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### **Initiating a New Perspective: The Prevalence, Perceptions, and Attitudes Towards Hazing Across Student Organizations on a College Campus**

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## Introduction

- Violent behavior and initiating practices among college students have been a longstanding tradition on college campuses.
- Hazing is any activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers regardless of a person's willingness to participate.
- Current scholarly focus has been limited to larger universities and select groups.
- As a result, there is limited knowledge on the prevalence and perceptions of hazing within student organizations, clubs, and sports teams on medium-sized college campuses.

## Literature Review

### Allen & Madden (2008)

- 55% of students involved in campus organizations have experienced behaviors that can be defined as hazing.
- The groups with the highest prevalence of hazing were (74%) in varsity athletic teams and (73%) in members of Greek-letter organizations.

### Campo et al. (2005)

- The sociodemographic characteristics that were most closely correlated with hazing activities were being in a Greek organization, varsity athlete, male, leader, and upperclassmen.

### Silveira & Hudson, (2015)

- 8% of marching band respondents reported hazing behaviors.

## Methods

**Research Question:** (1) What are the prevalence, perceptions, and attitudes towards hazing at a medium-sized four-year university?

**Study Site:** Medium-sized university in the mid-west.

**Recruiting Participants:** Eligibility: (1) Currently enrolled in the mid-west university and (2) currently an undergraduate student in good-standing with the university.

**Data Collection:** Allan & Madden (2008) survey tool with additional questions focusing on the perceptions, attitudes, clubs, and demographics involved in hazing.

**Sample Participants:** 178 students participated in the study with a final sample size of 158 after the removal from analysis.

## Results

Table 1

*Demographics Characteristics*

Characteristic	Frequency	Percent (%)
Age in years <i>M(SD)</i>	21.17	3.5
Ethnicity/Race		
Black or African American	7	4.4
Asia American	8	5.1
Hispanic/Latino	22	13.9
White/Caucasian	103	65.2
Hawaiian	1	0.6
Multiracial	13	8.2
Other	4	2.5
Gender		
Male	22	13.9
Female	134	84.8
Agender	1	0.6
Transgender	1	0.6

Table 3

*Reported Attitudes Towards Hazing Behaviors*

Statements	Frequency	Percent (%)
It is hazing even if someone agrees to participate.	111	70.2
Hazing is an effective way to create bonding.	10	6.3
Hazing is a way to effectively initiate new members.	13	8.2
I have a clear understand of the hazing policy at this university.	85	53.8
Hazing is a problem on this campus.	28	17.7
Hazing can cause physical harm.	153	96.9
Hazing can cause emotional harm.	155	98.1
Being hazed makes people feel stronger.	17	10.8
Being hazed negatively affects grades in classes.	92	58.2
Being hazed is a tradition in your group.	9	5.7
Being hazed is the only way to be accepted into a group.	2	1.2
Hazing makes others respect you.	1	0.6
Being hazed causes problems in relationships with others.	52	32.9
Being hazed justifies hazing others.	5	3.2
I would willing commit an act of hazing against another group member.	7	4.5

(N = 158)

Table 2

*Class Standing and Major in School*

Characteristic	Frequency	Percent (%)
Class Standing		
Freshman	34	21.5
Sophomore	32	20.3
Junior	43	27.2
Senior	49	31
Major		
Accounting	4	2.5
Biology	12	7.6
Business Administration	4	2.5
Criminology/Criminal Justice	5	3.2
English Language/Literature	8	5.1
History	6	3.8
Human Services	12	7.6
Nursing	15	9.5
Political Science	1	0.6
Psychology	14	8.9
Sports/Exercise Science	9	5.7
Other	68	43

Table 4

*Reported Hazing Behaviors*

Statements	Frequency	Percent (%)
Participate in a drinking game.	20	12.7
Sing or chant by self or with others in a public situation that is not related to an event, rehearsal, practice, or game	8	5.1
Associate with specific people and not others.	25	15.8
Experience sleep deprivation.	56	35.5
Deprive yourself of food.	16	10.1
Wear embarrassing clothing that is not apart of the uniform.	2	1.3
Being awakened during the night by other members.	9	5.7
Act as a servant to others.	3	1.9
Make body alterations such as branding, piercing, tattooing, or shaving.	16	10.2
Carry unnecessary items that do not belong to you.	2	1.2
Be required to remain silent.	4	2.5
Paddled, whipped, or beaten.	0	0
Be blindfolded or unaware of your location.	3	1.9
Forced to eat foods or other items.	0	0
Forced to perform sexual acts with the same gender.	1	0.6
Forced to perform sexual acts with the opposite gender.	1	0.6
Be forced to engage in physically demanding activities.	2	1.3
Kidnapped, transported, or abandoned.	0	0
Destroy or steal property.	0	0
Be tied up, taped, or confined to a space.	0	0

(N = 158)

## Conclusion

### Key Findings

- 53.8% of respondents have a clear understanding of the hazing policy at the university.
- There is a gap between the used definition of hazing and students' perceptions of what hazing is.

### Limitations

- Study population was limited to one medium-sized university.
- The sample size may not be representative of the students hazing behavior on the medium-sized mid-west university.
- Literature suggest having a 30-50% response rate while we only obtained a 7.3% response rate.

## Policy Implications & Future Research

### Policy Implications

- Design a prevention program for the campus community focusing on what hazing is, specifically the voluntary and involuntary nature of hazing.
- Make a commitment to educate the campus on the dangers and seriousness of hazing.

### Future Research

- Examine various others medium-sized universities.
- Focus on particular groups/organizations to examine hazing.
- We cannot measure hazing properly if we do not have an understanding of one accepted definition.

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