraternity and Sorority
Members: Examining the Role of Descriptive and Injunctive Norms. *Psychology
Of Addictive Behaviors, 18*(3), 203-212. doi:10.1037/0893-164X.18.3.203

Lockett, J. J., Barkley, L., Stichler, J., Palomo, J., Kik, B., Walker, C., & O'Byme, N.
(2015). Defining Peer-to-Peer Accountability From the Nurse's Perspective.
Journal Of Nursing Administration, 45(11), 557-562.
doi:10.1097/NNA.0000000000000263

Long, L. D. (2014). Does It Matter Where College Students Live? Differences in
Satisfaction and Outcomes as a Function of Students' Living Arrangement and
Gender. *Journal Of College & University Student Housing, 41*(1), 66-85.

Long, L.D. & Snowden, A. (2011) The more you put into it the more you get out of it: the educational gains of fraternity/sorority officers. *The Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors, 6*(2), 1-14.

Matthews, H., Featherstone, L., Bluder, L., Gerling, A. J., Loge, S., & Messenger, R. B. (2009). Living in your Letters: Assessing Congruence Between Espoused and Enacted Values of One Fraternity/Sorority Community. *Oracle: The Research Journal Of The Association Of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors, 4*(1), 29-41.

Mathiasen, R.E. (2005). Moral Development in Fraternity Members: A Case Study. *College Student Journal, 39(2).* 242-252. Retrieved from EBSCO*host*

Martin, G. L., Hevel, M. S., Asel, A. M., Pascarella, E. T., (2011). New evidence on the effects of fraternity and sorority affiliation during the first year of college. *Journal of College Student Development,* 52 (5), 543-559.

National Panhellenic Conference. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://npcwomen.org/

Park, A., Sher, K. J., Wood, P. K., & Krull, J. L. (2009). Dual mechanisms underlying accentuation of risky drinking via fraternity/sorority affiliation: The role of personality, peer norms, and alcohol availability. *Journal Of Abnormal Psychology, 118*(2), 241-255. doi:10.1037/a0015126

Ray, R., & Rosow, J. A. (2012). The two different worlds of black and white fraternity men: visibility and accountability as mechanisms of privilege. *Journal Of Contemporary Ethnography, 41*(1), 66-94. doi:10.1177/0891241611431700

Rolnik, A., Engeln-Maddox, R., & Miller, S. (2010) Here's Looking at You: Self-Objectification, Body Image Disturbance, and Sorority Rush. *Sex Roles. 63*(1-2). 6-17. doi: 10.1007/sl1199-010-9745-y

Sasso, P. (2015). White boy wasted: Compensatory masculinities in fraternity alcohol use. *Oracle: The Research Journal Of The Association Of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors, 10*(1), 14-30.

Sasso, P., & Schwitzer, A. M. (2016). Examining social desirability orientation and alcohol use expectations as factors in fraternity drinking. *Oracle: The Research Journal Of The Association Of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors, 11*(1), 17-35.

Scott-Sheldon, L. J., Carey, K. B., Kaiser, T. S., Knight, J. M., & Carey, M. P. (2016). Alcohol interventions for Greek letter organizations: A systematic review and meta-analysis, 1987 to 2014. *Health Psychology, 35*(7), 670-684. doi: 10.1037/hea0000357

Seabrook, R. C., Ward, L. M., & Giaccardi, S. (2016). Why Is Fraternity Membership Associated With Sexual Assault? Exploring the Roles of Conformity to Masculine Norms, Pressure to Uphold Masculinity, and Objectification of Women. *Psychology Of Men & Masculinity*, doi: 10.1037/men0000076

Shonrock, M. D. (1998). Standards and expectations for Greek letter organizations. *New Directions For Student Services, 1998*(81), 79.

Sorority. (n.d.). In Merriam-Webster: America's most-trusted online dictionary. Retrieved from https://www.merriam-webster.com/

Stoner, E., Lowery, J. W., (2004). Navigating Past the "Spirit of Insubordination': A
Twenty-First Century Model Student Conduct Code with a Model Hearing Script.
31 Journal of College and University Law 1.

Strayhorn, T. L., & Colvin, A. J. (2006). Assessing Student Learning and Development in
Fraternity and Sorority Affairs. *Oracle: The Research Journal Of The Association
Of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors, 2*(2), 95-107.

Syrett, N. L. (2009). *The company he keeps: a history of White college fraternities.*
Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

Taylor, C. (2015). *Bros Like Me: Adherence to Male Role Norms in Fraternity Men.*
(Electronic Thesis or Dissertation). Retrieved from https://etd.ohiolink.edu/

Torbenson, C. L., (2009), *Brothers and sisters: diversity in college fraternities and
sororities.* Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

Appendix A

Email Requesting Participation

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Danielle Burden from the Department of Counseling and Student Development at Eastern Illinois University. This research is conducted as part of thesis research with Dr. Jon Coleman, to look at Fraternity/Sorority peer accountability. All data will be examined in aggregate and will not be linked back to you. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you can stop and exit the survey anytime.

If you have questions or concerns about this research, please contact: Danielle Burden(Principle Investigator) dlburden@eiu.edu

If you have any questions or concerns about the treatment of human participants in this study, you may call or write:

Institutional Review Board
Eastern Illinois University
600 Lincoln Ave.
Charleston, IL 61920
Telephone: (217)581-8576
E-mail: eiuirb@www.eiu.edu

http://eiu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_29vUDGJgwWCIpyR

Appendix B

Participant Consent

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Danielle Burden from the Department of Counseling and Student Development at Eastern Illinois University. This research is conducted as part of thesis research with Dr. Jon Coleman, to look at Fraternity/Sorority peer accountability. All data will be examined in aggregate and will not be linked back to you. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you can stop and exit the survey anytime.

If you have questions or concerns about this research, please contact: Danielle Burden(Principle Investigator) dlburden@eiu.edu

If you have any questions or concerns about the treatment of human participants in this study, you may call or write:

Institutional Review Board
Eastern Illinois University
600 Lincoln Ave.
Charleston, IL 61920
Telephone: (217)581-8576
E-mail: eiuirb@www.eiu.edu

Do you wish to continue?

- Yes
- No

Appendix C

Survey Instrument

1. Which of the following best describes your current membership status?
   - Active member of a fraternity affiliated with the Inter-Fraternity Council (IFC)
   - Active member of a Sorority affiliated with the Panhellenic Council (PHC)
   - Active member of a Fraternity affialiated with the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC)
   - No longer active member of any of the above
   - Never been a member of any of the above
   - Active member of a Sorority affiliated with the National Pan-Panhellenic Council (NPHC)

2. Are you an initiated member of your organization?

   - Yes
   - No

3. If yes, for how many semesters have you been a fully initiated member of your organization?

4. Have you ever had to attend a student conduct meeting with a university official for an alleged violation of the conduct code? (i.e. housing employee, student standards staff, or fraternity and sorority programs staff)

   - Yes
   - No

5. How many student conduct meetings have you had during your entire time at EIU?

6. Which components of the student conduct code have you been found in violation of?

   - Consumption of Alcohol Underage
   - Use or Possession of Marijuana or other illegal substances
   - Academic Dishonesty
   - Disruptive Conduct/Fighting
   - Public Urination
   - Trash or Noise in the community
   - Other component not listed above

7. Which components of the student conduct code you have been found in violation of more than once?

   - Consumption of alcohol underage
   - Use of possession of marijuana or other illegal substances
   - Academic Dishonesty
   - Disruptive Conduct/Fighting
   - Public Urination

- Trash or Noise in the community
- Other component not listed above

8. What is your age? (In years)

9. How do you identify?

- Male
- Female
- Other

10. What is your ethnicity?

- White
- Black or African American
- Hispanic
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Bi-Racial
- Other

11. What is your current academic classification?

- First year of enrollment
- Second year of enrollment
- Third year of enrollment
- Fourth (or more) year of enrollment

12. Do you currently live in your organizations on-campus or off-campus registered chapter house?

- Yes
- No
- No, but I currently live with members of my organization

13. Have you lived in your organization's chapter house in the past?

- Yes
- No

For the next part of the survey, you will answer the questions about your behavior perception within your organization, using a scale ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 is equivalent to an answer of "Strongly Disagree" and 5 is equivalent to an answer of "Strongly Agree".

14. I feel the members in my organization hold me accountable for my actions within the chapter community.

- 1-Strongly Disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

15. I feel the members in my organization hold me accountable for my actions in the campus community.

- 1-Strongly Disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

16. It is my responsibility to hold my fellow members accountable for their behavior as a member of the chapter community.

- 1-Strongly Disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

17. It is my responsibility to hold my fellow members accountable for their behavior as a member of the campus community.

- 1-Strongly Disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

18. The members in my organizations support drinking in social situations.

- 1-Strongly Disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

19. There are different expectations on my behavior when people outside the chapter are present at events versus when it is just members.

- 1-Strongly Disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

20. My organization has a process for holding members accountable for their academic performance.

- 1-Strongly Disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

21. Other members of the organization hold me accountable for my academic performance by (select all that apply).

- Studying Together
- Going to Campus Resources (e.g. Student Success Center, Writing Center, Tutoring) together
- Scheduled study time
- Study groups for shared classes
- Serving as an academic resource
- Asking me about my course load/work

22. My chapter has a better reputation regarding member behavior compared to other chapters at EIU.

- 1-Strongly Disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

23. My organization has a process of holding members accountable when they have violated the Student Conduct Code.

- 1-Strongly Disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree

- 5- Strongly Agree

24. I am required to report to my organization if I am called to the Student Conduct Office

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

25. I feel that my organization should hold members accountable if they violate the student conduct code

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree