Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity/ Sorority Advisors

Volume 2 | Issue 1 Article 6

February 2006

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Recommended Citation

Ellsworth, Chad W. (2006) "Definitions of Hazing: Differences Among Selected Student Organizations," *Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors*: Vol. 2 : Iss. 1 , Article 6.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.25774/pvsd-8m03
Available at: https://scholarworks.wm.edu/oracle/vol2/iss1/6

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Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity Advisors
Vol. 2, Iss. 1, February 2006

DEFINITIONS OF HAZING: DIFFERENCES AMONG SELECTED STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS[1]

Chad W. Ellsworth

Fraternities, sororities, military organizations, athletic groups, and marching bands commonly are associated with hazing activities. Although such organizations have been linked to hazing activities, the fact that different entities and organizations have different definitions and perceptions of hazing has hindered any real effort to challenge and combat such activities. The purpose of this study was to investigate whether the activities students define as hazing differed among the selected student organizations. This study discovered statistically significant differences ($p<.05$) among the selected student organizations for physical hazing activities and psychological hazing activities, as well as statistically significant differences ($p<.05$) between women and men for physical hazing activities, psychological hazing activities, and other hazing activities. This study also identified 10 activities students in all groups identified as hazing, which moves us toward a common definition of hazing.

Although hazing has been a part of the culture of higher education, especially in some student organizations, for hundreds of years, it has become increasingly dangerous and deadly, and has become a serious concern for administrators and authorities (Nuwer, 1999). Between 1838 and 1969, 35 deaths that resulted from alcohol abuse and hazing were recorded. In the thirty years thereafter, a staggering 210 such deaths were reported.

Fraternities are the entities most frequently identified with the deadly outcomes of reckless hazing activities. However, sororities, military organizations, athletic teams, and marching bands also are receiving considerable attention (Crow & Rosner, 2002; Hollmann, 2002; Hoover, 1999; Hoover & Pollard, 2000; Novak, 2000; Nuwer, 1990, 1999; Shaw, 1992; Wegener, 2001; Winslow, 1999).

According to Hollmann (2002) and Crow and Rosner (2002), institutions of higher education are more likely to be sued because of an alcohol- or hazing-related death. In an increasingly litigious society, administrators must be proactive and seek to address more effectively dangerous and increasingly deadly hazing activities. Courts have ruled that administrators of colleges and universities have a "duty of care" to defend and promote the safety of their students, even though the long-held idea of *in loco parentis*, the idea that an institution should have a parental role in students' lives, was rejected in *Dixon v. Alabama State Board of Education* (1961). In two important hazing-related decisions, *Furek v. University of Delaware* (1991) and *Knoll v. Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska* (1999), a duty of care on the part of the institutions was

[1] This research study was summarized in two previous publications:
Ellsworth, C.W. (Winter 2005), Learning Opportunities: Understanding Students' Definitions of Hazing. *Perspectives*. Indianapolis, IN: Association of Fraternity Advisors.

Ellsworth, C.W. (2005), Learning Opportunities: Understanding Students' Definitions of Hazing. In Association of Fraternity Advisor (Ed.), *Issues in Focus: Hazing on Campus*. Indianapolis, IN: Association of Fraternity Advisors.

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inferred (Crow & Rosner, 2002). The fact that the university administrators knew hazing was involved was enough for the courts to rule that they should have acted to combat hazing (Hollmann, 2002; Reisberg, 1999). Finally, Butler and Glennen (1991) suggested that, if institutions sanctioned initiation rituals, administrators could match the social needs met by hazing activities and limit the risk associated with more dangerous alcohol- and hazing-related rites of passage.

Despite evidence that suggests higher education administrators should take action against hazing activities, staff continue to confront confusion, myths, and misperceptions. Hollmann (2002) argued that the lack of a common definition of hazing limits the effectiveness of anti-hazing action, legislation, and policies. The author further suggested that until there is consensus about the definition of hazing and student support for action against hazing, the problem will persist. For the purposes of this study, I compared laws and policies from different functional areas and geographical regions, and differences remain. Although some states recognize physical and psychological hazing activities, others recognize only physical hazing activities, or recognize hazing activities only in post-secondary institutions but not military or occupational settings. Likewise, some states have felony and misdemeanor penalties for hazing activities while others have only misdemeanor penalties (StopHazing.org, 2003).

Review of Literature

In recent years, Novak (2000) and Wegener (2001) began exploring differences by student organization affiliation at Texas A&M University and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, respectively. Novak's study demonstrated that fraternity and sorority affiliated members received more education about hazing activities than non-affiliated students do, and that more fraternity and sorority affiliated students than non-affiliates thought that hazing did not occur in their fraternal organizations. Novak also surveyed Texas A&M's Corps of Cadets and 70% either agreed or strongly agreed that some hazing activities associated with tradition continued even though administrators know about them, although only 57.4% of non-Corps of Cadets students surveyed agreed.

Similarly, Wegener (2001) found that both fraternity and sorority affiliated members and members of the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) agreed that some hazing activities associated with tradition continued even though University administrators know about them. Wegener stated that more fraternity and sorority affiliated members reported knowledge of university and state policies against hazing when compared to ROTC students. Although minorities of both groups reported being involved in hazing activities as a perpetrator or victim, most respondents said fraternities and sororities were most likely to have occurrences of hazing.

Psychological and sociological research studies have demonstrated that hazing activities are part of the social and cultural fabric of higher education, and that such activities have important, if misappropriated, roles in institutions and organizations (Aronson & Mills in Aronson, Wilson, & Akert, 1999; Butler & Glennen, 1991; Jones, 2000; Lodewijkx & Syroit, 2001; Schachter in Lodewijkx & Syroit, 2001; Schopler & Bateson, 1962; Sweet, 1999). Studies have also suggested that hazing activities mark transitions, provide ways for members to test newcomers in organizations, provide ways for newcomers to prove worthiness of membership, and provide ways for organizations to indoctrinate newcomers. The severity-attraction hypothesis proposed by Aronson and Mills stated that the more effort an individual puts toward reaching a goal or object, the more the individual will rationalize the goal or object as being worthy of such effort. Similarly,

https://scholarworks.wm.edu/oracle/vol2/iss1/6
DOI: https://doi.org/10.25774/pvsd-8m03

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Schachter proposed that when individuals face stressful or threatening situations, they would identify with other individuals, especially those who have gone through similar situations.

Hollman (2002) found that although hazing activities are functional in that they foster affiliation and identity in group members, they remain dangerous, harmful, and mostly secretive. Organizations have become more effective in carrying out and hiding hazing activities and students who are perpetrators or victims of hazing are reluctant to report such activities to authorities. Currently, 42 states and most colleges and universities have laws and policies against hazing, but a great amount of discrepancy remains. To confront hazing effectively, a common definition and set of perceptions about hazing, as well as common standards of unacceptable hazing activities should be established across functional areas and geographical regions.

Method

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether the activities that students define as hazing differ among student organizations. Specifically, this study investigated how those activities differed among fraternity members, sorority members, ROTC members, student athletes, and members of the marching band. The null hypothesis that guided this study was that student definitions of hazing activities do not differ among fraternity members, sorority members, ROTC members, student athletes, and members of the marching band. This was a quantitative study with a descriptive, cross-sectional design. The design included a comparison of student definitions for hazing activities among selected student organizations in order to describe how perceptions of hazing activities differed by student organization affiliation.

The variables for this study included student organization affiliation (independent variable) and the activities students defined as hazing activities (dependent variables). The independent variable was represented by categorical affiliation data such as fraternity member, sorority member, ROTC member, student athlete, or marching band member. The dependent variables, activities students defined as hazing activities, were represented by continuous data. For this study, I asked participants to complete a researcher-designed web-based survey, which consisted of 49 items. For 42 of these items, students indicated to what degree they agreed that each of the 42 items was a hazing activity. Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale. The remaining seven items asked for demographic information.

Of the 42 items that did not ask for demographic information, 5 items were identified as physical hazing, 2 items as psychological hazing, 9 items as both physical and psychological hazing, 8 items as other hazing, and 8 items as non-hazing activities by expert reviewers. In this way, the instrument measured respondents' definitions and perceptions of hazing activities according to the standard that was determined under an expert review. The experts who reviewed the instrument included the institution's Acting Director of the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life, a Captain from the Army ROTC, and an Associate Athletic Director, as well as two prominent authors in the area of hazing research. The remaining ten items were not identified by at least three of the experts with one of the above categories.

Examples of the 42 items included, "Complete a specific number of community service hours," "Drink or eat substances not intended for normal consumption," and "Perform chores or tasks for others." The items were not identified in any way as physical hazing, psychological hazing, or non-hazing on the instrument. Respondents were asked: "What activities, when done to or required of

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Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors, Vol. 2 [2006], Iss. 1, Art. 6

members or newcomers in your organization, do you agree are hazing activities? Please indicate to what degree you agree that each activity is a hazing activity."

Sample

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether activities that students defined as hazing behavior differed by student organization affiliation. Therefore, it was important to identify and include those student organizations most commonly associated with hazing activities. A stratified sampling technique was used and the population included fraternity members, sorority members, ROTC members, student athletes, and members of the marching band from a large, public, four-year research institution in the Mid-Atlantic region.

To control against heterogeneity of variance, it was important to have comparable sizes for each of the groups in the sample. The researcher selected a random sample from each of the above organizations through a systematic technique, in which every nth person was chosen. The smallest group in the population was the ROTC members, which included 32 students. Thus, the researcher sought to obtain approximately 30 usable responses from each of the groups. The total population of usable cases was 114 students.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data for this study were collected using a web-based survey instrument created and monitored by the researcher, and was hosted by software provided by Educational Benchmarking, Inc.

The data for this research were analyzed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) procedures. The mean differences of the activities students defined as hazing activities (dependent variable) were analyzed among student organizations (independent variable). Because the sample sizes of each of the student organizations differed, Levene's test was used to test against heterogeneity of variance.

Composite variables, including physical hazing activities, psychological hazing activities, both physical and psychological hazing activities, other hazing activities, and non-hazing activities were examined, as well as individual items. The mean scores for each activity (dependent variables) for each of the five groups (independent variables) were compared through a complex contrasts ANOVA in order to determine if significant differences existed among the five groups. For each significant difference, a Dunn (Bonferroni) test was used in order to determine which of the mean scores were significantly different. The significance level sought was $p<.05$.

Results

The results of this study indicated a number of contextual and cultural differences among the selected student organizations, which can inform administrator practice and future research. Most significantly, a number of differences between women and men were identified with regard to definitions and perceptions of hazing activities. The results have been presented in the groupings identified through the expert review.

Physical Hazing Activities

In the expert review, five items were identified as physical hazing activities: *consume alcoholic beverages; deprived of beverages or food by others; do calisthenics for excessive amounts of time or to excessive levels; forced to consume excessive amounts of alcoholic beverages;* and *march, walk, or run for excessive amounts of time or for excessive distances*. For the composite variable

https://scholarworks.wm.edu/oracle/vol2/iss1/6
DOI: https://doi.org/10.25774/pvsd-8m03

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that consisted of all of the activities identified by the expert reviewers as *physical hazing activities*, there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores for the five groups, $F(4, 94) = 2.90$, $p<.05$. The mean scores for each of the five groups were $M = 4.04$ ($SD = 0.87$) for fraternity members; $M = 4.39$ ($SD = 1.00$) for sorority members; $M = 3.47$ ($SD = 1.02$) for ROTC members; $M = 3.88$ ($SD = 0.80$) for student athletes; and $M = 4.17$ ($SD = 0.51$) for marching band members. A mean score of 4 indicated that a group agreed that the activities were hazing activities, whereas a standard deviation of 1 suggested scores were as low as 3 (neutral), or as high as 5 (strongly agree). A Dunn (Bonferroni) post hoc test revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between sorority members and ROTC members. In addition, for the composite variable *physical hazing activities*, there was a significant difference $t(85) = 2.33$, $p<.05$, between women ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 0.92$) and men ($M = 3.78$, $SD = 0.89$).

In the mean scores for the five groups, statistically significant differences were discovered ($p<.01$) for *do calisthenics for excessive amounts of time or to excessive levels,* $F(4,99) = 4.01$, and *march, walk, or run for excessive amounts of time or for excessive distances,* $F(4,99) = 4.77$ (see Table 1).

Table 1
Mean Scores for Physical Hazing Activities

Hazing Activity	Fraternity	Sorority	ROTC	NCAA	Marching Band	*F(x)*
Consume alcoholic beverages	*M* = 3.69	*M* = 4.40	*M* = 3.93	*M* = 3.62	*M* = 4.14	*2.05*
M = 3.93	SD = *1.30*	SD = *1.10*	SD = *1.44*	SD = *1.14*	SD = *0.69*	
SD = 1.20						
Deprived of beverages or food by others	*M* = 4.60	*M* = 4.38	*M* = 3.69	*M* = 4.12	*M* = 4.43	*1.58*
M = 4.22	SD = *0.74*	SD = *1.27*	SD = *1.40*	SD = *1.07*	SD = *0.79*	
SD = 1.15						
Do calisthenics for excessive amounts of time or to excessive levels	*M* = 3.80	*M* = 4.33	*M* = 2.88	*M* = 3.69	*M* = 4.25	*4.01**
M = 3.81	SD = *1.15*	SD = *1.24*	SD = *1.54*	SD = *1.16*	SD = *0.89*	
SD = 1.30						
Forced to consume excessive amounts of alcoholic beverages	*M* = 4.67	*M* = 4.37	*M* = 4.06	*M* = 4.49	*M* = 5.00	*1.00*
M = 4.45	SD = *0.62*	SD = *1.38*	SD = *1.48*	SD = *1.09*	SD = *0.00*	
SD = 1.17						
March, walk, or run for excessive amounts of time or for excessive distances	*M* = 3.47	*M* = 4.10	*M* = 2.44	*M* = 3.58	*M* = 3.25	*4.77**
M = 3.51	SD = *1.51*	SD = *1.26*	SD = *1.15*	SD = *1.16*	SD = *1.16*	
SD = 1.33						

1 = Strongly disagree that each activity is a hazing activity, 5 = Strongly agree
* p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001

A Dunn (Bonferroni) post hoc test revealed that there were statistically significant differences between sorority members ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 1.24$) and ROTC members ($M = 2.88$, $SD = 1.54$) for *do calisthenics for excessive amounts of time or to excessive levels*, and between sorority members ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 1.26$) and ROTC members ($M = 2.44$, $SD = 1.15$), and ROTC members and student athletes ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 1.16$), for *march, walk, or run for excessive amounts of time or for excessive distances.*

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Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors, Vol. 2 [2006], Iss. 1, Art. 6

With regard to the differences between women and men, there were statistically significant differences ($p<.01$) for the two groups for the two physical hazing activities *do calisthenics for excessive amounts of time or to excessive levels* $t(90) = 3.22$, and *march, walk, or run for excessive amounts of time or for excessive distances* $t(90) = 3.89$. In both cases, the mean scores for women $M = 4.14$ ($SD = 1.18$) and $M = 4.02$ ($SD = 1.19$), respectively were higher than those for men $M = 3.31$ ($SD = 1.30$) and $M = 3.00$ ($SD = 1.33$).

Psychological Hazing Activities

The expert reviewers categorized two items, *perform in public, such as dancing or singing* and *subjected to verbal abuse or harassment*, as psychological hazing activities. For the composite variable that consisted of all of the activities identified by the expert reviewers as *psychological hazing activities*, there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores for the five groups, though a Dunn (Bonferroni) post hoc test did not reveal for what groups there was a significant difference.

In addition, for the composite variable *psychological hazing activities*, there was a significant difference, $t(90) = 3.29$, $p<.001$, between women ($M = 3.87$, $SD = 1.07$) and men ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 1.07$).

Although only the second psychological hazing activity, *subjected to verbal abuse or harassment*, showed a significant difference among the selected student organizations, both psychological hazing activities showed statistically significant differences ($p<.05$) between women and men. For *perform in public, such as dancing or singing,* $t(93) = 2.47$, whereas for subjected to verbal abuse or harassment, $t(91) = 3.00$. In both cases, the mean scores for women ($M = 3.43$, $SD = 1.31$) and ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 1.12$), respectively, were higher than those for men ($M = 2.79$, $SD = 1.22$) and ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 1.25$), respectively.

Table 2
Mean Scores for Psychological Hazing Activities

Hazing Activity	Fraternity	Sorority	ROTC	NCAA	Marching Band	*F(x)*
Perform in public, such as dancing or singing $M = 3.20$ $SD = 1.30$	$M = 2.94$ SD = *1.34*	$M = 3.45$ SD = *1.36*	$M = 3.13$ SD = *1.20*	$M = 3.30$ SD = *1.20*	$M = 2.50$ SD = *1.51*	*1.11*
Subjected to verbal abuse or harassment $M = 3.83$ $SD = 1.24$	$M = 3.40$ SD = *1.40*	$M = 4.28$ SD = *1.19*	$M = 3.31$ SD = *1.25*	$M = 4.00$ SD = *1.11*	$M = 3.25$ SD = *1.04*	*2.91**

1 = Strongly disagree that each activity is a hazing activity, 5 = Strongly agree
* p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001

Physical and Psychological Hazing Activities

The nine activities identified as both physical and psychological hazing activities included: *deprived of sleep by others; drink or eat substances not intended for normal consumption; handcuffed or tied to a building or structure; kidnap a current member of one's organization; participate in streaking or other activities while naked; perform feat of strength or physical activity for excessive amounts of time; perform sexual acts; receive a brand or tattoo;* and *struck by an object, such as a ball, baton, fist, or paddle*. The composite variable that consisted of all of the activities identified by the

https://scholarworks.wm.edu/oracle/vol2/iss1/6
DOI: https://doi.org/10.25774/pvsd-8m03

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expert reviewers as *both physical and psychological hazing activities* did not indicate a statistically significant mean difference, $F(4, 90) = 2.08$, $p<.05$.

Table 3
Mean Scores for Both Physical and Psychological Hazing Activities

Hazing Activity	Fraternity	Sorority	ROTC	NCAA	Marching Band	*F(x)*
Deprived of sleep by others	*M* = 4.40	*M* = 4.16	*M* = 3.94	*M* = 4.09	*M* = 4.43	*0.44*
M = 4.16	SD = *0.83*	SD = *1.27*	SD = *1.29*	SD = *1.11*	SD = *1.13*	
SD = 1.14						
Drink or eat substances not intended for normal consumption	*M* = 4.20	*M* = 4.33	*M* = 3.75	*M* = 4.32	*M* = 4.86	*1.25*
	SD = *1.01*	SD = *1.40*	SD = *1.29*	SD = *1.09*	SD = *0.38*	
M = 4.25						
SD = 1.19						
Handcuffed or tied to a building or structure	*M* = 4.29	*M* = 4.52	*M* = 4.19	*M* = 4.12	*M* = 4.71	*0.65*
	SD = *1.27*	SD = *1.24*	SD = *1.38*	SD = *1.23*	SD = *0.49*	
M = 4.31						
SD = 1.22						
Kidnap a current member of one's organization	*M* = 3.29	*M* = 3.90	*M* = 3.25	*M* = 3.86	*M* = 3.00	*1.79*
	SD = *1.44*	SD = *1.29*	SD = *1.18*	SD = *1.17*	SD = *1.07*	
M = 3.63						
SD = 1.26						
Participate in streaking or other activities while naked	*M* = 4.00	*M* = 4.52	*M* = 3.93	*M* = 3.89	*M* = 4.38	*1.42*
	SD = *1.32*	SD = *1.24*	SD = *1.28*	SD = *1.04*	SD = *0.92*	
M = 4.13						
SD = 1.18						
Perform feat of strength or physical activity for excessive amount of time	*M* = 3.47	*M* = 4.21	*M* = 2.94	*M* = 3.47	*M* = 4.13	*3.38**
	SD = 1.46	*SD* = 1.29	*SD* = 1.09	*SD* = 1.25	*SD* = 0.83	
M = 3.64						
SD = 1.30						
Perform sexual acts	*M* = 4.07	*M* = 4.48	*M* = 3.79	*M* = 4.20	*M* = 4.43	*0.85*
M = 4.22	*SD* = 1.33	*SD* = 1.33	*SD* = 1.19	*SD* = 1.23	*SD* = 0.79	
SD = 1.24						
Receive a brand or tattoo	*M* = 3.93	*M* = 4.55	*M* = 4.00	*M* = 4.31	*M* = 4.57	*1.10*
M = 4.30	*SD* = 1.44	*SD* = 1.15	*SD* = 1.36	*SD* = 0.95	*SD* = 0.53	
SD = 1.14						
Struck by an object, such as a ball, baton, fist, or paddle	*M* = 4.00	*M* = 4.41	*M* = 4.00	*M* = 4.51	*M* = 4.63	*0.99*
	SD = 1.41	*SD* = 1.18	*SD* = 1.41	*SD* = 1.04	*SD* = 0.52	
M = 4.34						
SD = 1.18						

1 = Strongly disagree that each activity is a hazing activity, 5 = Strongly agree
* p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001

For *perform feat of strength or physical activity for excessive amounts of time*, a significant difference at $p<.05$ was found (see Table 3). A Dunn (Bonferroni) post hoc test showed that the difference was between sorority members ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 1.29$) and ROTC members ($M = 2.94$, $SD = 1.09$). Similarly, there was a significant difference between women and men for *perform feat of strength or physical activity for excessive amount of time*, $t(90) = 2.75$, $p<.01$; the means and standard deviations were $M = 4.06$ ($SD = 1.24$) and $M = 3.36$ ($SD = 1.21$) for women and men, respectively.

Published by W&M ScholarWorks, 2006

Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity Advisors
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Other Hazing Activities

During the expert review, three of the five expert reviewers identified eight activities as physical hazing, psychological hazing, or both physical and psychological hazing, though they did not agree on a specific type of hazing activity. Such activities, which were identified as other hazing activities, included: *blindfolded during activities; participate in an activity against your will; participate in drinking games; perform chores or tasks for others; shave one's head or other part of one's body; stand in line for excessive amounts of time; steal an item;* and *stranded alone or with other newcomers*. For the composite variable that consisted of all of the activities identified by the expert reviewers as *other hazing activities*, there was not a statistically significant mean difference, $F(4, 94) = 2.07$, $p<.05$.

In addition, for the composite variable *other hazing activities*, there was a significant difference, $t(85) = 2.91$, $p<.01$, between women ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 0.97$) and men ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 0.82$). Of the eight activities that were identified as other hazing activities, ANOVA analysis indicated one statistically significant difference, *participate in drinking games* ($p<.05$). The Dunn (Bonferroni) test showed that there were significant differences between sorority members and ROTC members, and sorority members and student athletes (see Table 4).

Table 4
Mean Scores for Other Hazing Activities

Hazing Activity	Fraternity	Sorority	ROTC	NCAA	Marching Band	*F(x)*
Blindfolded during activities	*M* = 2.47	*M* = 3.12	*M* = 2.73	*M* = 3.08	*M* = 2.00	*2.30*
M = 2.88	SD = *1.13*	SD = *1.48*	SD = *1.03*	SD = *0.97*	SD = *0.76*	
SD = 1.19						
Participate in an activity against your will	*M* = 3.31	*M* = 4.03	*M* = 3.37	*M* = 3.92	*M* = 3.71	*1.43*
M = 3.76	SD = *1.25*	SD = *1.30*	SD = *1.26*	SD = *1.14*	SD = *1.38*	
SD = 1.24						
Participate in drinking games	*M* = 3.12	*M* = 4.17	*M* = 3.00	*M* = 3.27	*M* = 3.38	*3.41*
M = 3.47	SD = *1.59*	SD = *1.05*	SD = *1.15*	SD = *1.26*	SD = *1.41*	
SD = 1.31						
Perform chores or tasks for others	*M* = 3.31	*M* = 3.93	*M* = 3.50	*M* = 3.43	*M* = 3.38	*1.01*
M = 3.56	SD = *1.20*	SD = *1.22*	SD = *1.21*	SD = *1.26*	SD = *0.92*	
SD = 1.21						
Shave one's head or other part of one's body	*M* = 3.71	*M* = 4.34	*M* = 3.47	*M* = 3.56	*M* = 4.00	*2.00*
M = 3.82	SD = *1.20*	SD = *1.14*	SD = *1.42*	SD = *1.34*	SD = *1.15*	
SD = 1.30						
Stand in line for excessive amounts of time	*M* = 2.87	*M* = 3.77	*M* = 3.00	*M* = 3.32	*M* = 3.50	*1.61*
M = 3.35	*SD* = 1.41	*SD* = 1.33	*SD* = 1.41	*SD* = 1.18	*SD* = 1.20	
SD = 1.31						
Steal an item	*M* = 3.50	*M* = 4.31	*M* = 3.69	*M* = 4.03	*M* = 4.63	*1.81*
M = 4.03	*SD* = 1.22	*SD* = 1.20	*SD* = 1.45	*SD* = 1.23	*SD* = 0.74	
SD = 1.25						
Stranded alone or with other newcomers	*M* = 3.53	*M* = 3.97	*M* = 3.19	*M* = 3.62	*M* = 3.38	*1.05*
M = 3.62	*SD* = 1.25	*SD* = 1.32	*SD* = 1.38	*SD* = 1.34	*SD* = 0.74	
SD = 1.30						

1 = Strongly disagree that each activity is a hazing activity, 5 = Strongly agree
* p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.25774/pvsd-8m03

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Even though there was only one statistically significant difference among the five groups for the eight activities identified as *other hazing activities*, there were five significant differences between women and men for those activities. The activities *blindfolded during activities* and *perform chores or tasks for others* were significant at $p<.05$, while *participate in an activity against your will* was significant at $p<.01$, and *shave one's head or other part of one's body*, and *stand in line for excessive amounts of time* were significant at $p<.01$, For these activities, the mean scores for women were: $M = 3.11$ ($SD = 1.22$); $M = 3.69$ ($SD = 1.24$); $M = 4.16$ ($SD = 1.20$); $M = 4.16$ ($SD = 1.11$); and $M = 3.56$ ($SD = 1.27$), respectively. For men, the mean scores were $M = 2.56$ ($SD = 1.07$); $M = 3.17$ ($SD = 1.08$); $M = 3.47$ ($SD = 1.20$); $M = 3.22$ ($SD = 1.35$); and $M = 2.78$ ($SD = 1.11$).

Non-Hazing Activities

Finally, although this study first focused on the activities students defined as hazing activities, it also was important to examine the activities that were not considered hazing activities. According to the expert review, eight activities were non-hazing activities. Those activities included: *attend educational presentations or programs; attend mandatory study halls; complete a specific number of community service hours; learn historical facts about one's organization; maintain a minimum grade point average;, memorize and recite facts about one's organization; study a specific amount of time;* and *wear a specific clothing item or color of clothing item.*

For the composite variable that consisted of all of the activities identified by the expert reviewers as *non-hazing activities*, there was a statistically significant mean difference, $F(4, 99) = 3.40$, $p<.05$. The mean scores for each of the five groups were $M = 1.90$ ($SD = 0.62$) for fraternity members; $M = 2.09$ ($SD = 0.68$) for sorority members; $M = 1.98$ ($SD = 0.73$) for ROTC members; $M = 2.03$ ($SD = 0.50$) for student athletes; and $M = 1.23$ ($SD = 0.37$) for marching band members. A mean score of 2 indicated that a group disagreed that the activities were hazing activities, whereas a standard deviation of 1 suggested scores were as low as 1 (strongly disagree), or as high as 3 (neutral).

All Hazing Activities

A continuum of the mean scores for hazing activities for the five student organizations included in this research would demonstrate that fewer ROTC members identified activities as hazing activities, whereas more sorority members identified such activities as hazing activities. For all hazing activities, including physical, psychological, both physical and psychological, and other hazing activities, the mean score for ROTC members was 3.47, whereas for sorority members it was 4.17. For fraternity members, it was 3.67 while for student athletes and members of the marching band, it was 3.83 and 3.91, respectively.

Summary

Although only a few statistically significant differences in the activities students defined as hazing activities were discovered, there were some statistically significant differences, most of which were between sorority members and ROTC members and such differences were present for three of the five types of hazing activities. Those types included physical hazing activities, both physical and psychological hazing activities, and other hazing activities. Physical hazing activities where significant differences were present included *do calisthenics for excessive amounts of time or to excessive levels*, both physical and psychological hazing activities included *perform feat of strength or physical activity for excessive amounts of time*, and other hazing activities included *participate in drinking games.*

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The data collected in this study suggested that there were significant differences in the activities students defined as hazing activities among the selected student organizations. The data showed that, for the composite variables *physical hazing activities* and *psychological hazing activities*, there were significant differences among the selected student organizations. Thus, the null hypothesis that the activities students defined as hazing activities do not differ among fraternity members, sorority members, ROTC members, student athletes, and members of the marching band was rejected.

For the entire sample, there were ten activities that the respondents agreed, as evidenced by mean scores greater than four, were hazing activities when done to or required of members or newcomers. They included: *forced to consume excessive amounts of alcoholic beverages; struck by an object, such as a ball, baton, fist, or paddle; handcuffed or tied to a building or structure; receive a brand or tattoo; drink or eat substances not intended for normal consumption; deprived of beverages or food by others; perform sexual acts; participate in streaking or other activities while naked; deprived of sleep by others;* and *steal an item.*

There were two statistically significant differences between ROTC members and student athletes. Such differences were evident for the physical hazing activity, *march, walk, or run for excessive amounts of time or for excessive distances*, and one other hazing activity, *participate in drinking games.*

In addition, a number of statistically significant differences were present between women and men, including significant differences in four of the five types of hazing activities, including physical hazing activities, psychological hazing activities, both physical and psychological hazing activities, and other hazing activities. Such hazing activities included: *do calisthenics for excessive amounts of time or to excessive levels; march, walk, or run for excessive amounts of time or for excessive distances; perform in public, such as dancing or singing; subjected to verbal abuse or harassment; perform feat of strength or physical activity for excessive amount of time; blindfolded during activities; perform chores or tasks for others; participate in an activity against your will; shave one's head or other part of one's body;* and *stand in line for excessive amounts of time.*

Discussion

Until recently, researchers have not paid a great amount of attention to differences in perceptions toward hazing activities across different student organizations. This study supports the findings of previous research. For example, Novak (2000) and Wegener (2001) concluded that fraternity and sorority members demonstrated considerable knowledge about hazing activities. By comparing the mean scores, which reflect the extent to which a respondent agreed that selected activities were hazing, there was compelling evidence that fraternity and sorority members had more knowledge about, and tended to agree with the activities that were identified as hazing activities, when compared to the other student organizations included in this study.

This study demonstrated that there are some activities that were identified as hazing activities among the majority of respondents, regardless of group affiliation. An analysis of the overall mean scores indicated that students in this study possessed some common definition of hazing activities. Beginning with the activities students most strongly agreed were hazing activities, they included: *forced to consume excessive amounts of alcoholic beverages*; *struck by an object, such as a ball, baton, fist, or paddle*; *handcuffed or tied to a building or structure*; *receive a brand or tattoo*; *drink or eat substances not intended for normal consumption*; *deprived of beverages or food by others*;

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perform sexual acts; *participate in streaking or other activities while naked*; *deprived of sleep by others*; and *steal an item*.

In this study, some of the differences among the selected student groups may be due to the activities that are inherent to those organizations. In such cases, those activities may be considered necessary components of the organizational culture, and not necessarily hazing activities. For example, while sorority members agreed that to *march, walk, or run for excessive amounts of time or for excessive distances* was a hazing activity ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 1.26$), ROTC members did not think that activity was a hazing activity ($M = 2.44$, $SD = 1.15$). For the ROTC, such activities are necessary parts of the organization's training. Similarly, some activities, whether or not those activities are hazing activities, are not part of the culture of some student organizations. For example, the mean scores and standard deviations for the items *forced to consume excessive amounts of alcoholic beverages* and *drink or eat substances not intended for normal consumption* for members of the marching band suggested that those students strongly identified such activities as hazing activities with very little variance in their opinions. In this way, the findings also suggest that hazing activities may have contextual elements, as evidenced by the fact that some student organizations strongly agreed that activities were hazing activities when others did not.

The most important findings of this study were the significant differences between women and men with regard to defining hazing activities. For the composite variables *physical hazing activities*, *psychological hazing activities*, and *other hazing activities*, as well as for a number of the individual activities, there were significant differences between women and men. According to Gilligan's theory of women's moral development (1982), the care orientation and the focus on relationships and responsibility suggest that, for many women, moral thinking is different from men's, which relies on individual rights and justice. In such a way, the moral thinking and ways in which women relate to others may explain differences between women and men with regard to perceptions of hazing activities. If the results of this study are contextualized with Gilligan's theory, perhaps women's moral thinking may preclude many of the hazing activities that are more accepted in groups of men and in male-dominated organizations, such as fraternities and military organizations. Nonetheless, Shaw (1992) reported that a significantly higher number of women participated in hazing activities as both new members and affiliated members than did not, and that a higher number of women did not define such activities as hazing.

This study offers evidence that (1) students' definitions of hazing activities can be strongly influenced by one's group affiliation or gender; and (2) students, regardless of group membership, for the most part are in agreement that certain behaviors are definable as hazing activities. Moreover, this study contributes a deeper understanding of the complex topic of hazing to the developing literature.

Limitations

A primary limitation of this study was the low response rate (26%) of the total population surveyed. The respondents included 16 fraternity members, 36 sorority members, 17 ROTC members, 37 student athletes, and 8 members of the marching band. In addition, there were a number of limitations that resulted from the context within which this study was conducted. For example, the Army ROTC was a relatively new student organization at the institution where this study was conducted, so traditions may not have been as entrenched as those of other ROTC organizations at other institutions with a longer history. In addition, the respective programs of the Office of

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Fraternity and Sorority Life, Athletic Department, Music Department, and Division of Student Affairs may be different from those at other institutions. Therefore, caution is advised before generalizing the results of this study to other campuses.

Areas for Future Research

With some knowledge about the activities students define as hazing, future research studies should explore whether or not such activities are harmful or inappropriate, whether or not students have been victims or have participated in such activities, and whether or not students would report or seek to intervene in such activities. Similarly, because this study examined definitions and perceptions of hazing only through the eyes of students who were members of the selected student organizations, it would be useful to explore the definitions and perceptions of hazing through the eyes of administrators, faculty and staff members, as well as students who are not involved with any of the student organizations selected for this study. Because this study also demonstrated the differences between women and men with regard to definitions and perceptions of hazing activities, it may be beneficial for future research to explore the reasons for such differences. One possible explanation may be tied to the differences in moral and ethical development of women and men as proposed by Gilligan (1982).

In addition, it would be beneficial for administrators and advisors to explore why students participate in hazing activities, and what outcomes students seek through participation in them. In such a way, administrators and advisors would be able to design and implement alternative, appropriate initiation rituals and rites of passage for the students with whom they work, while eliminating or limiting the danger and risk associated with inappropriate hazing activities.

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