

2014

# The Prevalence, Reasons, and Effects of Hazing on Female Student Athletes

Danielle Steffa

*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.

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The Prevalence, Reasons, and Effects of Hazing

on Female Student Athletes

(TITLE)

BY

Danielle Steffa

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

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**The Prevalence, Reasons, and Effects of Hazing on Female Student Athletes**

**Danielle Steffa**

**May 14, 2014**

## DEDICATION

*This thesis is dedicated to student athletes. Being a student athlete comes with many challenges and also many rewards. May each of you have a positive college experience without being subjected to hazing. I encourage each of you to focus on being positive, encouraging teammates that build each other up.*

## ABSTRACT

The present study was designed to understand the prevalence, reasons, and effects of hazing on female student athletes at a midsized, Midwest institution. Hazing is defined as any activity expected of someone joining a group that humiliates, degrades, or risks emotions and/or physical harm, regardless of that person's willingness to participate (Gersehel, Katz-Sidlow, Small, & Zandieh (2003). By using a modified survey done by Hoover (1999) and Allan and Madden (2008), the frequency, reasons why female athletes believe hazing happens, and any effects felt by these athletes was measured. Results showed there are many types of hazing behaviors that are happening at this institution. There were not statistically significant differences in the frequency of hazing behaviors of students from different demographic backgrounds, except for those who play on team sports compared to those on individual sports. The researcher provided several recommendations for future research of hazing within female athletics, as well as recommendations for future practices in collegiate athletics.

Keywords: *Hazing, student athletes, female student athletes, athletics.*

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## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

Each year around 55% of college students involved in clubs, teams, and school organizations experience hazing in some form (“Hazing Information”, 2012). This statistic represents over half of the students that are involved in extracurricular activities in college. Alcohol consumption, sexual acts, sleep deprivation, and vandalism can be viewed as forms of hazing (Keating, Pomerantz, Pommer, Ritt, Miller, & McCormick, 2005). Hazing is a problem that affects students mentally and physically. Athletic teams are no exception to this problem. According to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), across the nation there are over 400,000 student athletes participating in sports at over 1,000 colleges (“About the NCAA”, 2012). Hoover (1999) revealed that nearly 1 in 5 student athletes were exposed to unacceptable and illegal hazing activities. Newell (2008) said that 50% of female athletes were hazed in some way throughout their collegiate career. Among female athletes it was discovered that the most common form of hazing was alcohol related (Hoover, 1999).

Hazing is in the news more frequently than ever before. The most recent report of hazing comes from Cornell University, where Tau Epsilon Phi Fraternity forced its new members to drink alcohol while current members removed the new member’s clothes (Kaminer, 2013). Reportedly, two students were taken to the hospital and treated for severe intoxication. The fraternity has been shut down pending further investigation. Another case that has made headlines lately is a hazing incident at Northern Illinois University, where one student was found dead after a night of excessive drinking at a fraternity party. Twenty-two members of Pi Kappa Alpha are being charged, five of them with felonies, in regards to the death of the freshman new member (Schulte, 2012).

Hazing in America is not strictly restricted to fraternities and sororities. It has been happening in all sorts of student organizations, athletics, and more. Ellsworth (2004) found that the perceptions of hazing change among different groups on campus. His study focused on Fraternities and Sororities, Student Athletes, ROTC, and Marching Band Members. Members of all groups showed different levels of what they believed were hazing. The group that found the most behaviors to be considered hazing was sororities, then marching band, student athletes, ROTC, and finally fraternities.

Hazing in sports has become more prevalent in recent years. Hoover (1999) found that more than 250,000 athletes experienced some sort of hazing in one year's time. Specifically female athletes have been in the news for their use of alcohol in hazing behaviors. The State University of New York at Geneseo Women's Volleyball team was suspended in Fall 2012 for hazing freshman members of their team. Eleven varsity members were charged after freshman teammates reported being blindfolded and forced to drink shots (Herbert, 2012). Sadly, hazing within athletics is on the rise. Student athletes will often argue that hazing increases team cohesion (Brewer, Cornelius, Linder, & Van Raalte, 2007). However, Brewer and colleague's research showed that this is not the case; in fact hazing often makes athletes feel less connected with their teammates and decreases team cohesion.

The problem with hazing is not only its negative effect mentally and physically, but students fail to recognize that many activities they are participating in are in fact hazing. One of the biggest problems is that 9 out of 10 students who have reported experiencing a hazing behavior do not identify themselves as being hazed (Allan & Madden, 2008). Student athletes struggle adjusting to college just like any other first year student; however, the added stress of practices, games, and the team dynamics add to their adjustment challenges. Female athletes

often feel more threatened by other female athletes. Krane (2005) suggested that female athletes seek approval from others. Therefore, there is pressure to engage in hazing behaviors more frequently for fear of not getting approval from others. The most popular reason for engaging in hazing behavior is that it is a tradition and it increases team morale (Wilfert, 2007). It is important to realize that instead, hazing demoralizes athletes and negatively impacts the team as a whole.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to identify how often and what type of hazing activities female student athletes at a midsized, Midwestern university were engaging in and why they participated in these activities.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were proposed:

**R1.** What is the prevalence of hazing among female athletes at a midsized, Midwestern, university? (Allen & Madden, 2008)

**R2.** What are the main reasons female athletes choose to engage in these behaviors? (Krane and Waldron, 2005)

**R3.** What effect does hazing have on female student athletes?

### **Significance**

There is limited research on hazing specifically with female athletes. Since there is a large number of female athletes and hazing seems to be on the rise, it is essential that this phenomenon is examined.

This study also helps athletes, coaches, and administrators become aware of what activities are happening within the female athletic teams at a midsized, Midwestern university.

The findings of the present study may bring awareness of the issue and influence hazing prevention programs.

Lastly, this study will also help student affairs professionals understand in what ways hazing occurs on athletic teams and what are some of the effects of hazing. Student Affairs professionals need to identify some of the key issues that influence hazing and identify strategies for managing the problem.

### **Limitations of the Study**

There are a few limitations to the study. The proposed study is only based on female athletes at a midsized, Midwestern university and results could differ at a different institution. Another limitation is the study is limited to female athletes. There was no male participation and results could vary if men participated. Finally, the study is only significant to female students who are involved in athletic teams and may not generalize to the campus wide population. Females in other organizations could experience different results.

### **Definitions of Terms**

The following is a list of definitions of terms that are used throughout this study:

**Hazing.** Hazing is “any activity expected of someone joining a group that humiliates, degrades, or risks emotions and/or physical harm, regardless of that person’s willingness to participate” (Gersehel, Katz-Sidlow, Small, & Zandieh (2003).

**Acceptable Behaviors.** Acceptable behaviors are “positive activities that encourage team building” (Allan & Madden, 2008).

**Questionable Behaviors.** Questionable behaviors are “humiliating or degrading activities, but no dangerous or potentially illegal activities” (Allan & Madden, 2008).

**Alcohol- Related Activities.** Alcohol-related activities are “drinking contests, exclusive of other dangerous or potentially illegal activities” (Allan & Madden, 2008).

**Unacceptable Behaviors.** Unacceptable behaviors are “activities that carry a high probability of danger or injury, or could result in criminal charges” (Allan & Madden, 2008).

### **Summary**

Chapter one contains a detailed plan of the proposed study. After reading this chapter, one should know what to expect from the rest of this study, including the purpose, significance, limitations, and research questions. Chapter two contains a detailed literature review of hazing. The topics discussed will be the history of hazing, hazing related to college students, athletes, female athletes, and hazing prevention programs. Chapter three will discuss the methods that were used to conduct the study. Chapter four discusses the results of the present study. Finally, Chapter five discusses how the present study connects to past research and offers recommendations for the practice and future research.

## CHAPTER II

### Review of Literature

A review of literature was conducted concerning relevant research on hazing as it related to female athletes. This chapter focuses on the history of hazing and general findings, hazing among college students, hazing among athletes, and finally hazing among female athletes.

#### History of Hazing

Hazing has been a part of initiation practices since Plato's time (Campo, Poulos, & Sipple, 2005). It was already a common practice and consisted mostly of pranks that taught new members "a lesson". In the 1600's hazing was known as *pennalism* and was a requirement for graduation. University administrators and upperclassmen thought that underclassmen were uncivilized and needed to be groomed (Finkel, 2002). This practice was abolished in the 1700's because of serious injuries and deaths. According to Finkel's (2002) "History of Hazing", in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century hazing was accepted again at colleges and universities as a way for new students to learn respect. Today, hazing is as prevalent as ever but the types of hazing behaviors have changed.

The type and severity of hazing has increased. The first state to pass anti-hazing laws was New York in 1894 (Scheffer, 2012). According to the *Cornell Daily Sun* newspaper, the law made it unlawful for anyone to engage in hazing while attending the public schools or institutions of learning while in the state of New York (A Bill Against Hazing, 1894). This law was passed as a result of an incident at Cornell University where sophomore students released chlorine gas into a banquet hall where the freshman dinner was being held. One staff member died and several of the freshman students had to be treated for their injuries (Sheffer, 2012).



Forty-four states have since passed anti-hazing laws. The states that do not have hazing laws are Alaska, Montana, South Dakota, Hawaii, New Mexico, and Wyoming (Stop-Hazing, 2012). Research indicated that hazing often starts in high school and then continues into college (Kowalski & Waldron, 2009). Gershel, Katz-Sidlow, Small, and Clement (2003) found that “between 17.4% and 36.2% of middle school, high school, and college athletes self reported engaging in hazing experiences” (p.334). A large amount of middle and high school students are being exposed to hazing at a young age. This gives students the perception that it’s acceptable to engage in these behaviors when they reach college.

Allan (2004) defined hazing as “any activity expected of someone joining a group or to maintain full status in a group that humiliates, degrades, or risks emotional/physical harm, regardless of the person’s willingness to participate” (p. 1). Allan noted that hazing has evolved and there is a change in the types of behaviors that are now being shown.

“In years past, hazing practices were typically considered harmless pranks or comical antics associated with young men in fraternities. Hazing extends far beyond college fraternities and is experienced by boys/men and girls/women in school groups, university organizations, athletic teams, the military, and other social and professional organizations” (Allan, 2004, p. 2).

Currently, hazing continues to be a relevant problem on college campuses, and more commonly in athletics (Crow & Rosner, 2002). A study completed at Alfred University found that 80% of student athletes reported they had been subjected to questionable or unacceptable hazing behaviors and 1 in 5 was subject to illegal hazing including beatings, kidnapping, and

abandonment (Hoover, 1999). With this high percentage of athletes involved in some sort of hazing, there is a need for further attention to this topic.

Recently, the State University of New York at Geneseo suspended the women's volleyball team for the entire season after hazing allegations were brought against them. According to the *Livingston County News*, "Eleven team members face charges of hazing and unlawfully dealing with a minor for summoning eight freshmen on the team to 36 Court Street. The women were handcuffed, blindfolded and ordered to drink shots of vodka" (Gillespie, 2012, p. 1). Later it was reported that one woman had to be taken to the hospital because of alcohol poisoning. Her blood alcohol content registered at .26 percent. The legal limit to drive in Illinois is .08, meaning she was three times the legal limit to drive and she was under the legal drinking age of 21. The team's season was suspended until further notice.

Although the types of hazing behaviors have changed over time, they are still prevalent in the college environment. Not only have athletic teams experienced these problems, hazing behaviors have also been noticed in a variety of student organizations.

### **Hazing in College**

Joining student organizations is something that is highly encouraged for incoming first year students. Astin's Theory of Student involvement explains that the more involved a student is, the better they will perform academically, involved meaning someone who "devotes considerable energy to studying, spends much time on campus, participates actively in student organizations, and interacts frequently with faculty members and other students" (Astin, 1999, p.518). Initiation practices are often associated with these organizations. Most of them are considered harmless, but sometimes hazing is involved. Ellsworth (2004) found many different types of hazing behaviors were observed in student organizations. Organizations in his study

included fraternities, sororities, ROTC, NCAA athletic teams, and marching bands. The types of activities were divided into different categories: physical hazing, psychological hazing, both physical and psychological hazing, other hazing, and not hazing. The participants were 114 students spread across the different organizations. Scoring for the questions was as follows: 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).

In physical hazing activities there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores for the five groups ( $p < .05$ ). Marching band members had the highest prevalence of physical hazing, followed by fraternity members, then student athletes, ROTC members, and finally sororities. For psychological hazing activities, there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores for the five groups, ( $p < .05$ ). Sorority members engaged in psychological hazing the most out of any of the organizations. Student athletes had the second highest frequency of psychological hazing, followed by ROTC members, fraternities, and finally marching band members. For all hazing activities, including physical, psychological, both physical and psychological, and other hazing activities, sororities had the highest frequency of hazing behaviors, followed by marching band members, student athletes, fraternities, and then ROTC members.

Ellsworth's (2004) study indicated that hazing is very prevalent in many different types of student organizations on a college or university campus. A 2005 study showed that the reasons for engaging in these behaviors for students were because of undergraduate's social dependence on group opinion, conveying hierarchy, and to prove skills and attitude (Keating,

Pomerantz, Pommer, Ritt, Miller, & McCormick). In other words, students engaged in these behaviors because of the need to fit in and to prove to others who was in charge.

Most commonly in the news are hazing incidents within fraternities and sororities.

Michael Fernandes, a California State University student, recalled his experiences with hazing in his fraternity. One of Michael's closest friends and fraternity brothers, Matthew Carrington, died after a fraternity ritual. Michael recalls having to drink excessive amounts of water. Around 2 a.m., Michael left and he thought the rest of his fraternity brothers were done as well. The next day he found out that his brother Matthew had died. Michael said, "The hazing continued until around 4 a.m. when Matt had a seizure, after which no one called the ambulance until he stopped breathing an hour later. An hour after that, he was dead" (Fernandez, 2010, p. 9). Students all across the United States have similar stories; however, these personal accounts are not just in the Fraternity and Sorority world. Fraternities and sororities are scrutinized the most for hazing behaviors; however, recent research has shown that varsity student athlete's participation in hazing has also increased (Hoover, 1999; Crow & Rosner, 2004; Allan & Madden, 2008; Kowalski & Waldron, 2009).

### **Hazing Among Student Athletes**

Hazing among student athletes at colleges and universities has been on the rise. Hoover (1999) conducted research on hazing using 325,000 athletes at more than 100,000 NCAA affiliated schools and high schools from across the United States. Findings indicated that more than 250,000 athletes experienced some sort of hazing, which is 76% of all student athletes surveyed. Athletes most at risk were men: non-Greek members; and either swimmers, divers, soccer, or lacrosse players. When asked about the type of hazing activities that were done the following was found: 19% reported acceptable initiation activities (attending preseason trainings,

doing volunteer work with the organization, or taking an oath), 19% reported questionable initiation rites (being yelled at, forced to wear embarrassing clothing, or depriving oneself of food/sleep), 39% reported alcohol-related initiation, and 21% reported unacceptable initiation activities (sexual acts, getting beaten, or being kidnapped) . After totaling the number of actual athletes that had been involved in some sort hazing activity, Hoover found that 255,637 student athletes had experienced hazing. These student athletes should be held to a higher standard because they are representing themselves and the university during these activities.

More recently, Allan and Madden (2008) conducted a study where instead of focusing on athletes only, they focused on college students in general with a sub-section for student athletes. Allan and Madden found that more than half of the college students that were members of an organization or team were involved in hazing. Hazing also occurred among a wide variety of students. In the sub-section for varsity athletes, the most frequently reported hazing behaviors were: participation in a drinking game, sing or chant by self in a public situation, consuming large amounts of non-alcoholic beverages, consuming large amounts of alcoholic beverages to the point of passing out, and being screamed, yelled, or cursed at by other members (Allan & Madden). Twenty percent of varsity student athletes reported engaging in these behaviors.

The most common form of hazing behaviors used by athletes is excessive drinking behaviors (Allan & Madden, 2008). In 2011, authors Allan and Madden (2008) did a different study which compared the reasons for drinking in Fraternity and Sorority life and student athletes. Their survey measured a few different areas: past alcohol use using the Self-Reporting Drinking Index, intentions to drink in the future using an open ended response question, reasons for drinking were measured using the 20-item Drinking Motives Questionnaire, and alcohol-related consequences were measured using the College Alcohol Problem Scale. Fraternity and

sorority members reported higher scores than athletes on average amount of drinks in the future and average amount of drinks in the past. However, athletes did score higher than fraternity and sorority members on past maximum number of drinks average ( $p < .01$ ). Reasons for drinking were primarily the same, except that athletes reported higher conformity motives than fraternity and sorority members ( $p < .001$ ). In other words, athletes feel that they need to participate in these behaviors in order to fit in and to please others. Overall the study found that Fraternity and Sorority members drink more days out of the month, however, athletes consume more drinks during a single sitting.

Another study found that excessive drinking was becoming a major problem among collegiate athletic teams (Anderson, McCormack, & Lee, 2012). Students were interviewed about their drinking habits. The interviews and observations revealed a commonality that excessive drinking and alcohol consumption have become a huge part of hazing behaviors. All of the participants admitted to having been forced to consume alcohol to the point of vomiting, passing out, or (at a minimum) extreme inebriation. Although the participants were voluntarily willing to engage in these behaviors, they are still considered forms of hazing.

There are numerous reasons why athletes engage in hazing behaviors. Kowalski and Waldron (2009) found that athletes haze primarily for two reasons: hazing is fun and because of intimidation and jealousy issues. One student was quoted saying “It’s fun to watch, and it’s even fun to be a part of, too” (p. 295). With this mindset that so many student athletes have, it is hard to make sense to them why hazing is detrimental to the overall team and individual players. Another argument for the reason that student athletes haze was that it increases team cohesion. In a study done by Brewer, Cornelius, and Linder (2007), 165 student athletes (66 female, 98 male, and 3 not reported) completed a modified version of the Group Environment

Questionnaire, the Team Initiation Questionnaire, and a social desirability scale. The results suggested that the argument that hazing builds team cohesion was suspect (2007). Hazing was shown to be associated with less team cohesion.

Collins, Comstock, and Fields (2007) concluded that coaches and athletes must “recognize the problem, educate the participants, rethink the purpose of sports, and change the culture to make the behavior unacceptable” (p. 361). As Brewer, Cornelius, and Linder (2007) discussed earlier showed, hazing is thought to create team cohesion, not tear it apart. Without changing the attitudes of the athletes, hazing behaviors will continue.

### **Hazing Among Female Athletes**

Little research has been done specifically about female athletes and hazing. Krane and Waldron (2005) did a study about the health compromising behaviors that women endure in order to be successful in their sport. Their findings suggest that female athletes are “overconforming to the sport ethic and behaving in ways that place themselves and others at risk” (p. 325). These behaviors include hazing in that female athletes feel more part of the group when they engage in these behaviors. The article concluded that women are willing to do whatever it takes to be a part of the group and to be the “it girl” (p.327). Hazing is a large part of doing what it takes to be a part of the group.

Allan and Madden (2008) examined females as one of their demographics. Their results showed that 52% of females surveyed were involved in some sort of hazing behavior within their student organizations or teams. The research also found the most common hazing behaviors among females were participation in a drinking game, sing or chant by yourself, association with specific people but not others, and sleep deprivation. These behaviors were different compared to those of males. While there is a difference between the types of hazing behaviors between

males and females, more research must be done to determine what sort of behaviors are happening and how often.

As discussed prior, the most common form of hazing athletes face involves the use of alcohol. A study done by Zamboaga, Rodriguez, & Horton (2008) found significant differences across different sports teams ( $p = .001$ ). Results showed that a high frequency of team social events involving alcohol use was associated with elevated use/increased likelihood of drinking game participation ( $p = .001$ ). If athletes are engaging in these behaviors, it is likely that hazing is occurring, especially with the younger students.

Other issues that female athletes deal with that can influence their hazing behaviors were eating disorders, social acceptability, and overwhelming amounts of stress. Etzel, Maniar, Visek, & Watson (2006) discussed the topic of the female athlete triad. Centered on eating disorders, this concept involved disordered eating, amenorrhea, and osteoporosis. These were all factors that influence one's ability to perform more successfully on the court or field. All have long term health effects as well (Mirsa, 2008). Negative consequences and psycho-social problems were involved with collegiate athletic participation; one of the major activities which caused these negative consequences was hazing (Chen, Magner, & Snyder, 2010). The connection between these health disorders and hazing is that female athletes will go to extremes in order to fit in with the team.

### **Identity Development Among Female Athletics**

A study done by Young and Bursik (2000) compared the identity development of 59 female athletes and 33 non-athletes. All participants interviewed were asked questions about life plans, goals, maturity, etc. The study found that identity achievement and life plan complexity



were correlated with non-athletes. This showed that female student athletes have to focus more on their identity development.

Identity development is something that happens throughout the college years. Being a student athlete is something that adds additional developmental challenges to a person. Howard-Hamilton and Sina (2001) discussed Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development. Erikson's theory used the last two stages to identity student athlete development. The first stage was sense of industry. According to the author, this was used by athletes because their academic abilities have been recognized and rewarded. The next stage was sense of identity. The author suggested that athletes may form an ego identity based on how successful they are in sports. The support these athletes receive may seem positive but sometimes it becomes their entire identity, which is not good. With hazing being so prevalent in athletics, this could provide more trouble when trying to establish themselves as individuals.

### **Summary**

Hazing can have a detrimental impact on the identity development of student athletes as well as potential physical harm (Etzel, Maniar, Visek, & Watson, 2006). Through the literature review, research has been compiled on the prevalence of hazing throughout different aspects of college life. Hazing has been around for hundreds of years; however, little effort has been made to stop it. The research indicates hazing is prevalent in athletics, but not much research has been done specifically about female student athletes.

## CHAPTER III

### Methods

The purpose of the present study was to identify how often and what type of hazing activities female student athletes at a midsized, Midwestern university were engaging in and why they felt the need to participate in these activities. A modified quantitative survey (Hoover, 1999) (Allan & Madden, 2008) was used to determine if there is a relationship between female athletics and hazing.

The goals of this research were to:

- a. Find out how many female student athletes at a midsized, Midwestern university engage in hazing behaviors;
- b. Understand the main reasons female athletes choose to engage in these behaviors;
- c. Understand the effects hazing has on student athletes' overall college experience; and
- d. Define some solutions to prevent these hazing behaviors from continuing that athletes believe would help.

### Participants

The target population was drawn from female varsity athletes at a midsized, Midwestern university. The population consisted of 10 female athletic teams with a total of 177 female athletes. The athletic teams surveyed were women's basketball, cross country, golf, rugby, soccer, softball, swimming, tennis, track, and volleyball.

### Site

The survey was distributed to female athletes via an online survey. The university studied was a midsized, public university in the Midwest. The institution has a population of around 8,277 undergraduate students and offers 47 undergraduate majors.

### **Instrumentation**

This was a quantitative study. The project consisted of a modified survey done by Hoover (1999). The survey consisted of answering the likelihood of the individual or team participating in different behaviors that were acceptable, questionable, alcohol-related, and unacceptable based on a five-point likert scale. The response options were “Never Participated In”, “Participated in Only Once”, “Somewhat Likely to Participate”, “Likely to Participate”, and “Very Likely to Participate” (Appendix B). In Appendix B, items 1-8 are considered acceptable team behaviors, items 9-16 are questionable hazing behaviors, items 17-18 are drinking related hazing behaviors, and items 19-24 are unacceptable hazing behaviors. Item 25 was created to see why student athletes believe hazing occurs.

In Appendix B, items 25-36 refer to the short-term and long-term effects of hazing. Again, this used a five-point likert scale with the response options being “Never Experienced”, “Experienced Once”, “Experienced a Few Times”, “Likely to Experience”, and “Experienced Very Often” (Appendix B). These were developed in order to see what type of effects the team behaviors have had, if any, on the student athletes’ overall college experience.

### **Data Collection and Confidentiality**

Data were collected via an online survey on SurveyMonkey™. All female athletes were sent an email requesting their participation in a research project. The link to the survey was included in the email. To ensure the confidentiality of each participant an informed consent was attached to the beginning of the survey (Appendix A). Data were saved via SPSS™ and only the researcher and thesis chair had access. These data were saved on the primary investigator’s locked computers.

Demographic information was asked of each participant in order to analyze differences in race or ethnicity, year in school, and individual versus team sport participants. A question about specific sport involvement was not asked in order to protect the identity of participants. Survey data only contained demographic information about the participants and no identifiers for the identities of each individual and therefore, minimal risk of breaching confidentiality occurred.

## CHAPTER IV

### Results

This chapter reviews the participants' demographics, results of the Student Athlete Hazing Survey, and ends with a chapter summary. The Student Athlete Hazing survey was a modified survey from a study done by Hoover (1999). The three research questions asked about the frequency of hazing behaviors, why student athletes feel hazing happens, and the frequency of any long term and short term effects of hazing on the student athlete's life. Participants were asked to take the survey via an email that was sent out to all female student athletes.

A total of 58 female, student athletes completed the Student Athlete Hazing Survey. Out of those 58 participants, 52 of them completed the entire online survey via Survey Monkey™. The survey was sent to 128 female student athletes. This made the response rate 40.63%. Student athletes were invited to participate in the study via an email sent by the researcher. Results were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences™ (SPSS), version 18, a statistical analysis tool.

#### Demographics

Tables 1-3 examine demographic information for the participants who took the Student Athlete Hazing Survey. Each table identifies different characteristics of those who participated. The demographic information was self-reported by the female student athletes. Finally, all participants had the option to not answer any of the demographic questions that were asked of them.

Table 1 shows the age of the female student athlete participants. The majority of participants (n=18; 31%) were 19 years of age. One participant (1.7 %) reported that they were 17 years of age. Eight participants (13.8%) reported being 18 years of age. Ten participants

(17.2%) reported being 20 years of age. Nine participants (15.5%) reported being 21 years of age. Three participants (5.2%) said they were 22 years of age. One participant (1.7%) reported being 23 years of age. Finally, eight participants (13.8%) did not report their age.

Table 1

*Age of Female Student Athlete Participants*

Age	<u>n</u>	%
17	1	1.7
18	8	13.8
19	18	31.0
20	10	17.2
21	9	15.5
22	3	5.2
23	1	1.7
Other	8	13.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 2 displays the racial identity of the Student Athlete Hazing Survey participants. A majority of participants (n=39; 67.2%) reported being White, Non-Hispanic. The second greatest percent identified were Black or African American (n=7; 12.1%). Two participants (3.5%) reported being Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Four participants (6.9%) reported being Mixed: African American and Caucasian. Finally, six participants (10.3%) were Unsure or Did Not Report.

Table 2

*Racial Identity of Female Student Athlete Participants*

Racial Identity	n	%
Black or African American	7	12.1
White, Non-Hispanic	39	67.2
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	2	3.5
Mixed: African American and Caucasian	4	6.9
Unsure/Did Not Report	6	10.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 3 displays the majors of all the female student athletes who took the Student Athlete Hazing Survey. The highest percentage of majors (n=8; 13.8%) were either Biology or Undecided/Did Not Report. The second highest major reported was Education (n=6; 10.3%). Accounting was third highest with 8.6% (n=5). Business, Communication Disorders & Sciences, Exercise Science, Kinesiology, and Recreation Administration each had 5.2% (n=3). Communication, Health Administration, Math, Psychology, and Sociology all reported 3.5% (n=2). Finally, Dietetics, English, Industrial, Journalism, Physics, and Sports Management each had one participant (1.7%).

Table 3

*Majors of Female Student Athlete Participants*

Major	n	%
Accounting	5	8.6
Biology	8	13.8
Business/Management/Finance	3	5.2
Communication Disorder & Sciences	3	5.2
Communication	2	3.5
Dietetics	1	1.7
Education	6	10.3
English	1	1.7
Exercise Science	3	5.2
Health Administration	2	3.5
Industrial/Construction	1	1.7
Journalism	1	1.7
Kinesiology	3	5.2
Math	2	3.5
Physics	1	1.7
Psychology	2	3.5
Recreation Administration	3	5.2
Sociology	2	3.5
Sports Management	1	1.7
Undecided/Did Not Report	8	13.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>



Finally, Table 4 indicates whether or not the female student athlete participated in a team or individual sport. For the purpose of this study, a team sport was defined as volleyball, basketball, softball, track & field, rugby, and soccer. Individual sport was defined as swimming, tennis, golf, and cross country. The majority of female student athletes reported playing on a team sport (n=40; 69.0%). Individual sport reported 12 student athletes (20.7%). Six female student athletes (10.3%) did not report whether they were on a team sport or individual sport.

Table 4

*Type of Sport Played by Female Student Athlete Participants*

Type of Sport	<u>n</u>	%
Team Sport	40	69.0
Individual Sport	12	20.7
Did Not Report	6	10.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Data**

**Research Question 1:** What is the prevalence of hazing among female athletes at a midsized, Midwestern, university? (Allen & Madden, 2008)

The Student Athlete Hazing Survey asked 24 questions about whether the individual student athlete or team participated in different activities. Survey items 1-8 are considered acceptable team behaviors, items 9-16 are questionable hazing behaviors, items 17-18 are drinking related hazing behaviors, and items 19-24 are unacceptable hazing behaviors.

Frequency tests were conducted to determine how often female student athletes were engaging in or being subjected to these behaviors. The results are summarized in Tables 1-4.

### **Acceptable Behaviors**

The first set of questions pertained to acceptable team activities. The student athlete responses are listed below in Tables 1-8. To analyze this, a frequency distribution was used in SPSS™. Acceptable team behaviors were activities that most student athletes would be expected to do such as testing for a skill or endurance, doing volunteer community service, or keeping a specific grade point average. When looking at each question, athletes reported to participating in many different acceptable behaviors. The most common activity was Attending Preseason Training which 91.4% of female student athletes reported that they were “Very Likely to Participate.” Also being reported as 91.4% “Very Likely to Participate” was Attending a Team Roast or Skit Night. Other acceptable behaviors were found to have average findings. Within questions 1-8, none of the results seemed particularly unusual, as most student athletes are required to have preseason, training, and participating in team bonding activities.

Demographic information was asked of each participant in order to analyze differences in race or ethnicity, year in school, and individual versus team sport participants. A one-way ANOVA was tested and there was no statistical significance at the  $p < 0.05$  level desired by the primary researcher. This indicates that answers did not vary depending upon race or ethnicity, year in school, and individual versus team sport participation for acceptable team behaviors or activities.

Table 5

*Acceptable Team Behaviors*

Activity	<i>NP</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>SL</i>	<i>LP</i>	<i>VLP</i>
Attending Preseason Training	3.4 (2)	0	0	5.2 (3)	91.4 (53)
Testing for Skill, Endurance, or Performance in a Sport	1.7 (1)	1.7 (1)	3.4 (2)	13.8 (8)	79.3 (46)
Keeping a Specific Grade Point Average	1.7 (1)	0	6.9 (4)	17.2 (10)	74.1 (43)
Dressing Up for a Team Function (besides uniforms)	5.2 (3)	5.2 (3)	19.0 (11)	19.0 (11)	51.7 (30)
Attending a Skit Night or Team Roast	8.9 (5)	5.4 (3)	23.2 (13)	30.4 (17)	32.1 (18)
Doing Volunteer Community Service	1.8 (1)	5.3 (3)	5.3 (3)	29.8 (17)	57.9 (33)
Taking an Oath or Signing a Contract of Standards	8.8 (5)	5.3 (3)	14.0 (8)	14.0 (8)	57.9 (33)
Completing a Ropes Course or Team Trip	24.6 (14)	14.0 (8)	17.5 (10)	17.5 (10)	26.3 (15)

This chart shows the frequency of student athlete's participation in Acceptable Team Behaviors by percent. The numbers in the parenthesis are the actual count of participants who indicated that response as their answer. For the table the abbreviations mean the following: NP= Never Participated, P= Participated in Only Once, SL= Somewhat Likely to Participate, LP=Likely to Participate and VLP= Very Likely to Participate.

**Questionable Behaviors**

The next questions, survey items number 9 through 16, were considered questionable hazing activities. Questionable hazing activities were defined as humiliating or degrading activities, but there are not any dangerous or potentially illegal activities, such as drugs use, etc. It is important to note that student athletes who responded with a frequency of 2 meant that they

had engaged in the activity at least one time. There are initiations to a team, which happen once, that are still considered hazing activities. Below are the questionable hazing activity frequency distributions.

Table 6

*Questionable Hazing Behaviors*

Activity	NP	P	SL	LP	VLP
Being Yelled, Cursed, or Sworn At	33.3 (19)	28.1 (16)	14.0 (8)	8.8 (5)	15.8 (9)
Being Forced to Wear Embarrassing Clothing	78.9 (45)	8.8 (5)	8.8 (5)	0	3.5 (2)
Tattooing, Piercing, Head Shaving, or Branding	87.7 (50)	5.3 (3)	1.8 (1)	3.5 (2)	1.8 (1)
Participating in Calisthenics not related to a sport	59.6 (34)	17.5 (10)	12.3(7)	3.5 (2)	7.0 (4)
Associating with Specific People and Not Others	51.8 (29)	28.6 (16)	10.7 (6)	5.4 (3)	3.6 (2)
Acting as a Personal Servant to Players Off the Field/Court	80.7 (46)	14.0 (8)	3.5 (2)	1.8 (1)	0
Being Forced to Deprive Oneself of Food, Sleep, or Hygiene	3.4 (2)	0	0	5.2 (3)	91.4 (53)
Consuming Extremely Spicy/ Disgusting Concoctions	89.5 (51)	10.5 (6)	0	0	0

This chart shows the frequency of student athlete's participation in Questionable Team Behaviors by percent. The numbers in the parenthesis are the actual count of participants who indicated that response as their answer. For the table the abbreviations mean the following: NP= Never Participated, P= Participated in Only Once, SL= Somewhat Likely to Participate, LP=Likely to Participate and VLP= Very Likely to Participate.

Out of 58 athletes who took the survey, only 19 of them said they had never been sworn at, cursed at, or yelled at by a coach or another player. Sixty-six point six percent of athletes have been subjected to this type of hazing activity. Of that 66.6%, 28.1% reported that this event had only happened once, 14% said it was somewhat likely to happen to them, 8.8% said it was likely, and 15.8% reported that it was very likely that they or their team had engaged in this activity. Thirty-three point three percent of the participants said they had never participated in being yelled, cursed, or sworn at.

The next question asked whether or not they or their team had ever been forced to wear embarrassing clothing, which female student athletes did not report participating in as frequently. Seventy-eight point nine percent (n=45) reported that they had never been subject to this behavior. Eight point eight percent (n=5) reported that they had been forced to participate in wearing embarrassing clothing once. Eight point eight percent also reported that they were somewhat likely to participate in this behavior. There were not any participants who reported that they were likely to engage in these behaviors. Finally, 3.5% (n=2) said that they were very likely to participate in these behaviors. This behavior was engaged in less frequently compared to the other questionable hazing activities.

The following questionable hazing activity that was asked among the participants was whether or not they or their team had participated in tattooing, piercing, head shaving, or branding. The overall response was that this was an activity that the student athletes did not participate in very much. Eighty-seven point seven percent (n=50) of participants said that they had never participated in this activity. Five point three percent (n=3) said they had participated in this activity only once and 1.8% (n=1) said that they were somewhat likely to participate in this activity. Three point five percent (n=2) said that they were likely to participate and 1.8%

(n=1) said that they were very likely to participate in tattooing, piercing, head shaving, or branding.

The next activity analyzed was participation in calisthenics not related to a sport. Student athletes responded that 59.6% (n=34) of them had never participated in this activity. Seventeen point five percent (n=10) of student athletes reported that they had only participated in calisthenics not related to their sport only once. Twelve point three percent (n=7) reported that they or their team were somewhat likely to participate in this activity. Three point five percent (n=2) reported that they were likely to participate. Finally, seven percent (n=4) of respondents said that they were very likely to participate in this activity.

Next, participants were asked about whether or not they or the team participated in associating with specific people and not others. This question had a high frequency of the female student athlete participation. Fifty-one point eight percent (n=29) of participants said they had never participated in this activity. Twenty-eight point six percent (n=16) of participants said they or their team had engaged in this activity at least once. Ten point seven percent (n=6) said they were somewhat likely to participate in associating with specific people and not others. Five point four percent (n=3) said they were likely to participate and finally 3.4% (n=2) said they were very likely to participate in associating with specific and not others.

Then, student athletes were asked about whether or not they had participated in acting as a personal servant to players off the field or court. Eighty point seven percent (n=46) of respondents said they had never participated in this activity. Fourteen percent (n=8) said they had participated in this activity only once. Three point five percent (n=2) responded that they were somewhat likely to participate in this activity. Only one participant said they were likely to participate and no student athletes said they were very likely to participate.

The next questionable activity student athletes were asked about was whether they were forced to deprive oneself of food, sleep, or hygiene. This question had a high level of participation compared to the other questionable behaviors. Only 3.4% ( $n=2$ ) said they had never participated in this activity. Zero athletes said that they had participated in this activity only once. Zero athletes also reported that they were somewhat likely to participate. Five point two percent ( $n=3$ ) said they were likely to participate. Finally, 91.4% ( $n=53$ ) said that they were very likely to deprive oneself of food, sleep, or hygiene. This was a definite concern for female athletes, as it a health and safety concern.

The last activity asked about that was considered a questionable hazing behavior was whether or not the student athlete had consumed extremely spicy/disgusting concoctions. Eighty-nine point five percent ( $n=51$ ) of student athletes reported they had never participated in this activity. Ten point five percent ( $n=6$ ) reported that they had engaged in this behavior only once. There were no other responses for this activity. This means that this activity is being participated in the least out of the questionable activities.

Demographic information was asked of each participant in order to analyze differences in race or ethnicity, year in school, and individual versus team sport participants for questionable hazing activities. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to test for statistical significance for race/ethnicity and year in school and there was no statistical significance at the  $p \leq 0.05$  level for both race/ethnicity and year in school. There was a significant difference for the type of sport the athlete played, however. The test was significant  $t(49)$ ,  $p=.001$ . Females who participated in team sports ( $M=13.21$ ,  $SD=4.66$ ) reported more questionable behavior participation than those who are in individual sports ( $M=10.00$ ,  $SD=1.54$ ). Below the Independent Samples T-Test is

displayed to show this difference. Female student athletes who are involved in a team sport are more likely to participate in questionable team behaviors.

Table 7

## Independent Samples T-Test for Questionable Behaviors by Type of Sport

Type of Sport	<i>n</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)
Team	39	13.21	4.66	-3.69	49	0.001*
Individual	12	10.00	1.54			

Note: *p* is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

**Alcohol Related Behaviors**

The next two questions that were asked are related to consuming alcohol on recruitment visits or participating in drinking games. Both could be considered potentially dangerous activities as there are health and safety concerns related to both.

Table 8

*Alcohol Related Behaviors*

Activity	<i>NP</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>SL</i>	<i>LP</i>	<i>VLP</i>
Consuming Alcohol on Recruitment Visits	70.2 (40)	8.9 (5)	12.5 (7)	5.4 (3)	3.6 (2)
Participating in a Drinking Contest	69.6 (39)	8.9 (5)	12.5 (7)	5.4 (3)	3.6 (2)

This chart shows the frequency of student athlete's participation in Alcohol Related Behaviors by percent. The numbers in the parenthesis are the actual count of participants who indicated that response as their answer. For the table the abbreviations mean the following: NP= Never Participated, P= Participated in Only Once, SL= Somewhat Likely to Participate, LP=Likely to Participate and VLP= Very Likely to Participate.

The first alcohol related activity that was asked about was whether or not the athlete or team consumed alcohol on a recruitment visit. Seventy point two percent (n=40) of student



athletes responded that they had never participated in this activity. Eight point nine percent (n=5) reported that they had participated in this activity only once. Twelve point five percent (n=7) reported that they were somewhat likely to participate. Five point four percent (n=3) reported that they were likely to participate, while 3.6% (n=2) reported that they were very likely to participate.

This next question shows the frequency of student athletes that have participated in a drinking contest. Sixty-nine point six percent (n=39) reported that they had never participated in this activity. Eight point nine percent (n=5) reported that they had participated in a drinking contest only once. Twelve point five percent (n=7) said that they were somewhat likely to participate in this activity. Five point four percent (n=3) said they were likely to participate, while 3.6% (n=2) said they were very likely to participate in a drinking contest.

Demographic information was asked of each participant in order to analyze differences in race or ethnicity, year in school, and individual versus team sport participants. One-way ANOVA was conducted and there was no statistical significance at the  $p=0.05$  level desired by the primary researcher. This indicates that answers did not vary depending upon demographic information provided for alcohol-related activities.

### **Unacceptable Behaviors**

The next questions, survey items number 19 through 24, are considered unacceptable hazing activities. Unacceptable hazing activities are defined as activities that carry a high probability of danger or injury, or could result in criminal charges. It is important to note that student athletes who responded with a frequency of two meant that they had engaged in the activity at least one time. Below are the unacceptable hazing activity frequency distributions.

Table 9

*Unacceptable Hazing Behaviors*

Activity	NP	P	SL	LP	VLP
Making Prank Calls or Harassing Others	86.0 (49)	7.0 (4)	7.0 (4)	0	0
Destroying or Stealing Property	91.2 (52)	8.8 (5)	0	0	0
Engaging In or Simulating Sexual Acts	87.7 (50)	8.8 (5)	1.8 (1)	1.8 (1)	0
Being Tied Up, Taped, or Confined in a Small Space	94.7 (54)	5.3 (3)	0	0	0
Being Paddled, Whipped, Beaten, Kicked; Beating Others	98.2 (56)	1.8 (1)	0	0	0
Being Kidnapped or Transported and Abandoned	98.2 (55)	1.8 (1)	0	0	0

This chart shows the frequency of student athlete's participation in Questionable Team Behaviors by percent. The numbers in the parenthesis are the actual count of participants who indicated that response as their answer. For the table the abbreviations mean the following: NP= Never Participated, P= Participated in Only Once, SL= Somewhat Likely to Participate, LP=Likely to Participate and VLP= Very Likely to Participate.

Table 4 shows the frequency of student athletes who engaged in making prank calls or harassing others. Eighty six percent (n=49) reported that they had never participated in this activity. Seven percent (n=4) reported that they had only participated in this activity once, while another seven percent (n=4) reported that they were somewhat likely to participate in making prank calls or harassing others. Zero athletes reported that they were likely or very likely to participate in this activity.

The next unacceptable activity that was asked about was if the student athlete or their team had destroyed or stolen property. Ninety one point two percent (n=52) reported that they

had never participated in this activity. The other eight point eight percent (n=5) said that they had participated in this activity only once. There were no other responses for this question.

The next question asked about whether or not the individual or team had engaged in or simulated sexual acts. Eighty seven point seven percent (n=50) reported that they had never participated in this activity. Eight point eight percent (n=5) reported that they had engaged in this behavior only once. One point eight percent (n=1) reported that they were somewhat likely to participate and another 1.8% (n=1) said they were likely to participate. No one reported that they were very likely to participate in engaging in or simulating sexual acts.

The next behavior that was asked about was if the student athlete or team had been tied up, taped, or confined in a small space. Ninety four point seven percent (n=54) reported that they had never participated in this behavior. The other 5.3% (n=3) said they had participated in this activity only once. There were no other responses for this activity.

Following this, student athletes were asked to report on the frequency of being paddled, beaten, whipped, kicked; or if they had beaten others. Ninety eight point two percent (n=56) reported that they or their team had never participated in this activity; 1.8% (n=1) or one person reported that they had been involved with this activity only once. There were no other responses for this question.

The last activity that was asked of student athletes was whether or not they or their team had been kidnapped or transported and then abandoned. Among the respondents, 98.2% (n=55) said they or their team had never participated in this behavior and 1.8% (n=1), or one person, said that they had participated in this activity only once. There were no other responses for this behavior, which indicates that this behavior is not happening very often. This is a good indication, as this hazing behavior could be extremely harmful to participants.

Demographic information was asked of each participant in order to analyze differences in race or ethnicity, year in school, and individual versus team sport participants. One-way ANOVA was conducted and there was no statistical significance at the  $p=0.05$  level desired by the primary researcher. This indicates that answers did not vary depending upon demographic information provided for unacceptable team behaviors or activities.

**R2.** What are the main reasons female athletes choose to engage in these behaviors?

(Kowalski and Waldron, 2009)

Item number 25 in the Student Athlete Hazing Survey, asked participants to rank order why they believed that hazing happens (1 being the top reason through 6 being the bottom reason). Their choices were “It’s Fun”, “Part of Initiation to the Team/Tradition”, “To Intimidate the New Members”, “Jealousy”, “Builds Team Cohesion”, and “Other.” To analyze the female student athlete’s responses, frequency tests were run. Their reasoning for why they feel hazing happens are listed below.

Table 10

*Reasons Female Student Athletes' Believe Hazing Happens*

Reasons	1	2	3	4	5	6
It's Fun	16.4 (9)	18.2 (10)	30.9 (17)	18.2 (10)	12.7 (7)	3.6 (2)
Part of Initiation to the Team/Tradition	47.3 (26)	29.1 (16)	9.1 (3)	5.5 (3)	1.8 (1)	7.3 (4)
To Intimidate New Members	18.2 (10)	30.9 (17)	21.8 (12)	14.5 (8)	10.9 (6)	3.6 (2)
Jealousy	5.5 (3)	5.5 (3)	10.9 (6)	20.0 (11)	38.2 (21)	20.0 (11)
Builds Team Cohesion	5.5 (3)	16.4 (9)	27.3 (15)	29.1 (16)	16.4 (9)	5.5 (3)
Other	7.3 (4)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	20.0 (11)	60.0 (33)

This table depicts the frequency of reasons female student athletes believe that hazing happens. The reasons are listed in the left-hand column. The percentage for each ranking are listed in the other columns. If a 1 was indicated, this was the top reason the student athlete believed hazing happened. If given a ranking of 6, this was the bottom reason the student athlete believed hazing happened.

This question helped the researcher understand why student athletes felt that hazing happened. Of the reasons listed, "Part of Initiation to the Team/ Tradition" was the top reason with 47.3% of student athletes reporting this as the top reason they felt hazing happened. The number two reason student athletes indicated why hazing happens is "To Intimidate New Members" with 18.2% reporting this as the top reason hazing happens. Number three is "It's Fun." Sixteen point four percent of student athletes indicated this as their top reason hazing happens. "Other" was the number 4 ranked reason why hazing happens with 7.3% reporting this as their top reason. Finally, "Jealousy" and "Builds Team Cohesion" were tied for the bottom reason, with 5.3% for both reporting this was their top reason.

Demographic information was asked of each participant in order to analyze differences in race or ethnicity, year in school, and individual versus team sport participants. A one-way ANOVA was conducted and there was no statistical significance for year in school or type of sport played at the  $p < 0.05$  level. This indicates that answers did not vary depending upon demographic information provided for acceptable team behaviors or activities. An independent sample t-test was conducted to compare “white” versus “non-white” female student athlete’s reasons for why they believed hazing happens. There were less than five participants in two of the race/ethnicity categories; therefore they were categorized by “white” and “non-white.”

**R3.** What effects does hazing have on female student athletes?

On the Student Athlete Hazing Survey, items 26-35 asked how often the individual student athlete felt certain reactions to hazing activities. Frequency tests were run to determine how often student athletes were experiencing certain effects as a result of hazing behaviors. Long term and short term effects were analyzed. A five-point likert scale was used with the response options being “Never Experienced” (NE), “Experienced Once” (EO), “Experienced a Few Times” (EFT), “Likely to Experience” (LE), and “Experienced Very Often” (EVO). The results are summarized in Table 6.

*Frequency of Effects from Hazing*

Activity	NE	EO	EFT	LE	EVO
Felt Dizzy, Disoriented, or Confused	90.6 (48)	3.8 (2)	3.8 (2)	0	1.9 (1)
Felt Sick to the Point of Throwing Up	88.7 (47)	3.8 (2)	3.8 (2)	1.9 (1)	1.9 (1)
Felt Disconnected from My Team	88.7 (47)	5.7 (3)	5.7 (3)	0	0
Had Less Sleep	88.7 (47)	9.4 (5)	1.9 (1)	0	0
Gotten in Trouble from a Superior because of my Actions	90.6 (48)	7.5 (4)	0	0	1.9 (1)
Reliving Negative Team Activities in my Head	92.5 (49)	5.7 (3)	0	0	1.9 (1)
Avoiding Certain Teammates	83.0 (44)	5.7 (3)	5.7 (3)	1.9 (1)	3.8 (2)
Felt Very Depressed	88.7 (47)	5.7 (3)	0	3.8 (2)	1.9 (1)
My Grades in School Have Slipped	94.3 (50)	1.9 (1)	0	1.9 (1)	1.9 (1)
Had a Hard Time Sleeping	96.2 (51)	1.9 (1)	0	0	1.9 (1)

This chart shows the frequency of the student athlete's effects from hazing activities. The numbers in the parenthesis are the actual count of participants who indicated that response as their answer. For the table the abbreviations mean the following: NE= Never Experienced, EO= Experienced Only Once, EFT= Experienced a Few Times, LE=Likely to Experience and EVO= Experienced Very Often.

For this study, the effects of hazing events were not reported as commonly as one might believe. The highest reported frequency of effects was that athletes had "Avoided Certain Teammates." Two athletes (3.8%) reported they experienced this very often. One athlete (1.8%) reported they were likely to experience this. Three athletes (5.7%) reported they had experienced

this a few times. Three athletes (5.7%) also reported they had experienced this only once. Finally, 44 athletes (83%) reported that they had never experienced this. This was the most commonly experienced side effect felt from hazing.

Forty-eight (90.6%) athletes reported that they had never felt dizzy, disoriented, or confused as a result of hazing behaviors. Two athletes (3.8%) reported that they have experienced this effect only once. Two athletes (3.8%) also reported that they had experienced feeling dizzy, disoriented, or confused a few times. Zero athletes reported that they were likely to experience this effect. Finally, one athlete (1.9%) reported that they were very likely to feel dizzy, disoriented, or confused as a result of hazing.

Forty-seven (88.7%) athletes reported that they had never felt sick to the point of throwing up as a result of hazing behaviors. Two athletes (3.8%) reported that they have experienced this effect only once. Two athletes (3.8%) also reported that they had experienced feeling sick to the point of throwing up a few times. One athlete (1.9%) reported that they were likely to experience this effect. Finally, one athlete (1.9%) reported that they were very likely to feel sick to the point of throwing up as a result of hazing.

Athletes were then asked if they had ever felt disconnected from their team as a result of hazing behaviors. Eighty-eight point seven percent (n=47) reported that they had never experienced this effect. Three athletes (5.7%) reported that they had experienced this effect only once. There were no other responses for this effect of feeling disconnected from their team as a result of hazing.

The next effect that was asked about was whether or not the female student athlete had ever had less sleep as a result of a hazing behavior. Eighty-eight point seven percent (n=47) said they had never experienced this effect. Five participants (9.4%) said they had experienced this



effect once. Finally, one participant (1.9%) said she had experienced this effect a few times. There were no other responses for having less sleep as an effect.

Forty-eight (90.6%) of athletes reported that they had never gotten in trouble from a superior as a result of hazing behaviors. Four athletes (7.5%) reported that they have experienced this effect only once. Zero athletes reported feeling this effect a few times or were likely to experience this effect. Finally, one athlete (1.9%) reported that they were very likely to get in trouble from a superior as a result of a hazing behavior.

Next, athletes were asked if they had ever relived negative team activities in their head as a result of hazing behaviors. Ninety-two point five percent (n=49) reported that they had never experienced this effect. Three athletes (5.7%) reported that they had experienced this effect only once. One athlete (1.9%) reported that they were very likely to relive negative team activities in their head. There were no other responses for this effect of feeling disconnected from their team as a result of hazing.

Following that effect, female student athletes were asked whether or not they had felt very depressed because of hazing behaviors. Eighty-eight point seven percent (n=47) of athletes reported that they had never felt very depressed as a result of hazing behaviors. Three athletes (5.7%) reported that they have experienced this effect only once. Zero athletes reported feeling this effect a few times. Two athletes (3.8%) reported that they were likely to experience this effect. Finally, one athlete (1.9%) reported that they were very likely to feel very depressed as a result of a hazing behavior.

The next effect that was asked was whether or not the female student athlete had their grades slip in school as a result of a hazing behavior. Ninety-four point three percent (n=50) said they had never experienced this effect. One participant (1.9%) said they had experienced this

effect once. Finally, one participant (1.9%) said she was very likely to experience her grades slip in school as a result of hazing behaviors. There were no other responses for having less sleep as an effect

The last effect asked was whether or not female student athletes had a hard time sleeping as a result of hazing behaviors. This was the least reported effect compared to the other effects listed. Fifty-one female student athletes (96.2%) reported that they had never experienced this effect. One athlete (1.9%) reported she had experienced less sleep only once. Finally, one athlete (1.9%) reported that she was very likely to experience less sleep as a result of hazing activities. There were no other responses for this effect.

Demographic information was asked of each participant in order to analyze differences in race or ethnicity, year in school, and individual versus team sport participants on the effects of hazing. One-way ANOVA was conducted and there was no statistical significance at the  $p=0.05$  level desired by the primary researcher. This indicates that answers did not vary depending upon demographic information provided for the effects of hazing on female student athletes.

### **Summary**

Chapter IV contains demographic data, as well as statistical data collected for the study. After using SPSS™, data that showed that questionable, alcohol-related, and unacceptable hazing behaviors are happening at this Midwest, midsized, public institution. Based off of the frequency distributions, these activities are happening at least once at this midsized Midwest public institution. The main reason reported for these hazing behaviors happening is that “It’s Part of Initiation to the Team” and/or “Tradition.” Female student athletes did not report feeling significant effects from hazing behaviors, although there were some athletes who reported they

were very likely to feel effects of hazing. Chapter V connects the data from this study to past research that has been conducted and provides recommendations for further studies and practice.

## Chapter V

### Discussion

The present study was developed to assess the prevalence, reasons, and effects of hazing at a midsized, Midwest public institution. This chapter discusses each research question and its relationship to prior research. This chapter will also provide recommendations for future research and for practice.

**Research Question 1:** “What is the prevalence of hazing among female athletes at a midsized, Midwestern, university? (Allen & Madden, 2008).

When examining the data for research question one, female student athletes were asked about their participation in different behaviors. These behaviors were categorized into the following groups: acceptable behaviors, questionable behaviors, alcohol-related behaviors, and unacceptable behaviors. A variety of examples were provided and student athletes were asked to report how frequently they or their teammates engaged in those examples. According to the Hoover (1999) study, over 76% of athletes reported being involved in some sort of hazing activity. In the current research, all of the areas of questionable, alcohol-related, and unacceptable behaviors reported having at least one athlete report that they had been involved in each activity.

Out of the questionable activities, “being forced to deprive oneself of food, sleep, or hygiene” was the most frequently participated in activity. Out of the 57 athletes who answered the question, 55 of them reported having some involvement in this behavior. Fifty-three of the athletes said that they were very likely to participate in this activity. This is an indication that hazing is happening at this midsized, Midwestern institution. All of the other questionable hazing activity questions had a range in participation from 10.5% to 96.6% participation. The activity with the least amount of participation from the female student athletes was “consuming

extremely spicy/disgusting concoctions,” which 10.5% of the female student athletes reported participation in this activity. These questionable activities have the potential to turn into more serious hazing activities if they are not addressed.

Alcohol-related activities also had a high degree of participation from female student athletes. In accordance with prior research, alcohol is the most frequent hazing behavior among student athletes. In a study done by Anderson, McCormack, & Lee (2012), all of their participants admitted to having been forced to consume alcohol to the point of vomiting, passing out, or (at a minimum) extreme inebriation. In the current study, 30.4% (n=17) of the participants admitted to consuming alcohol on recruitment visits. For a recruit, this is usually an indication of how they will be treated once they arrive on campus and participate in their respective sports. Another question asked was whether or not the female student athlete had participated in a drinking contest as part of a hazing activity. Again, 30.4% (n=17) admitted to having participated in this at least one time. Two athletes reported that they were very likely to participate in this behavior.

Finally, the last part of this research question was assessing the involvement in unacceptable hazing behaviors. Female student athletes did not engage in these behaviors to the same degree as the questionable or alcohol-related behaviors, however they were still happening. In the Hoover (1999) study, the researcher found that 21% of student athletes were engaging in unacceptable hazing activities. In the current research, the frequency of athletes being involved in unacceptable behaviors ranged from 1.8% (n=1) to 14% (n=8). All of the unacceptable behaviors had at least one participant say they had participated in this activity at least once.

For research question one, it is obvious that hazing is occurring at this midsized, Midwest, public institution. The current research showed that athletes are participating in

acceptable behaviors, questionable hazing behaviors, alcohol-related hazing behaviors, and unacceptable behaviors. The frequency of participation in these behaviors differed from previous research studies. Hoover's (1999) study found that over 76% of athletes were involved in some sort of hazing. Current research found that participation in hazing activities ranged from 1.8% to 96.6% participation depending on the activity. Only 1.8% of students admitted to "Being paddled, whipped, beaten, kicked; Beating Others" and also, only 1.8% admitted to "Being Kidnapped or Transported and Abandoned." However, 96.6% reported "Being Forced to Deprive Oneself of Food, Sleep, or Hygiene." For this section, it is important to note that although only one participant admitted to being involved in a lot of the activities, there is a likelihood that this person is not the only one involved, especially when 69% of the participants were on a team sport.

**Research Question 2:** What are the main reasons female athletes choose to engage in these behaviors? (Kowalski and Waldron, 2009).

In the current study, athletes gave multiple reasons why they believed hazing occurred. The main reason given was that it's "Part of Initiation/Tradition", with 47.3% listing this as their top reason. According to Kowalski and Waldron (2009), athletes haze primarily for two reasons: hazing is fun and because of intimidation and jealousy issues. In the current research "It's fun" was ranked number three among the participants and "Jealous" was the bottom ranked reason given by athletes in the current study.

Another study completed by Brewer, Cornelius, and Linder (2007) wanted to determine if hazing was associated with building team cohesion. A sample of 165 student athletes (66 female, 98 male, and 3 not reported) completed a modified version of the Group Environment Questionnaire, the Team Initiation Questionnaire, and a social desirability scale. Results from

the study questioned the prevailing argument that hazing builds team cohesion (2007). Hazing was associated with less team cohesion. In the current study, “Builds Team Cohesion” was one of the options female student athletes were asked to rank among reasons why hazing occurs in athletics. The participants ranked “Builds Team Cohesion,” last along with “Jealous.” This study confirms Cornelius et. al’s (2007) that hazing does not help build team cohesion.

**Research Question 3:** What effects does hazing have on female student athletes? (Hoover, 1999).

Allen and Madden (2008) reported negative effects of hazing among different student groups in their research. They noted that the highest amount of negative effects reported was 11% and it was for “Feel Stressed.” In the current study, the top effect of hazing was “Avoiding Certain Teammates,” which reported that 17% had avoided their teammates at least one time. This effect is greater than those reported by Hoover (1999). Similar to “Avoiding Certain Teammates,” Hoover (1999) reported that the second greatest negative effect was “Having Problems in Relationships,” which 8% of participants said they experienced this effect at least once. In the current study, 12.3% reported “Feeling Depressed” because of hazing behaviors. In the Hoover study, only 3% reported this (1999). This is the greatest difference between Hoover’s (1999) study and the current research. Most of the same effects are reported, however, the current research had a higher frequency of student athletes who are reporting that they’ve experienced negative effects of hazing.

### **Recommendations**

The purpose of the present study was to determine the prevalence, reasons, and effects of hazing at a midsized, Midwest institution. Current research showed hazing is occurring, described why female student athletes feel this hazing occurs, and provided the frequency of

effects. Based on the results from the current study, there are recommendations for future research, as well as recommendations for future practices in collegiate athletics.

**Recommendations for Future Research.** During the present study, quantitative data were collected. The data provided information that hazing is happening at this midsized, Midwest institution. For future research, it would be recommended that the researcher look at qualitative data. For those athletes who admitted involvement in hazing, qualitative interviews would allow for a deeper understanding of why hazing occurs among female student athletes. This would allow the researcher to have a first-hand account of what is happening at a single institution. The researcher could expand their study to multiple institutions as well.

Other recommendations for future research would be to give the coaches and athletic staff a survey similar to the one used for this study. This would show how often the coaches think hazing is happening at this midsized, Midwest institution. If they do not match up, it would be recommended that the coaches and staff become more educated about hazing and the overall implications this could have on a female student athlete's experience. This would help to give the coaches and staff a realistic picture of what is happening among the athletes they are supervising, advising and coaching. Next, these administrators would be able to design appropriate intervention or prevention programs.

Finally for future research, it would be recommended that the researcher look at the way that hazing affects those on team sport versus those on an individual sport, as defined by the study. Current research asked them to distinguish whether they participated in a team sport or individual sport; however, it would be interesting to see the breakdown of hazing activities by the type of sport participants played. If a participant on a team sport reports being involved in hazing activities, there is probably a higher frequency of participation, but athletes on teams may



be afraid to report it. Breaking the types of hazing activities down by team versus individual sport would help the researcher more fully define where these hazing behaviors are occurring, allowing the researcher to give a more detailed report.

**Recommendations for the Practice.** During the present study a few recommendations for the Athletic Department surfaced. First, it's extremely important that the department make the coaches and staff aware that hazing is happening at this midsized, Midwest public institution. It would be recommended that all administrators, staff, coaches, and athletes be given a clear message as to the definition of hazing. Most of those involved in hazing activities are unaware what specific behaviors are considered hazing. Providing everyone with a clear message of what hazing is and then letting the coaches know that their athletes did report being involved in all questionable, alcohol-related, and unacceptable hazing behaviors, would be the first step to addressing the problem.

Next, it would be recommended that student athletes, as well as coaches, go through a hazing education course. This course should be taken as a team with the coach included. A part of the course would be designing a contract that all teammates agree to and sign by the end of the course agreeing that they will not participate in hazing activities. It would be important to design this course with interactive activities and provide preventative measures to stop hazing before it even happens. Part of the course should also be designed to help athletes address hazing issues that may have already happened. Providing them with counseling resources or a procedure to go about reporting these actions and behaviors is important. This would be clearly defined in the course and resources would be provided. As mentioned earlier, a big part of the course would be having the team come up with a hazing contract that they would all sign by the end of the course.

It is important to let the team feel like they have created this document and they have all agreed to it. They will feel more valued and connected if it is something they have designed as a team.

Finally, the last recommendation for the Athletic Department would be to offer team building activities that do not involve hazing. Similar to the acceptable team activities asked about in the current study, it should be the athletic department's responsibility to make sure that each athlete is experiencing positive team-building activities, such as a low ropes course. Positive activities will help bond a team and individuals more so than dangerous hazing activities. Providing activities such as a ropes course, community service days, and all-athletic events such as a talent contest, are all ways to connect a team without involving dangerous hazing activities.

## **Conclusion**

The participants in this study did report being engaged in all types of hazing behaviors. They ranked the reasons why they believed hazing happens and reported any effects they experienced as a result of hazing. It is extremely important that coaches, staff, and athletes be educated about hazing and use many preventative measures. Hazing has the potential for serious harm to student athletes, even death, which cannot be taken lightly. In higher education, it is our duty to make sure that our students are safe and have positive experiences while in college. Being involved in hazing activities is not a positive experience for anyone and has the potential to become extremely dangerous mentally and physically. It is essential that student athletes, administrators, staff, and coaches be aware that this is happening and take measures to prevent this from happening in the future. The recommendations for future research discussed were exploring qualitative interviews to get a deeper understanding of hazing among female student athletes, have the coaches and staff become aware of the issue, and look more closely at

the difference in hazing activities in team sports versus those athletes in individual sports. For the practice of collegiate athletics it is recommended that coaches, staff, and athletic administrators be aware that hazing is happening among their athletes. It is also recommended that student athletes and coaches go through a hazing education and prevention course. Finally, it's extremely important that these athletic teams provide positive team-building activities for team and individual sports to participate in. By following these recommendations, the practice may help prevent or limit the amount of hazing that is occurring in female athletics.

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## Appendix A

### Letter of Consent

#### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

##### *The Prevalence and Effects of Hazing in Female Student-Athletes*

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Dani Steffa, a College Student Affairs graduate student. The purpose of this study is to examine the prevalence and effects of hazing on female student athletes at a public, Midwestern, mid-sized university. You have been asked to participate in this study because you are a female athlete at an NCAA institution. Please ask questions about anything you do not understand, before deciding whether or not to participate. If you volunteer to participate you will be asked to:

Provide information relating to your student athlete experience at Eastern Illinois University. You will be asked to take a 15 minute survey regarding the activities and behaviors you and your team have participated in. Additionally, you will be asked to provide demographic information.

There are no foreseeable risks to your participation. However you may benefit from this study as the information provided at its conclusion could benefit Eastern Illinois University's athletic program. Additionally your participation provides you with the opportunity to provide information that could improve the behaviors of female athletes at Eastern Illinois University. There is no right or wrong answers. Participation in this research study is voluntary and not a requirement or a condition for being the recipient of benefits or services from Eastern Illinois University or any other organization sponsoring the research project. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind or loss of benefits or services to which you are otherwise entitled.

If, at any point, you have feelings of uneasiness or wish to talk to someone about past experiences, you may contact the Eastern Illinois Counseling Center. They may be reached at (217)581-3413 or go to the Human Services Building, Monday through Friday from 8:00am-4:30pm.

No names will be collected as a part of this research. Surveys will be collected as soon as the participants are finished. Data will be stored and secured by the primary research in a locked file cabinet. The only people who will have access to this data will be the primary researcher- Danielle Steffa, Dr. Rick Roberts, and Dr. Dena Kniess. After the data has been recorded and analyzed all surveys will be stored for 3 years and then destroyed.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact:



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## **RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS**

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](mailto:eiuirb@www.eiu.edu)

You will be given the opportunity to discuss any questions about your rights as a research subject with a member of the IRB. The IRB is an independent committee composed of members of the University community, as well as lay members of the community not connected with EIU. The IRB has reviewed and approved

**APPENDIX B****Student Athlete Questionnaire****Student Athlete Team Survey**

**Your answers to the following questions will be kept strictly confidential and used for research and educational purposes only. Please indicate to what extent you have been involved in the following activities:**

**For the following questions, indicate how often you or your team participated in the following activities:**

**1=Never Participated (NP)**

**2=Participated In Only Once (P)**

**3=Somewhat Likely to Participate (SL)**

**4=Likely to Participate (LP)**

**5=Very Likely to Participate (VLP)**

	<b>NP</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>SL</b>	<b>LP</b>	<b>VLP</b>
1. Attending pre-season training	1	2	3	4	5
2. Testing for skill, endurance, or performance in a sport	1	2	3	4	5
3. Keeping a specific grade point average	1	2	3	4	5
4. Dressing up for team functions (besides uniforms)	1	2	3	4	5
5. Attending a skit night or team roast	1	2	3	4	5
6. Doing volunteer community service	1	2	3	4	5
7. Taking an oath or signing a contract of standards	1	2	3	4	5
8. Completing a ropes course or team trip	1	2	3	4	5
9. Being yelled, cursed, or sworn at	1	2	3	4	5
10. Being forced to wear embarrassing clothing	1	2	3	4	5
11. Tattooing, piercing, head shaving, or branding	1	2	3	4	5
12. Participating in calisthenics not related to a sport	1	2	3	4	5
13. Associating with specific people, not others	1	2	3	4	5
14. Acting as personal servant to players off the field, court	1	2	3	4	5
15. Being forced to deprive oneself of food, sleep or hygiene	1	2	3	4	5
16. Consuming extremely spicy/disgusting concoctions	1	2	3	4	5
17. Consuming alcohol on recruitment visits	1	2	3	4	5
18. Participating in a drinking contest	1	2	3	4	5
19. Making prank calls or harassing others	1	2	3	4	5
20. Destroying or stealing property	1	2	3	4	5

21. Engaging in or simulating sexual acts	1	2	3	4	5
22. Being tied up, taped, or confined in small space	1	2	3	4	5
23. Being paddled, whipped, beaten, kicked; beating others	1	2	3	4	5
24. Being kidnapped or transported and abandoned	1	2	3	4	5

**25. Please rank the following in order(1-6, 1 being the top reason) of why you believe hazing happens:**

It's Fun	_____
Part of Initiation to the Team/Tradition	_____
To Intimidate the New Members	_____
Jealousy	_____
Builds Team Cohesion	_____
Other	_____

If you listed "Other" in your top 3, please explain.

Please answer the following questions based on your own or teammates reaction to hazing activities:

- 1=Never Experienced (NE)
- 2=Experienced Once (EO)
- 3=Experienced A Few Times (EFT)
- 4=Likely to Experience (LE)
- 5=Experienced Very Often (EVO)

	NE	EO	EFT	LE	
<b>EVO</b>					
26. Felt dizzy, disoriented, or confused	1	2	3	4	5
27. Felt sick to the point of throwing up	1	2	3	4	5
28. Felt disconnected from my team	1	2	3	4	5
29. Had less sleep lately	1	2	3	4	5
30. Gotten in trouble from a superior because of my actions	1	2	3	4	5
31. Reliving negative team activities in my head	1	2	3	4	5
32. Avoiding certain teammates	1	2	3	4	5
33. Felt very depressed	1	2	3	4	5

34. My grades in school have slipped	1	2	3	4	5
35. Had a hard time sleeping numerous nights in a row	1	2	3	4	5

**Please provide the following demographic information:**

- 36. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_
- 37. What is your Year in School? \_\_\_\_\_
- 38. What is your race and/or ethnicity? \_\_\_\_\_
- 39. What is your academic major? \_\_\_\_\_
- 40. Do you play a team or individual sport?  Individual  Team

For research purposes, the following have been defined:

Individual sport = Swimming, Tennis, Golf, and Cross Country

Team sport = Volleyball, Basketball, Softball, Track and Field, Rugby, and Soccer