

**AN EXAMINATION OF BLACK MALES' ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS ABOUT  
HAZING WITHIN A BLACK GREEK LETTER ORGANIZATION**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this descriptive and inferential quantitative research design was to examine the differences in attitudes and beliefs about hazing activities within Black Greek letter organizations (BGLOs). While previous research has highlighted the existence of hazing activities and practices in BGLOs, there is a gap in understanding the perceptions and attitudes of Black males who have participated in these activities (Samson, 2021; Schiffer et al., 2022). To address this gap, a quantitative survey research design was employed to investigate the attitudes and beliefs among Black males at both a selected historically Black colleges and universities and a predominantly White institution. Variables assessed included age, educational level, and the attitudes and beliefs of Black male members of BGLOs. The findings within this study revealed that when age increases, the support for hazing decreases. In addition, participants with a bachelor's degree differ from those with master's and doctorates. Those with bachelor's degrees are somewhat more positive about hazing. In reference to the attitudes and beliefs about hazing of Black male members of BGLOs, the findings represented that the respondents, which came from two different institutions: one historically Black college and university and one predominantly White institution, were not significant.

This document is dedicated to those closest to me: my parents, Charles and Diane Tucker; my sister, Kimberly Tucker; my best friend, Josh Kato; life advisor, Alvin Barrington; and mentor, Dwayne M. Murray. Thank you all for your unweaving support and guidance throughout my journey.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

The goal of Black Greek letter organizations (BGLOs) was to pool resources and enhance the efforts of African Americans in pursuit of higher education dating back to the early 1900s (Parks & Hooker, 2020). Jones and Phillips (2020) asserted that, as stewards of Black culture, BGLOs' membership helped African Americans gain acceptance into the larger landscape of American society. BGLOs helped African American students develop a sense of belonging and integrated them into the school culture, consequently improving academic outcomes and relationships between African American students (Munson, 2019).

Although BGLOs have been shown to improve campus integration, acceptance, and success of African American students in the United States, hazing has become a significant problem. Parks and Hooker (2020) explained that within fraternities such as BGLOs, rituals associated with hazing are deeply centered, despite the physical violence and injuries that result from such initiations. Given that Black people view themselves as being grossly underrepresented in different spheres in the United States, hazing activities within Black fraternities were argued as key in building friendships and to enhance perseverance against physical abuse (Munson, 2019). Arguably, hazing in BGLOs is a manifestation of ancient-day violent rituals performed to develop identities; however, the extremism of these rituals in institutions of higher education has created the need for research examining the attitudes and beliefs of African Americans in BGLOs. In prior research, Parks and Mutisya (2019) reported violent hazing was more common within both male and female Black organizations, such as BGLOs, than in White organizations.

Given Black men's unique and precarious social and academic experiences on college campuses (Cuyjet, 206; Dancy, 2103; Strayhorn, 2020), the relationship of Black men to fraternities is essential to consider. The question of whether different institutional contexts may inform Black men's thinking about fraternities and hazing remains under investigation.

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes and beliefs about hazing in higher education institutions in the United States. Of particular interest is how Black men who are members of BGLOs think about hazing and its place in the culture of these organizations. Although research on hazing is extensive, hazing activities in BGLOs are in their infancy; hence, there is a gap and limited research on attitudes and beliefs (Thompson, 2019; Wilson, 2018). In this chapter, the sections covered include the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the survey, overarching research questions, theoretical framework, significance of the study, definitions of key terms, study delimitations, limitations, and the organization of this study.

### **Background of the Study**

BGLOs are an integral part of the college experience for many African American students (Mitchell, 2018). College integration is an essential function filled by BGLOs, often leading to more incredible attachment bonds and improved academic outcomes (Munson, 2019). These organizations serve as sources of support and usually become like family to their predominantly Black student membership, which is essential for the creation of bonds of attachment (Parks & Hooker, 2020). With nearly 800,000 members, BGLOs are well known for many positive practices, such as: literacy programs, mentoring disadvantaged youths, food drives, and holiday gift-giving (Ali, 2018). The

bonds within these organizations are often referred to as brotherhood within fraternities and sisterhood within sororities (Parks & Hooker, 2020). These relationships usually extend far beyond the realm of college.

Although BGLOs have been hailed as community pillars for services in times of need, they have also been condemned for widespread hazing activities and underage drinking among students and members of the community (Sergent et al., 2018). BGLOs have historically engaged in clandestine gatherings, adopted exclusive membership practices, and displayed a bias toward those with lighter skin tones (Chambers, 2017). In addition, BGLOs have provided a platform for Black elites to establish an exclusive and privileged community. This helped these organizations to sustain the harmful cycle of racial bias and White dominance (Chambers, 2017). While many BGLOs offer positive and constructive benefits, some students who choose to pledge and are then accepted into BGLOs often experience negative consequences such as hazing (Parks & Hooker, 2020). The negative impacts of BGLOs on students have been associated with reduced academic performance. Compared to other social clubs within colleges or universities, BGLOs tend to thoroughly engage their members in co-curricular activities that are both regular and mandatory, leaving little time for studying and attending classes (Miller & Bryan, 2020).

Consequently, many students in BGLOs tend to perform dismally in their academic life when compared to other students who devote more time to their studies, which can negatively impact class rankings and career readiness, which is the surest way to undermine the economic progress of Black college graduates (Ricks & Warren, 2020). The issue of hazing is complex, with profound—even criminal—implications. Fraternity members are compelled by a sacred brotherhood governed by secrecy and discretion

(Schiffer et al., 2021). BGLOs are known for community service and significant contributions to all sectors of American life. Still, there is also an unfortunate association with what is believed to be the widespread practice of hazing (Parks & Hooker, 2020). Existing hazing research reveals some interesting nuances along racial lines. Hazing is an ongoing social problem in collegiate fraternities and sororities at both Historically Black college and universities (HBCUs ) and predominately White institutions (PWIs; Parks, 2013).

The problem has grown in scope and severity, forcing lawmakers to pass strict laws prohibiting the practice in 44 states (Parks & Hooker, 2020). Initiation rites that included acts of violence resulting in death within a Black fraternity were first documented in the 1970s, and hazing litigation began in the 1980s (Parks et al., 2015). Hazing in Black fraternities is more physically violent than in White fraternities (Jones, 2004). More life-threatening incidents occurred in Black fraternities after the supposed ban on hazing in 1990, and the practices continue in that direction (Parks & Hooker, 2020). Hazing research within BGLOs has expanded since the first death that resulted from initiation violence in the 1970s, but it is grossly insufficient. Allan et al. (2018) reported that 73% of all students who seek membership in fraternities and sororities experience hazing. The wide range of research findings on hazing offers several explanations regarding why it occurs, but much of it neglects the broader implications beyond the collegiate context (Mitchell, 2018).

Different entities have researched the attitudes and beliefs of Black males about hazing within BGLOs, although the extensiveness of this research is limited. For instance, Williams (2021) investigated how Black students in higher education institutions created

a culturally safe space in their institutions. The researcher noted that students affiliated and unaffiliated with BGLOs' social programs found such programs to develop cultural spaces that met the needs of students seeking to connect with their traditions and culture. In a contrasting study, Samson (2021) also investigated negative college attitudes and fraternity membership among college students in the United States using a sample of 2,817 students. The regression analysis of the collected data revealed a negative relationship between Greek letter organizations' (GLOs) membership and ethno-racial groups among White male students. Alternatively, Schiffer et al. (2022) agreed that hazing was an issue in many college campuses with masculine honor beliefs (MHBs), showing the students' positive attitude toward hazing.

The focus of the current study was on the differences in attitudes and beliefs of Black males who were members of BGLOs while at both HBCUs and PWIs regarding hazing practices in BGLOs. Although research on hazing practices within BGLOs has been conducted, there is a gap in the literature regarding the differences in attitudes and beliefs among Black males in BGLOs (Thompson, 2019; Wilson, 2018) at different types of institutions. Subsequently, this study involved examining the differences in attitudes and beliefs of Black males who were members of BGLOs in a selected HBCU and PWI in the United States.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The problem to be addressed was persistent hazing activities and practices within BGLOs in the United States. BGLOs, like other institutions in the United States, were created to help African American students within higher education institutions and address discrimination issues. However, the experiences of hazing activities and practices



have negatively influenced the reputation of these organizations, regardless of whether they are at HBCUs or PWIs (Parks & Hooker, 2020). As a social problem, hazing has negatively interfered with the academic performance of students in addition to causing harm and sometimes death to participating individuals (Parks & Hooker, 2020). In their study, Williams (2021) established that while BGLOs used hazing as a bonding strategy, the negative health consequences on some members led schools and authorities to pass strict laws to contain such activities. Despite the passage of laws and scrutiny of BGLOs activities, Parks and Hooker (2020) reported that some members of BGLOs were still engaged in hazing despite opposition from others.

The specific problem that prompted this research was to discover if there was a difference in attitudes and beliefs toward hazing activities within BGLOs at both HBCUs and PWIs. As illustrated by Parks and Hooker (2020), while some BGLO members are still supporting and perpetrating hazing activities, others are against such activities. Despite the knowledge of hazing and its adverse impacts on some of its members, these opposing sentiments are yet to be investigated in current research. In the bid to examine this difference, Williams (2021) reported that BGLOs created a culture of belonging for African American students. The researcher did not investigate the participants' beliefs and attitudes toward hazing within the BGLOs. In a different study, Samson (2021) emphasized the need for extensive research on hazing after finding membership with BGLOs was negatively associated with ethno-racial groups. Similar conclusions were reported by Schiffer et al. (2022), reporting that although MHBs predicted positive attitudes toward hazing, the researchers' focus was not on the attitudes and beliefs of Black males in BGLOs.

Based on the preceding research and reports on the negative impacts of hazing on the well-being of students and members of the community, examining the differences in attitudes and beliefs is crucial in mitigating the prevalence and effects of hazing at both HBCUs and PWIs (Hedrick, 2023; Vanderbilt, 2022). As a social problem, failure to address the impacts of hazing on individuals may encourage harm to new students within higher education institutions (Nuwer, 2001). This study extends research in the field by directly centering the perspectives of Black men who are members of BGLOs.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this descriptive and inferential quantitative research design was to examine the differences in attitudes and beliefs about hazing activities within BGLOs. While researchers have demonstrated the existence of hazing activities and practices in BGLOs, they have yet to investigate the perceptions and attitudes of Black males who have engaged in or participated in these activities (Samson, 2021; Schiffer et al., 2022). A quantitative survey research design was employed. The choice of collecting quantitative data was informed by my need to capture broadly the attitudes and beliefs about hazing activities in the United States to investigate the attitudes and beliefs among Black males at both HBCUs and PWIs.

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used for this research. The variables assessed included age, gender, beliefs, and attitudes of Black male members of BGLOs. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to examine the nature and extent of participants' attitudes and beliefs toward hazing activities and practices. Specifically, the study involved the examination of the attitudes and beliefs of Black men about hazing and how they may have been influenced by age and institutional type.

## **Research Questions**

In this study, the differences in attitudes and beliefs of Black males on hazing practices and activities within BGLOs in one HBCU and one PWI in the United States were examined. The following research questions were used to guide the development of survey questions and the whole study process:

Are the attitudes and beliefs of Black males on hazing practices within BGLOs different as a function of the type of institution the respondent attended?

1. Does the age of the respondent affect the attitudes and beliefs of Black males on hazing practices within BGLOs?
2. Does the educational level of the respondent affect the attitudes and beliefs of Black males on hazing practices within BGLOs?

## **Theoretical Overview**

MHBs was the theoretical framework for this quantitative research. MHBs refer to the notion that aggression and violence are necessary and justifiable in establishing manhood (Schiffer et al., 2021). This perspective places value on having a formidable social reputation (Saucier et al., 2018) and requires manhood and reputation to be protected at all costs (Schiffer et al., 2021). While there is a general understanding of hazing, it is essential to note the four core characteristics of hazing include: (a) coalitional: performed in a group context and symbolizing group solidarity (Cimino, 2011); (b) unidirectional: current members target incumbents to reinforce the hierarchy (Cimino, 2011); (c) temporary: it is considered an initiation ritual (Favero et al., 2020); and (d) coercive: there is social pressure to participate (Cimino, 2011). Within this

framework, hazing in fraternities is understood as a need to demonstrate and perform masculinity routinely.

MHBs provided the best opportunity to explore individual differences related to one's insistence on demonstrating and performing masculinity as practices within fraternities (Schiffer et al., 2021). Desantis (2007) established traditional masculine gender norms as a fundamental standard of fraternities, which is reinforced by hazing. Not only does hazing provide an opportunity for existing members to demonstrate masculinity, but it also establishes manhood for newcomers who can withstand various forms of hazing (Schiffer et al., 2022). Fraternities conceptualize masculinity as being a thing to be learned, earned, and practiced through the culture of hazing (McCready, 2020). While hazing has various forms, BGLOs tend to perpetrate acts of violence as initiation rites, and the more violent those acts, the more masculinity attributed to the organization and those who accept the practice (Owen et al., 2008). MHBs theory was used to design the survey questions, develop the research questions that guide the study, and analyze data collected from Black men attending a HBCU and PWI.

### **Methods Overview**

The quantitative research methodology was used to examine the attitudes and beliefs of Black males regarding hazing activities and practices within BGLOs at HBCUs and PWIs in the United States. Researchers use quantitative research to collect and analyze numerical data to establish a relationship between independent and dependent variables (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). Rana et al. (2021) stated that collecting and analyzing numerical data will allow researchers to make predictions, identify patterns, test relationships, and generalize the findings of a study to the general

population. Using quantitative research methodology for this study allowed me to investigate the attitudes and beliefs of Black males within BGLOs in a selected HBCU and a PWI (see Seers & Critelton, 2001). Baker (2017) noted that, besides establishing causal and correlational relationships between study variables, quantitative methodology is crucial in evaluating and describing statistics about a phenomenon.

The Examination of Black Males Attitudes and Beliefs about Hazing within the Black Greek Letter Organization Survey (see Appendix VII) was employed as the primary data source for this quantitative study. The survey questions were designed to collect data on hazing practices, Black males' attitudes, and beliefs about hazing practices within BGLOs. The survey was also utilized to collect data on participants' levels of education and age. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 29.0 was used to analyze the data. The statistical analyses included separate samples t-tests, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), factor analysis, and structural equation modeling. Extensive discussion of the methodological approaches will be discussed in Chapter 3.

### **Definitions**

The following is a list of terms and concepts utilized in this research.

**BGLOs.** A Black Greek letter organization is one of the nine intercollegiate Black student organizations with the mission of uniting college students dedicated to excellence, fostering kinship, and uplifting African American communities (Miller & Bryan, 2020).

**Group identity.** Group identity refers to an individual's sense of belonging to a particular group (Verkuyten, 2021).

**Hazing.** Hazing is a mandatory initiation process that entails undergoing some form of physical and mental torture (Kowalski et al., 2020).

**HBCUs.** Historically Black colleges and universities are educational institutions founded after the Civil War to provide educational opportunities to free men and women of color (Price & Viceisza, 2023).

**PWI.** PWI is the term used to describe higher education institutions in which Whites account for 50% or greater of the student enrollment (Mills, 2020).

**MHBs.** MHBs is a framework that centers on the belief that aggression is sometimes justifiable and necessary in response to insult or threat to establish and maintain manhood (McCartin et al., 2022).

### **Significance of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes and beliefs about hazing of Black male college students. Addressing this purpose was crucial, as the findings of this study enhanced my understanding of the attitudes and beliefs in hazing practices within BGLOs. The findings of this study have important theoretical and practical implications and a foundation for future quantitative studies. Hazing research has produced empirical understandings of the various motivations for perpetrating and actively accepting this cultural practice (Mitchell, 2018). One of the practical significances of this study was that the findings were used to formulate policies that both HBCUs and PWIs may utilize to mitigate hazing practices within BGLOs in the future. Formulating new guidelines will help reinforce existing policies that failed to prevent hazing practices in the past.

While hazing is often regarded as normative behavior for fraternities, because of the frequency with which it occurs, institutions are confronted with greater liability in terms of financial costs and irreparable damage to reputations. These confrontations and reputational damage impact enrollment and an institution's ability to generate multiple forms of revenue. The outcome of this study will help both HBCUs and PWIs exercise greater control over BGLOs and mitigate any negative and consequential impacts of hazing practices on the reputation of such institutions, potentially allowing them to maintain their sources of revenue.

Many litigants have post-traumatic stress disorder because of their previous experiences with hazing (Munson, 2019). These issues need ongoing research designed to capture not only individual motivations and the beliefs associated with their group identity but also those idiosyncrasies that may influence the adoption of views that could lead to and promote the outright rejection of hazing as an accepted cultural practice. Besides policies that will help institutions of higher education minimize hazing practices within BGLOs, the findings of this study may recommend strategies that might be adopted to help individuals impacted by hazing practices. The theoretical significance of this study will establish a foundation for future researchers to extensively investigate hazing practices within BGLOs at both HBCUs and PWIs. Although researchers have evidenced hazing exists in BGLOs, how the attitudes and beliefs of those involved compared at select HBCUs and PWIs is yet to be thoroughly examined; hence the need for this study.

## **Organization of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes and beliefs about hazing activities within BGLOs. The problem prompting this research was persistent hazing activities and practices within BGLOs in the United States. The specific problem that prompted this study was whether or not there is a difference in attitudes and beliefs for Black males toward hazing activities within BGLOs at select HBCUs and PWIs. To exhaustively investigate this problem, this dissertation is divided into five chapters. In the first chapter of this dissertation, I introduce the study, identify the problem to be investigated, the purpose of the study, and the research questions. In the same chapter, the significance of the study and theoretical framework are discussed. In the second chapter of this dissertation, I will synthesize literature associated with the problem being investigated. The focus is on underpinning the problem's existence and what previous researchers have done to address the problem.

Chapter 3 introduces methodological approaches, including the research methodology, design, sample, data collection, and analysis processes utilized in this study. The research methodology and how the data were collected and analyzed will also be presented in detail in Chapter 3. The findings obtained using the selected research methodology and following the research process elaborated in Chapter 3 will be presented in Chapter 4. Thus, Chapter 4 will be the findings chapter of this research. In the final chapter of this dissertation, Chapter 5, I will discuss the findings reported in Chapter 4, demonstrating how the research questions were answered and addressed. I will also use Chapter 5 to draw conclusions from the findings and make recommendations for practice and future research.



## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

BGLOs provide vital services to the communities in which they are embedded. All BGLOs, or The Divine Nine, as they are referred to, are well known for awareness campaigns, health fairs, food drives, and literacy programs, to name a few. BGLOs often target the campus environment with their services, but when permissible, those services expand beyond the campus boundaries and create positive press for the organizations (Mitchell, 2018). African American communities respect BGLOs; however, those unfamiliar with the college environment may find it difficult to identify each group. All BGLOs have many commonalities. Distinct colors, images, and practices distinguish them. The following section provides a preliminary review of all BGLOs.

This chapter is divided into sections. First is the introduction, followed by general information about BGLOs. Next is a short history of BGLOs containing two subsections: group identity, beliefs, and practices. Next are subsections about group identity and belonging, then beliefs and practices. MHBs as the theoretical framework is discussed at length. The next subsection gives a historical account of hazing, followed by another subsection on the justification of hazing. In the last section, malpractices and hazing culture are explored. The chapter ends with a summary. These sections serve to frame the culture of hazing within the BGLOs discussion.

#### **BGLOs**

All nine of the historically BGLOs comprise the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC). The NPHC was founded in 1930 on the Howard University campus to support African American college students searching for a voice, community, and shared identity

as they pursue their education (Jones & Reddick, 2017). Historically, the NPHC played a vital role in uniting African American college students as they sought equality and fair treatment under the law. The NPHC continues to play a critical role as it oversees how the BGLOs collectively honor their Greek organizations' history, traditions, and values (Chambers, 2017). The NPHC currently has nine members, and these Greek organizations are commonly called "The Divine Nine." Each of these nine fraternities and sororities is rich in history, and ties to one or more of these organizations can be found in many college-educated African American families in the United States (Chambers, 2017).

Most BGLOs were founded in the early 20th century. They were borne out of necessity and were formed due to trials and tribulations many African Americans faced in the United States (Laybourn & Goss, 2018). The exclusion from the American higher education system was one of many problems plaguing African Americans then. Even when African Americans were admitted into PWIs, they were mistreated, ostracized, and prevented from joining many social and student organizations. As a result, African American students began searching for ways to cope with these struggles (Laybourn & Goss, 2018).

After an earlier failed attempt, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated was initially started as a study and support group for the African American male students at Cornell University who were facing harsh racial prejudice at the time (Mitchell, 2018). African American students often went days without seeing another person of color on campus, so their study groups served as safe spaces for their struggles and provided opportunities for warm fellowship and encouragement (Mitchell & Dancy, 2019).

Following in the footsteps of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated, eight other intercollegiate fraternities and sororities were founded on similar principles of service and the betterment of African Americans (Miller, 2018).

Many different movements and political events affected how these organizations were developed. Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated paved the way for sororities in 1908 when it was founded at Howard University. Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated was founded in Indiana for similar reasons to Alpha Phi Alpha, as racial tension and prejudices on campus led them to create their fraternity at Indiana University. Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated was the first of The Divine Nine fraternities to be founded on a HBCU campus at Howard University. The women's suffrage movement strongly influenced Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated's beginnings.

Springing forward to the most recent of The Divine Nine organizations, Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Incorporated was a product of the Civil Rights Movement, and they were very influential in shaping the political landscape of Baltimore after being founded. This is a complete list of The Divine Nine provided by the NPHC (n.d.) Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity.

These organizations, all over 100 years old except for Iota Phi Theta, have contributed countless hours of service, scholarships, and leadership to communities worldwide. Though they all differ in their founding principles in one way or another, they came together as a unified body to create social change and have left an indelible impact on the world, making it a better place (Miller, 2018).

### *History of BGLOs*

As aforementioned, most BGLOs were formed during the loco parentis era of 1765– 1985, when the administration and faculty members of higher learning institutions closely monitored students' social activities and provided parental oversight (Allan & Madden, 2008). There were certain limits on how the students could interact, which caused friction between the students and the institutions. Students from all The Divine Nine were included in this study. According to some students, they expected entering college and experiencing new quasi-adult experiences would help them as they transitioned to the next stage of life (Jones, 2015). The faculty members and the administration saw early college life as a confusing stage for the students, and this demanded strict monitoring of their activities. This difference of opinion led to the social clubs' response to the students' desire to interact freely without the institution's knowledge (Jones, 2015).

Private entities, student societies, clubs, and organizations created initiation rites and processes that specified how to gain membership and identify with the group (Parks & Hughey, 2020). These private entities, including BGLOs, developed unorthodox initiation rites, which often entailed subjecting a student to physical and mental torture (Anderson & Smith, 2016). The initiation process can be demeaning, and it can also cause physical and psychological injury to the students. The country's human rights laws criminalize any form of hazing (Bawan et al., 2017). However, this activity is still rampant in these organizations (Parks & Hughey, 2020).

Most students view their willful participation as a practice that helps them identify with each group's uniqueness (Cooper, 2018). Even though the students suffer to varying

degrees, semester after semester, many willingly participate in the process because of the desire to have a social group and develop a sense of belonging to help them cope in the new, unfamiliar college environment as they adopt a group identity (Jones, 2015).

Homogeneity has been a problem in earlier investigations (Hughes et al., 2019). The marginalization of African American students, seen as a homogeneous group among the student body, led to the need to establish groups that might serve as platforms for representing their distinct perspectives (Byars-Winston & Rogers, 2019). McGuire et al. (2020) explained that African American men actively sought out Christian and secular social groups to connect with others who have had similar experiences and share their worldview, receiving the necessary support. Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated was established in 1911 at Indiana University to create a visible presence for African American students. Enrollment of African Americans was restricted, making it challenging to develop a sense of community (Parks & Laybourn, 2016).

African American students created a sense of community by organizing themselves into a fraternity. Parks and Laybourn (2016) characterized the organization's founders as committed to serving as a wellspring of motivation for its members. Their goal was to seek recognition and success in their pursuits and foster a sense of community among non-members on the campus (Parks & Laybourn, 2016).

Dr. Ali D. Chambers, an associate professor of African American Studies at Claflin University, is recognized as an expert in BGLOs. His study focused on the historical and cultural significance of these organizations. Chambers' research on the failure of BGLOs has garnered extensive recognition and approval. It is published in

prestigious academic journals such as *The London School of Economics Journal* and *American Politics and Policy*. Chambers' (2017) assertion was:

While the primary objective of the BGLO was to free the Black community from their subordinate condition as second-class citizens, other people see these organizations as a way for the Black bourgeoisie to establish and preserve their privileged position and acknowledgment within the Black community. (p. 631)

According to Chambers (2017), BGLOs have historically engaged in clandestine gatherings, exclusive membership practices, and a bias toward those with lighter skin tones. In addition, BGLOs have provided a platform for Black elites to establish an exclusive and privileged community. This has helped these organizations to sustain the harmful cycle of racial bias and White dominance (Chambers, 2017).

Whaley (2010) explored the intricate and delicate matter of colorism and privilege among BGLOs, explicitly focusing on Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated. Norma Boyd, a co-founder of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, believed that those like herself, who had a lighter complexion and were educated and affluent, had the advantage of being able to navigate both the Black and White communities (Whaley, 2010).

Boyd saw herself as a spy inside the White community, intending to gather information about their ways of life. She aimed to share this knowledge with the "darker people of the race" so they might collaborate in countering the perceived threat from the dominant culture (p. 23). Boyd's comment exemplified the convictions held by many individuals of African descent: their equality and integration into American society were contingent upon certain conditions. These conditions included embracing Christianity,

serving in the military, endorsing republican or democratic values, and achieving economic stability. African American students may encounter prejudice in larger campus communities, yet their involvement in GLOs, particularly BGLOs, provides them with circumstances conducive to cultivating elevated racial self-esteem (Greyerbiehl & Mitchell, 2014; Mitchell, 2015).

Students who want a welcoming environment at a PWI may be drawn to fraternities and sororities that exhibit a comparable cultural perspective and culturally significant interpretations of esteemed principles (Garcia, 2020). Students marginalized at PWIs may have an increased inclination to seek out groups that might fulfill their need for belonging and academic achievement. Like the African American student experience, Latin sorority and fraternity members, considered students from a minority subculture, have comparable motivations for creating their organizations (Garcia, 2020).

### ***Group Identity and Belonging***

Group identity refers to an individual's sense of belonging to a particular group (Dovidio et al., 1998). At its core, the concept describes social influence within a group. This influence may be based on a social category or interpersonal interaction among group members. This term applies to BGLOs because members have a shared identity and sense of belonging to their organizations. This group identity is responsible for a specific style of dress, a uniquely common vernacular, and shared rites and rituals (Dovidio et al., 1998). This group identity results in BGLO members becoming a pseudo-family, as they often refer to each other as brothers and sisters (Mitchell, 2018). BGLO families also share a system of beliefs and practices.

Fraternal/ethnic societies and clubs are organizations established by persons with similar hobbies, occupations, or ethnic origins (Blackmon et al., 2023). These organizations exhibit a strong bond of friendship, mutual assistance, and camaraderie among their members. They provide a platform for individuals to engage with others who have similar interests or cultural backgrounds, promoting a feeling of belonging and community. Cultural enclaves are communities characterized by a significant concentration of certain ethnicities, actively preserving a strong sense of ethnic or national identity. These enclaves function as areas where people of the same cultural background gather. The correlation between The Divine Nine and cultural enclaves has long been seen at Frostburg State University (FSU).

The Divine Nine fraternities and sororities have provided many Black students with assistance and camaraderie throughout their college experience. Blackmon et al. (2023) explored the historical background of various groups at FSU. This research aimed to ascertain the origins of these groups at FSU and assess their influence on the community. Blackmon et al. interviewed faculty members from various organizations to get information on their experiences and the organization's impact on their lives. In addition, they used supplementary materials such as peer-reviewed scholarly publications and historical archives. The purpose of this study was to provide insight into the experiences of Black students who were enrolled in PWIs and HBCUs.

During the interviews, several participants reported that some group members would dwell in suites, often known as quads, inside the resident halls (Blackmon et al., 2023). Through cohabitation, The Divine Nine fraternities and sorority members established a miniature representation of their cultural enclave inside the school



community. It provided a venue wherein individuals could commemorate their cultural background, share thoughts and opinions, and provide intellectual, social, and emotional assistance to one another. This living arrangement enhanced visibility and fostered an understanding of The Divine Nine groups' rich cultural traditions and contributions to the broader college community.

Although BGLOs have assisted students, particularly African American students at mostly PWIs, they are not the only GLOs established to combat racism and foster a feeling of inclusion for students. Multicultural fraternities and sororities were subsequently established to provide culturally significant environments that actively oppose racism and other types of injustice (Garcia & Duran, 2021; Gillon et al., 2019). Gillon et al. (2019) observed that racially heterogeneous students, encompassing various ethnicities such as African American, Black, Native American, Latina, Asian American, and Pacific Islander, encountered racism and other types of marginalization within their college environments. The assistance provided by their fraternities and sororities aided them in acquiring the skills to navigate and cope with these oppressive settings. These favorable encounters resulted in the establishment of more inclusive organizations and representatives of other cultures (Garcia & Duran, 2021).

Students who attend institutions with low minority representation and increasing racial tensions are at risk of not continuing their education at the university (O'Malley, 2019; Walker- DeVose et al., 2019). Garcia (2019) and O'Malley (2019) discovered a significant number of research participants reported experiencing many instances of racial incidents and were influenced by ideas of racial privilege. Assessing the African American member's experience enhances comprehension of the identified concerns that

may have prompted the creation of resource organizations like fraternities and sororities (Walker-DeVose et al., 2019).

National Panhellenic Conference sororities, as inter/national organizations, sent several statements across various websites and social media platforms in response to the racist demonstrations that occurred throughout the summer of 2020 regarding the killing of George Floyd, expressing their opposition to racism (Goodman et al., 2023). I aimed to investigate the information found on the websites and Facebook pages of 26 National Panhellenic Conference (inter)national groups. The objective was to assess the messages about racism in the aftermath of the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a method utilized to challenge power and oppression systems that dehumanize some and humanize others (Goodman et al., 2023). Stories, which represent the teller's epistemic, ontological, and axiological ideas about knowledge, reality, and values, perpetuate these systems. Elite speech shapes public opinion and perpetuates discriminatory ideas, attitudes, and ideologies. CDA is employed to explore the connection between language and ideology, address social issues, and understand the role of language in knowledge transmission in social institutions. Researchers use CDA to investigate White hegemonic behaviors on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. I aimed to analyze the diversity, equity, and inclusion discourse of historically and predominately White sororities and fraternities on social media platforms, focusing on inductive analysis of power rather than deductive analysis based on a specific theory.

Goodman et al. (2023) identified three key observations: (a) the identification of systematic racism; (b) the recognition of the organization's historical and value-based

connection to racism; and (c) the need for both individual and organizational action. The findings indicate the National Panhellenic Conference sororities need to clearly explain their ideals and actions in confronting racism in both society and their organization to progress toward achieving racial fairness.

Fraternity and sorority members also influence the college experience for PWI students (Walker-DeVose et al., 2019). African American fraternities and sororities can enhance unfavorable impressions of campus surroundings by actively participating in situations where social segregation is evident (Walker-DeVose et al., 2019). African American students who are not adequately represented were actively involved in groups to effectively counter the negative stereotypes associated with their subculture (Jones & Reddick, 2017).

Monoracial students often assume that multiracial college students are insincere when they join an identity-based organization, such as a culturally-based sorority or fraternity. This assumption stems from monoracism and dominant racist discourses, which have an impact on the development of one's identity (Harris, 2016; Osei-Kofi, 2012). Joining a primarily White group as a non-White member may often result in emotions of racial exclusion (Snider et al., 2024). Multiracial students first pursued fraternities as a space of inclusion where they could freely express their many racial identities without being reduced to mere tokens (Delgado, 2016).

This previous research study demonstrated college students who identified as a single race initially felt confused and disoriented when confronted with the concept of being multiracial. This led to feelings of discomfort and the burden of dealing with many cultures for members of the multiracial Student for Life (SFL) group. Those who

identified as a single race within the SFL group might benefit from more education on the experiences of multiracial students. Specifically, they should be informed about how multiracial students navigate the complexities of having numerous racial backgrounds and their challenges in connecting with other communities and cultures (Guillermo-Wann & Johnston-Guerrero, 2021). Monoracial members of the SFL should participate in diversity and inclusion programs as part of their membership education. These programs should include discussions regarding the positive aspects of multiracialism and the harmful effects of deliberate erasure.

Education programs should first confront the prevailing milieu of colorblindness, particularly among traditionally White fraternities (Sasso et al., 2022). Within the context of multiracial students, it is crucial to consider their involvement in less diverse chapters. These students often encounter colorblindness, a reluctance to engage in conversations about race, and the need to manage assumptions made about their ethnic background by others (Snider, 2020). These changes may help multiracial SFL members build a more human perspective and provide them the ability to discuss racial terminology and erasure, which was shown to impact the identity development of multiracial students negatively (Ford, 2012).

In addition, campus professionals should collaborate with chapter leaders to motivate multiracial students to pursue meaningful leadership opportunities in other identity-based organizations. These organizations offer spaces for developing identity and racial awareness (Snider, 2020). This deliberate engagement may enhance the development of leadership skills and promote more participation within their chapter (Garcia, 2019; Malaney & Danowski, 2015). These initiatives aim to encourage

additional leadership opportunities and educate monoracial members of the SFL, which may enhance their sense of belonging within their respective chapters. This can help alleviate tokenization and the reliance on multiracial SFL members to act as mediators between different racial groups and facilitate common interests, as discovered in this study.

### ***Beliefs and Practices***

There were criticisms and positive points in the literature about fraternities. As all-male social organizations, fraternities frequently had dominant masculine cultures (Kimmel, 2018). In some instances, hegemonic masculinities influenced productive behavior. Harris and Harper (2014) studied how masculinity motivates fraternity members to participate in positive activities, such as challenging prejudice, confronting chapter brothers, and building non-romantic connections with women. A critical mass of brothers with similar ideas allowed participants to be considered good guys. Men in the chapter identified being excellent as a prominent feature and expectation of the group due to the critical mass. Men acted according to the expectations of most of the group (Harris & Harper, 2014). According to Anderson (2008) and Harris and Harper (2014), participants wanted to interact with fraternity members from other chapters and institutions that prioritize correcting the stereotypically bad conduct norm.

Seniority in the fraternity and elected or appointed chapter leadership posts led to an improved feeling of agency in confronting harmful behaviors among participants (Harris & Harper, 2014).

Harris and Harper (2014) also found that leadership positions gave participants a feeling of ownership over the well-being of the chapter and its members, even if their

activities were unpopular. Anderson (2012) conducted ethnographic research and found that chapter members valued productive masculine qualities when welcoming new members. Chapters were reluctant to accept new members if they did not feel they would embrace non-heterosexuals, respect women, and foster emotional connection among brothers (Anderson, 2012). Both studies' findings showed that a dominating narrative of productive masculinity was necessary for chapters to challenge or eliminate bad conduct effectively. No chapter succeeded when just a small group of members firmly advocated for eliminating harmful practices (Anderson, 2012; Harris & Harper, 2014).

As Meikle and Morris (2022) reported, African Americans have a social duty to build a vibrant community based on leadership development, economic achievement, and equality. African American students at PWIs want to integrate into the significant culture while retaining a solid subculture that reflects their community (Oikonomidoy et al., 2021). Several resource organizations targeting African Americans help kids build social relationships. African American student clubs, choirs, and special interest groups, such as Jubilee choirs at Fisk University and Hampton University, are examples of resource groups outside of fraternities and sororities (Chrisman, 2018). Jubilee choir singers showcase African American Christian heritage in their performances (Chrisman, 2018). Concertgoers experience the message as students (Chrisman, 2018).

Harris and Harper (2014) proposed productive masculinity, like inclusive masculinity, to acknowledge diverse masculinities. These authors found critical themes in their study of 50 Interfraternity Council men at a national leadership conference: "(a)

bringing out the best in men, (b) ‘a brother is a brother’, and (c) disrupting sexism, homophobia, and racism” (Harris & Harper, 2014, p. 102). Along with sustaining their fraternity’s ideals and principles, the members cared about and wanted to help their brothers grow as men. Participants thought they were accountable for being the fraternity men they wanted others to see and their brothers to be. While research on healthy masculinities among fraternity men is scarce, this study showed fraternities may help establish healthy and productive masculinities.

Significant research linked bad masculinity in fraternities to previously described behavior concerns. Kimmel’s (2018) explored the complex relationship between masculinity and fraternity membership. Kimmel attributed harmful behaviors in fraternities to masculinity, namely, “its chronic insecurity, its desperate need for validation, and the sometimes-sadistic cruelty with which that validation is withheld and then conferred” (p. 97). Fraternities reflect hypermasculine cultures that enforce gendered standards via persistent behavior policing. Police enforcement perpetuates hegemonic masculinity, causing individuals to engage in uncomfortable actions to meet expectations (Harris & Barone, 2011; Kimmel, 2019). Harris and Struve (2009) found partaking in dominating male characteristics gave fraternity membership social prestige and benefits on campus.

Alcohol usage is a key behavioral indicator of masculinity. It is a common aspect of male behavior among fraternities (Sasso, 2015). Alcohol use, frequency and the amount of usage were crucial in contests. Fraternities competed in the finest drinking contests and hosted the best parties with alcohol. Harris (2008) discovered alcohol use and competitive usage of alcohol may characterize masculinity among

college males. Alcohol intake was utilized to assess masculinity (Anderson, 2012; Harris, 2008) and to shame men who did not use alcohol as anticipated (Sasso, 2015). Hegemonic, macho alcohol drinking is a significant aspect of the fraternity experience (Sasso, 2015).

BGLOs uphold a strong belief in service to advance and better African American people and communities (Mitchell & Dancy, 2018). These organizations use education as the primary tool for economic and financial mobility. These organizations have historical practices deeply rooted in positioning African Americans for a more significant share in the political system and labor market while simultaneously preparing this group for leadership roles in all sectors of society (Mitchell & Dancy, 2018). Many notable African Americans are members of BGLOs. Given this history and tradition of preparing men for leadership roles, many are concerned that BGLOs have deviated from their intended purposes and sank into various malpractices and a culture of hazing (Mitchell & Dancy, 2018).

### **MHBs as the Theoretical Framework**

MHBs refer to individual differences in the idea that aggression and violence are necessary responses when provoked or in the case of self-defense or protecting one's family (Cohen et al., 1996; Saucier et al., 2015). MHB stems from honor cultures, but contemporary applications illustrate how it can be applied across various cultures (Saucier et al., 2018). MHB assigns higher values to individuals with formidable reputations and the willingness to make aggressive decisions to uphold those reputations (Schiffer et al., 2020; 2021). MHBs are associated with competitive viewpoints about societal success and participation in risk-taking behaviors to demonstrate manliness



(Saucier et al., 2018). From the MHB perspective, individuals, particularly males, need dominance (Cohen et al., 1996). Individuals higher in MHBs tend to see romantic rejection and the questioning of their masculinity as personally insulting (Stratmoen et al., 2018, 2020). Under the framework of MHBs, men see honor and manhood as precarious. Protecting themselves and loved ones is critical to their identities. MHBs demand that any threat to honor be met with fierce reactions. Otherwise, there are implications for perceived weakness without a strong defense in protecting their reputation (O’Dea et al., 2017). MHBs also dictate that physical fights should be won at any cost and that threats must be met with aggression (O’Dea et al., 2018).

MHBs have been established as a relevant framework for hazing research (McCready, 2020). Individuals using MHBs often view hazing as an opportunity to demonstrate manhood. Hazing has been associated with the need to gain and maintain honor by any means necessary (Saucier et al., 2016). Peer influence, valuing tough social reputation, and engaging in risky behaviors are all attributes of hazing and MHBs (Barnes et al., 2012).

Fraternities are not the only place MHBs are seen; they are woven into the country’s fabric. For example, “Don’t Mess with Texas” appears on Texas billboards, road signs, and souvenirs. It started as an anti-littering program but symbolizes Texas pride and braggadocio. To “mess with” someone implies ridicule, mocking, or threatening them, and Texans are proud of their history of resisting such threats (Fehrenbach, 2014). Texas has a culture of honor that values defending one’s reputation with violence. Cultures of honor have become a significant theoretical viewpoint on cultural differences in attitudes, behavior, and practices. The field first noticed this subject, thanks to Nisbett

and Cohen (1993, 2018). The researchers examined how Mediterranean anthropologists' culture of honor formulations applied to the South and West United States. Many scholars have utilized this approach to study cultural impacts on behavior in honor-based cultures since the 1990s.

Nisbett (1993) introduced the concept of "culture of honor" to social psychology to explain why men in the South had higher violence rates than men in the North. Beyond North- South variations in poverty, slavery, and temperature, Nisbett (2018) said the culture of honor explains increased violence in the South. Regions only differ in violence rates for threats to reputation, such as argument-related violence that spontaneously erupts in response to insults and affronts, supporting the culture of honor hypothesis (Nisbett, 1993).

Why is honor culture prevalent in the South? Nisbett (2018) stated that honor cultures in many civilizations, including the U.S. South, respond to ecological pressures like scant, susceptible economic resources, and poor law enforcement. In the 18th century, ranchers from Britain's outskirts inhabited the U.S. South, while German and Dutch farmers colonized the North. Herding economies are more sensitive to resource loss than farming since cattle are nomadic and theft-prone. Well into the 19th century, the state could not enforce the law in the border South. These circumstances led White Southerners to use an honor code rather than a penal system to defend themselves, their families, and their wealth by demonstrating toughness and forceful reprisal.

Living in a community where individuals celebrate while seeing violent acts and never addressing them cannot lead to a healthy community. That substance putrefies. "It is too traumatizing, too painful, too terrifying just to disappear," Stevenson said on Public

Broadcasting System (PBS) NewsHour. The National Memorial for Peace and Justice and its companion Legacy Museum argued that slavery did not end in 1865 but transformed into racial terror, segregation, resistance to civil rights, and eventually mass incarceration. To achieve the development and freedom promised by prevailing national narratives, one must publicly confront past violence to break the cycle. “When we can discuss these matters, we can establish new connections,” Stevenson said on PBS. “We must follow each step without skipping any.” Truth and reconciliation follow a particular order. One must be honest before achieving reconciliation, as stated by PBS NewsHour in 2018.

Although Southerners no longer depend on a herding economy or live apart from law enforcement, White Southerners still value honor. The culture of honor is still observable in several instances. One is interpersonal interaction patterns that lead to sudden bursts of aggression in response to insults or affronts (Cohen et al., 1996; Cohen et al., 1999). Another is collective representations like laws and media that condone honor-related violence (Cohen, 2018). Institutional non-stigmatization of violence is another (Cohen & Nisbett, 1997). While growing up, boys and girls learn honor-based masculinity and femininity via socialization (Vandello & Cohen, 2008).

Per the culture-of-honor argument, only European Americans show South-North regional differences in honor-related interpersonal violence (Nisbett, 2018), suicide (Osterman & Brown, 2011), and risk-taking (Barnes et al., 2012). After Nisbett and Cohen’s (1996) initial research, researchers found European Americans in Mountain West states also relied on an honor code for protection in an environment where herding was the primary form of subsistence and legal enforcement was limited. Leung and Cohen (2011) defined honor, dignity, and face cultures as the frequency with which

individuals and situations promote different norms, values, practices, and ideals (or cultural logic) for social order and self-worth.

Cultural norms and ideas promote self-worth and respect as socially given. Honor is an individual's worth in their own eyes and society's (Pitt-Rivers, 1997). Pitt-Rivers' (1997) judgment of his value, his claim to pride, and society's recognition of his greatness are all involved. This notion of honor includes self-esteem and reputation or social image. In honor-based civilizations, individuals feel their value is tenuous and quickly taken away since it relies on others' perceptions. One might earn self-worth by stealing another's honor via competition or aggressiveness. In honor-based communities, family and societal expectations define personal morality, and violating them shames oneself and their family. Individuals engage in various acts to defend their personal and familial reputations to avoid shame and criticism.

The role of masculinity and its belief system has a long history in the development and socialization of men. There is evidence of that socialization within fraternities. Waterman et al. (2020) found less evidence that fraternity membership had a socialization effect on traditional masculinity ideologies. According to their results, men may develop these beliefs before college, which remain stable despite fraternity membership. In contrast, dignity-based civilizations of the Northern and Midwestern United States and Northern and Western Europe believe individuals have intrinsic values that cannot be taken away (Leung & Cohen, 2011). Thus, insults or taunts should not affect an individual's self-esteem or that of others. Dignity lets individuals follow their ideals, beliefs, and morals. For dignity-based societies, in opposition to honor-society disgrace, regret about failing to behave according to one's ideals limits conduct. Dignity-based

cultures have robust laws that safeguard individuals. Dignity-based cultures value diligent and active reputation protection less than honor-based societies since individuals do not need to take the law into their own hands.

Fraternity culture perpetuates traditional masculinity ideologies, but little research has considered the process by which men internalize these ideologies (Waterman et al., 2020). Men may select fraternities based on preexisting ideologies, or fraternities may have a socializing effect on ideologies. Waterman et al. (2020) used two longitudinal datasets to explore the selection and socialization effects of fraternity membership on masculinity ideologies (i.e., gendered beliefs, gendered traits, and sexual double standard beliefs) and impersonal sex (i.e., sexual motives and multiple sex partners) among ethnically and racially diverse college men.

Waterman et al. (2020) used dataset one ( $n = 166$ ,  $M = 18$  years old fall of first year). The focus was on the exploration of the selection and socialization effects of fraternity membership on male role norms, masculine traits, and endorsement of the sexual double standard. To examine the presence of selection effects, the researchers conducted a total of eight logistic regression studies. Waterman et al. (2020) did not find much evidence for selection or socialization effects on sex motives and multiple sex partners; therefore, findings may inform intervention efforts for men before and during college. Two preexisting datasets were employed to measure fraternity membership, but the results showed differences in membership among males with multiple sex partners and second-semester university students. Race and ethnicity varied among samples. In dataset two, Waterman et al. (2020) oversampled Asian Americans, but not dataset one. Future studies might replicate these findings with diverse groups to further selection and

socialization studies. Finally, Waterman et al. (2020) examined traditional masculinity ideologies and impersonal sex. Future studies might examine fraternity selection and socialization on sexual aggression.

Fraternity men's sexual assault opinions vary per chapter (McCready et al., 2022). The collective control of fraternity chapters over women was positively connected with sexual assault mitigation and victim blaming and negatively associated with survivor support. McCready et al. (2022) utilized multilevel modeling to see whether chapter traditional masculine norm climates and individual masculinity norm compliance influenced members' minimizing, solidarity, survivor-blaming, and survivor-support sexual assault views. Data were collected from a single historically White collegiate social men's fraternity ( $n = 2,691$ ) from 77 U.S. and Canadian universities. These researchers examined whether fraternity chapters had significant variations regarding these opinions. Results suggest masculine norm climates and adherence predict these feelings. The data suggest fraternity chapters think differently about sexual assault. The sample size of 2,500 fraternity males and disparities across chapters and institutions are limitations. These findings support Treat et al.'s (2021) results. Even after controlling for prior sexual violence and characteristics that predict fraternity membership (i.e., binge drinking and a preference for casual sex), college males are more likely to engage in sexual aggression.

There is limited discussion in the field about addressing college sexual assault through early prevention (Schewe, 2007). In addition to interventions for college students, early interventions that aim to help boys develop healthier beliefs about gender and sex during middle and high school may also be effective strategies for preventing college

sexual aggression (DeGue et al., 2014). In previous research, authors showed that beliefs remained stable over time; furthermore, the development and assessment of comprehensive, theory-based primary preventive measures for sexual assault must continue, requiring the expertise of sexual assault researchers, well-directed research funding, and field-based prevention specialists. Integrated prevention efforts should be multidimensional and data-based, requiring more excellent impact data to justify investments (DeGue et al., 2014).

Young boys are still developing these beliefs, which may be more malleable than college students' beliefs. Programs aimed at younger boys may be more developmentally appropriate. The purpose of developmentally appropriate prevention and properly timed during development is to change individuals' of beliefs and behaviors that lead to undesired outcomes (Nation et al., 2003).

A review of the relevant literature related to the issue of hazing revealed that hazing practices in fraternities are often designed to humiliate the intended members (Jones, 2017). In the process of making pledges feel ashamed and causing injury to their dignity and self-respect in a public format, somehow those perpetuating the hazing feel as though they are strong men, who in turn, will produce stronger men with unquestionable masculinity through the various hazing practices (Saucier et al., 2018). The cycle is repeated to establish a firm hazing culture within the BGLOs. Toward that end, I aimed to examine the practice and culture of hazing within the specific BGLO selected for this study and the implications related to MHBs.

## **Hazing**

The term hazing has acquired several interpretations among individuals. Hazing is defined as any conduct anticipated by an individual who joins a group that causes humiliation, degradation, abuse, or puts the victims at risk (Edelman, 2005). Hazing has also been defined more expansively as “any activity that is anticipated of an individual who is joining or taking part in a group (such as a student club, organization, or team) that causes humiliation, degradation, abuse, or danger, regardless of the person’s willingness to participate” (Hoover & Pollard, 2000, p. 8). Mothers Against School Hazing (MASH), has provided a more comprehensive definition of the word. According to MASH, “it refers to any action or activity that fails to contribute to an individual’s positive growth and development” (Lipkins, 2006, p. 13). In Illinois, hazing is defined as the intentional involvement of a hazer in an activity that compels another person to undertake specific actions. It is recognized that this occurrence might take place in any educational environment and is necessary for joining a group affiliated with the institution (Illinois General Assembly). Illinois has enacted an anti-hazing statute, which imposes a criminal charge on anyone who engages in hazing when physical injury is involved.

The definitions provided by Hoover and Pollard (2000) and MASH vary in terms of the inclusion of the phrase “endangers regardless of a person’s willingness to participate” (p. 8) and “does not contribute to the positive development of a person” (Lipkins, 2006, p. 13). This distinction alters the presentation of hazing. Instead of seeing hazing as an optional activity or considering potential advantages, this approach steers the discussion toward refining the definition. Regardless of the precise definition of hazing, hazing is not a recent occurrence.



### *Historical Account of Hazing*

Hazing has existed since Ancient Greece and persisted into the Medieval Ages (Ball, 2004; Lewis, 1991). At a particular juncture, hazing was formally sanctioned in England because it instilled a sense of obedience (Torbenson & Parks, 2009). Hazing was introduced in the United States as early as the 1600s, but the first legal case did not arise until 1873. This case included the death of student Mortimer Leggett, who was hazed at Cornell University (Acquaviva, 2008). In 1873, Mortimer Leggett, a prospective member of the Kappa Alpha Society at Cornell University, tragically died while participating in a ritual. He was blindfolded and guided into a forest by two current members, but unfortunately, all three individuals accidentally fell into a gorge, resulting in Leggett's death (Nuwer, 1999).

It is crucial to acknowledge that although hazing is often associated with fraternities and sororities, it may also occur in other areas on college campuses. Hoover and Pollard (2000) reported that 35% of those who join sports teams experience hazing, whereas 22% of those who join music, art, or theatrical clubs also endure hazing. This corroborates Nuwer's (1999) discovery that hazing is a "social issue in the United States" (p. 21).

Hazing was pervasive in the operational practices of universities from the early years and into the 19th century. Underclassmen quickly discovered the hierarchical structure of the collegiate system, realizing that they occupied the lowest position. According to Syrett (2011), individuals were expected to avert their gaze and physically step aside if a senior approached them. Frequently, the sophomore class subjected the first-year students to hazing since they had just experienced it themselves and wanted to

ensure the same treatment was passed on to the following group. To do this, they took advantage of the Freshman Laws, which required sophomore students to assist newcomers in understanding university life. This hazing included the act of relocating furniture to the central area of the school and deliberately filling a freshman's room with smoke by blowing it through the keyhole. This would compel the students to vacate their living quarters, exposing them to potential hazing incidents (Syrett, 2011).

These instances are consistent with Lipkins' (2006) description of hazing, which was defined as "a tradition-based process employed by groups to uphold a hierarchy" (p. 13). The rise of hazing within fraternal organizations is seen in 19th-century fraternities using pledging to attract prep school students (Nuwer, 1999). This concept included fraternities proactively seeking to enlist members before their arrival on college campuses, extending the duration of the recruiting process. By enduring that time, new members were proving the worthiness of membership. These instances of aggressive and playful behavior among fraternity members have, on several occasions, resulted in fatalities, a pattern that has persisted throughout the history of fraternities.

Hazing is a persistent issue inside fraternity and sorority communities, as well as in other organizations on college campuses. Allan et al. (2018) focused on the fraternal organizations at seven different universities. Their findings revealed that 26% of the participants engaged in an action classified as hazing. The primary activity expected of students to participate in groups is engaging in drinking games; however, tolerating loud and intense shouting was also ranked highly on the list. Researchers discovered a discrepancy between hazing encounters and their classification as such (Allan et al., 2018). The disconnection has been a long-standing challenge for students (Allan &

Madden, 2008; Campo et al., 2005; Hamilton et al., 2013). This disconnection requires more investigation.

StopHazing has offered many resources, studies, and instruments to promote education and combat hazing practices. Through their studies, they have discovered a range of hazing acts, spanning from low to high danger. An illustration is included in Appendix A. The text discusses low-risk behaviors, which include actions such as intimidation, derogatory language, and deceit.

### ***Justification for Hazing***

The justification for hazing is a subject that has been extensively researched for many years, although a conclusive solution has not yet been reached. Cimino (2011) and Keating et al. (2005) made significant progress in addressing this inquiry. Cimino (2011) derived three overarching ideas from an anthropological investigation. The research included watching all weekly meetings and hazing rituals of a fraternity over a semester. The aim was to elucidate the underlying motives for hazing including: (a) solidarity, (b) social dominance, and (c) loyalty.

The solidarity argument from Aronson and Mills (1959) explains that individuals subjected to hazing justify the mistreatment by developing a stronger affinity with the organization. Aronson and Mills performed research in which participants were divided into three distinct groups to discuss the psychology of sex. The authors determined hazing induces cognitive dissonance, which may be handled using two methods. Firstly, the individual being hazed may rationalize and persuade themselves that the experience was not as severe as it was. Secondly, they may emphasize the good aspects while downplaying the negative ones (Aronson & Mills, 1959). Keating et al. (2005) expanded

on this concept by asserting that hazing creates a relationship of reliance between the individuals who haze and those who are hazed, increasing the hazingees' fondness for the hazers.

The loyalty idea proposed by Cimino is a well-recognized concept in literature. Smith's groundbreaking study in 1964 suggested that fraternities' arduous and protracted initiation procedures would enable new members to demonstrate their dedication to the group. Contrastingly, according to Jones' (2015) study, new fraternity recruits willingly subject themselves to hazing rituals to demonstrate their value to the fraternity. This is consistent with studies conducted outside the context of Greek life. Johnson (2000) conducted extensive interviews with 12 student-athletes. He contended that the practice of hazing newcomers in sports demonstrates their dedication to the team. In contrast, Vigil (2008) discovered gang initiations serve the purpose of eliminating individuals who are not strong enough. This conclusion was drawn based on Vigil's observation and analysis of literature on gang initiations.

The notion of social dominance, as described by Cimino (2011), is a well-studied and well-established concept. This thesis revolves around the idea that those who engage in hazing activities assert their authority and control over others who are subjected to hazing (Cimino, 2011). Athletics have a very high degree of social dominance. Novices are expected to do physical labor tasks such as tidying the locker room or transporting equipment to effectively illustrate the authority held by senior team members (Nuwer, 2001).

Keating et al. (2005) further suggested that hazing, which is linked to social dominance, serves the purpose of maintaining the hierarchical structure. The initiation

process for new members is comparable among fraternities and centers upon the organization's history, principles, rules, and expectations for member conduct (such as Pi Kappa Phi, Phi Delta Theta, Delta Upsilon, and Chapter Resources). The purpose of this procedure was for new members to establish connections with their fellow members while gaining knowledge about the heritage they are joining and the significance of their new membership. These programs offered new members a structured foundation to enhance their Greek Life experience. The duration of these procedures typically ranged from 4 to 8 weeks. It is intended to provide new members with the necessary resources to adapt and integrate into the chapter (Phi Delta Theta, Phikeia Education Program).

While fraternities may use various strategies and approaches, their commonalities outweigh the differences. The portrayal of Greek Life initiation rituals in popular culture, particularly in films like 1978 *Animal House* has contributed to the perpetuation and intensification of contemporary perceptions of the new member process (Tingley et al., 2018). This has resulted in a heightened focus on the recruiting, intake, and introduction procedures concerning students' physical and mental well-being. An instance illustrating this heightened phenomenon may be the case of excessive alcohol consumption at Pennsylvania State University, where a new member tragically lost their life during the initiation procedure (Bittner, 2016; Deak, 2017). One new member of a fraternity dies each year because of hazing practices (Filip, 2012; Nuwer, 1999).

As a result of these fatalities due to hazing, several inter/national organizations have significantly reduced or eliminated the initiation procedure for new members. The occurrence of hazing throughout the new member procedures is the primary factor that negatively impacts Greek Life (Biddix et al., 2014; Kase et al., 2016). Hazing has reached

such a level that it is now considered unlawful in 44 out of the 50 states in the United States. The charges may include assault, battery, or any other relevant criminal offenses (Alvarez, 2015; Parks et al., 2015).

Tingley et al. (2018) discovered a disparity between genders in the regulations around hazing and pledging. Males have a higher propensity to endorse and engage in less severe types of hazing, as well as advocate for the implementation of more extreme hazing practices. Paradoxically, males are also the most inclined to voice their opposition to hazing, both on behalf of the new members being hazed and as opposing active members within the organization. Conversely, women perceive more favorable aspects of the new member and initiation procedures (Tingley et al., 2018). New members who remain in their organizations might benefit from the Greek experience in many ways, including increased graduation rates, alumni support, and opportunities for campus leadership roles (Aren et al., 2014; Pike, 2020). Alumni assistance is crucial in benefiting the organization and strengthening the connection between the institution and Greek Life (Tingley et al., 2018).

### **Malpractices and Hazing Culture**

At least one university hazing fatality occurred from 1969 to 2021. There have been over 200 university hazing fatalities since 1838, including 40 between 2007 and 2017 (The Economist Newspaper, 2017). Death from alcohol poisoning has the highest incidence (The Economist Newspaper, 2017). An individual's desire to engage in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers them constitutes hazing (National Collaborative for Hazing Research and Prevention at the University of Maine, 2008).

Hazing may even occur to an established member, as in the 2011 death of fraternity brother George Desdunes.

In Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the Phi Delta Theta fraternity welcomed 18-year-old Louisiana State University student, Maxwell Gruver, to their residence on September 13 (CBS Interactive, 2017). The “Bible Study” hazing practice included dousing Gruver and 20 other “pledges” with hot sauce and mustard and forcing them to drink 190-proof vodka while reciting the Greek alphabet. A post-mortem examination revealed that Gruver died of “acute alcohol intoxication with aspiration” the following day (CBS Interactive, 2017, para.2). His blood-alcohol concentration was 0.495 grams per 100ml, indicating 24 standard shots. Parents of a Louisiana State University student who died after hazing were awarded \$6.1 million (Albeck-Ripka, 2023). The Louisiana Legislature passed the Max Gruver Act as a preventive measure, which now defines hazing as a felony. Louisiana State University and Phi Delta Theta were among 17 defendants in the civil complaint and negotiated settlements. In 2019, former Louisiana State University student Matthew Naquin was found guilty of negligent homicide for killing Mr. Gruver. The prosecution said he led the hazing.

In 1974, a group of fraternity brothers from Monmouth College coerced William Flowers, a 19-year-old pledge, to excavate a burial site and, after that, occupy it, according to the New York Times (Sullivan, 1974). Flowers was the first African American student to join the Zeta Beta Tau fraternity. Upon entering the grave, the walls crumbled and engulfed Flowers, entombing him alive (Sullivan, 1974). Later that year, the New Jersey Legislator passed an anti- hazing bill (Bergmann, 2015). In a preliminary hearing on November 25, 1974, Monmouth County Judge M. Raymond

McGowan charged the seven fraternity brothers with manslaughter for ordering Mr. Flowers and four other pledges to dig and lay in beach sand graves. A grand jury ruled not to charge them (The New York Times, 1975).

On October 19, 2021, 18-year-old University of Missouri student, Danny Santulli, fell after a party hazing ritual given by the Phi Gamma Delta members (The Guardian, 2022). CCTV video showed him being force-fed beer and vodka, losing balance and keeling over. He was unconscious and in cardiac arrest with a near-fatal 0.46 blood-alcohol level. Though he lived, Santulli suffered brain damage and cannot walk, communicate, or see.

While hazing is present in many groups, fraternities have garnered scrutiny due to their prevalence rather than being an infrequent occurrence. A significant number of colleges, along with 44 states, have enacted laws against hazing (Allan & Madden, 2008). In addition, public opinion strongly condemns such behavior, and polls conducted among students indicate a significant level of unfavorable emotion (Allan et al., 2019). Despite facing criticism, fraternity hazing continues to be widely practiced and incidents resulting in fatalities have significantly increased in recent decades (Banks & Archibald, 2020). Between 2006 and 2014, a total of nine individuals lost their lives while undergoing the initiation process for the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity (Rosenberg & Mosca, 2016).

While these organizations stand for unity, togetherness, and the well-being of their members, they share a dark side with other sororities and fraternities. The process of initiation, which is referred to as *hazing*, can become violent and criminal. Hazing imposes activities that are strenuous and humiliating in a bid to discipline and train (Jones & Reddick, 2017).



Historically, hazing became a fraternity ritual after the Civil War. The act was born from copying veterans who required boys to prove their manliness before being brought into the battalion. While widely practiced, hazing is illegal. The degree of hazing intensity varies from school to school. Some argue the reward of being a part of these BGLOs is worth the dark initiation rites and rituals (Jones & Reddick, 2017).

Pledging is an essential activity in BGLOs. The members consider the rites they undertake under the pledge to enhance their success as a group (Gunn, 2015). It defines their uniqueness from the other students within the institution. With the pledging processes, the members of a particular group get a certain sense of success because they believe that the group's platform enhances their chances of accomplishing specific, impossible tasks (McClure, 2002). Most of these entities believe that hazing has been a traditional rite of initiation for their group; subsequently, it defines their identity and what the group stands for. Every student who seeks to join the organization must undergo the mandatory initiation process (Cooper, 2018). The initiation processes of hazing for the BGLOs came after the predominantly White societies developed their initiation process; hence, they tend to be distinct from the other organizations' operations (Harper, 2007). Some of the distinct hazing processes for the BGLOs were dressing alike, standing in lines, and marching within the campus premises (Baker, 2008). The hazing process for these groups often takes two distinct natures. The first is pledging, which entails undergoing some form of physical and mental torture. When one successfully undergoes these processes, they eventually gain membership into the group and enjoy the privileges and benefits that accompany being a member of society (Anderson & Smith, 2016). The other process entails papers where one registers to be a member; however, members who

join through paper are often victimized and considered less valuable group members.

Several laws in the United States criminalize hazing and pledging; however, most institutions have BGLO groups and most students who endeavor to join these groups often participate in these processes as both abusers and victims either knowingly or unknowingly (Dancy & Hotchkins, 2015). When a student joins an institution of higher learning as a freshman, they often feel out of place because most students are members of different social clubs where they tend to interact exclusively amongst themselves (Baker, 2008). These groups require an individual to get a membership to interact with their members. There are different ways of attaining membership in these student societies. In the modern student culture, most of these groups demand that one who wants to gain membership must register with the administration through an application (Clark & Brooms, 2018). The management of these groups are always fellow students who review the application, and if they deem that the individual might be beneficial to the organization, they accept the application (Allan & Madden, 2008). The administration may also decline to approve such a proposal.

During the second year of college and some during their first year at PWIs, students are often in their most vulnerable position. They apply for membership in a BGLO at this stage. These students are more likely to drop out or fail during this process. Students are vulnerable because they are in a new environment. The ability to cope may be overwhelming, especially if there is no support to help them understand and appreciate the new culture (Palmer et al., 2015). Social support is quite essential in coping with a new environment.

According to the National Education Statistics, most students in postsecondary

education who drop out of school do so during their first year of study (Allan & Madden, 2008). The primary cause of this dropout is that the students cannot cope in the new environment and assimilate to the new culture. It is also worth noting that the attrition rate for African American students is higher. Being the minority group, especially in PWIs, assimilating to strange environments can be tricky, and those who lack social support may opt to drop out in the process (Dancy & Hotchkins, 2015). BGLOs enhance the adaptive capacity of minority groups and provide various forms of support in college, especially in PWIs (Clark & Brooms, 2018).

BGLOs have many positive attributes that should be preserved and expanded to benefit their members and others (Mitchell, 2018). Hazing undermines those positive attributes and appears to be the most damaging aspect of BGLOs' student life (Mitchell, 2018). It is incumbent upon researchers to manage and analyze the cultural practice of hazing through a deliberate framework for understanding. It is necessary to accentuate the positives of BGLOs by controlling the negative aspects of hazing. Organizational theory is an explanatory framework since BGLOs are characterized by unique colors, behaviors, verbiage, relationships, and a shared sense of identity. Still, it stops short of the dimensions included in MHBs. BGLOs are intricate organizations operating on college campuses, characterized by shared identity and unique relationships (Granovetter, 1973). These interactions should be studied to understand the culture of hazing and the possibility of reducing or eliminating the illegal practice of hazing from the rank-and-file members of BGLOs.

A careful examination of the actors, social ties, and the exchange of information within BGLOs could be the key to understanding why hazing is so pervasive, why

members feel compelled to participate, and what, if anything, can be done to eliminate or reduce the practice of hazing. The answers to these questions would be significant and valuable in uprooting the deeply entrenched practice of hazing within BGLOs. In the formative years, higher education in the United States managed its students far differently. Most early institutions operated under *loco parentis*, and the institutions significantly influenced how the students interacted with each other (Mitchell & Gipson, 2015). The faculty members in these institutions acted like second parents to the students within the school premises, and they set the rules and guidelines on how students were to interact (Baker, 2008). The strict policies and the institutions' supervision of the students curtailed their interaction. As a result, students started forming secret groups where they could interact freely without the institutions' strict supervision. These groups were student societies created for the primary purpose of free and unsupervised interactions among college students (Woolhouse, 2020).

These societies began as literary societies where the students within an organization could get an opportunity to develop their writing and speaking skills among their peers. Brown et al. (2005) postulated that the perceptions of faculty members and the administration regarding what college life should entail differed from the student's perspective. The latter viewed college life as a time to try new experiences and transition to the next stage of life, namely, adulthood.

The former viewed the same as a period of self-denial for the students (Chambers, 2017). Over time, these societies evolved from literary societies to social clubs. This evolution eventually led to the creation BGLOs within higher education institutions (Chambers, 2017). The first organization was the Phi Beta Kappa, which began as an

entity where students would compete in essay writing and other literary skills; however, this organization shifted its focus to providing other social activities for its members. The organization was first established at the College of William and Mary in 1776 (Allan & Madden, 2008). It was the only student organization at the time that openly provided other social activities for its members. The other organizations, even though they offered such activities, did so without the administration's knowledge and without the approval of campus faculty (Cooper, 2018).

For students to join this organization, there were rites of initiation that one had to undergo (Baker, 2008). The organization also had a distinct oath of allegiance and several secret rituals (i.e., handshakes, that defined their members from other groups' members within the organization; Anderson & Smith, 2016). Before creating BGLOs, the different student organizations offering a platform for the students to interact had various codes that defined their identity to such groups. However, the newly established group had distinct unorthodox rites of initiation and processes that differed from the other groups (Clark & Brooms, 2018).

Before the establishment of BGLOs, other existing student societies provided a platform for student interaction (Baker, 2008). These groups had discriminatory practices that necessitated the creation of BGLOs. Most of the established groups, White Greek letter organizations (WGLOs), often excluded other students from attaining membership based on the student's race, religion, or ethnicity (Clark & Brooms, 2018). During the early years of WGLOs, racism was rampant in the United States, and at the time, there was no legislation prohibiting racial discrimination (Allan & Madden, 2008). As a result, the vice of racial discrimination was practiced publicly in student organizations and

higher education.

BGLOs accommodated students excluded from WGLOs (Chambers, 2017). As much as the BGLOs sought to provide a platform for social interactions and academic enrichment for its members, directly or indirectly, the group also sought to address some of the rampant societal and political issues, such as racism and discrimination (Dancy & Hotchkins, 2015). Since then, American society has produced various affirmative action plans and legislation to address the prevailing social issues of the time. Since the *Civil Rights Act* of 1964, society has seen various inclusion developments, even in student organizations (Anderson & Smith, 2016).

As with most student organizations, membership follows a specific process. For both BGLOs and WGLOs, pledging is essential in seeking membership. The members consider the rites they undertake under the pledge to enhance their success as a group (Gunn, 2015). It defines their uniqueness from the other students within the institution. With the pledging processes, the members of a particular group obtain a sense of success because they believe that the group's platform enhances their chances of accomplishing specific, impossible tasks (McClure, 2002). Every student who seeks to join a BGLO must undergo the mandatory initiation process (Cooper, 2018). This mandatory initiation process is called *pledging*, which entails undergoing some form of physical and mental torture. When one successfully undergoes these processes, they eventually gain membership into the group and enjoy the privileges and benefits that accompany being a member of that society (Anderson & Smith, 2016). The benefits include various capital types improving social standing in campus life. Other benefits include academic support from other fraternity or sorority members.

## Summary

The NPHC is a group of nine historically BGLOs founded in 1930 to support African American college students, addressing racial prejudice and exclusion in the U.S. higher education system. BGLOs formed during the loco parentis era of 1765–1985 often subjected students to torture and initiation rites. Despite human rights laws, African American students participate in these organizations to develop belonging and identity. Group identity, particularly among African American students, is crucial in combating racism—fraternal/ethnic societies and clubs like The Divine Nine which foster community. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) can challenge power structures. Education programs should encourage diversity and inclusion.

Fraternalities often have masculine cultures influencing productive behavior; however, fraternities can promote dominant masculinity and excessive alcohol use. Historically, African American fraternities have strategically positioned themselves for political and labor market positions. MHBs are individual differences in the belief that aggression and violence are necessary for self-defense or family protection. It stems from honor cultures and is associated with competitive viewpoints and risk-taking behaviors. The culture of honor influences attitudes, behavior, and practices.

Fraternal membership may not socialize traditional masculinity ideologies, but early interventions can help develop healthier beliefs about gender and sex. Hazing, a societal problem in the United States, has existed since Ancient Greece and is widespread on college campuses, with a participation rate of 26% of students. The controversial Greek practice of hazing is now illegal in 44 U.S. states. It is seen as a demonstration of dedication or hierarchy and a potential benefit for new members.

Hazing, a college tradition since 1838, is illegal but crucial for collective success.

Researchers must address hazing to maintain BGLOs' positive aspects while mitigating harmful elements. Chapter 3 will discuss the methodology of the study in detail.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this research was to examine the attitudes and beliefs about hazing activities within BGLOs. The creation of BGLOs in the United States prompted the need to create support systems for African American students attending higher education institutions. Parks and Hooker (2020) asserted the central goal of BGLOs was only to pool resources that would help the integration and acclimatization of African American students but also to foster their sense of belonging and acceptance into the larger American society. Although BGLOs have been associated with enhanced delivery of services to members of the community, Sergent et al. (2018) asserted the organizations have been condemned for widespread drinking among students and hazing activities. Based on the negative impacts of BGLOs, the specific problem that prompted this research was to investigate the attitudes and beliefs towards hazing activities within BGLOs at selected HBCUs and PWIs.

Hazing is a complex and significant social problem that should be addressed. In this chapter, I will discuss the research methodology and design employed to examine the attitudes and beliefs of hazing practices within BGLOs at one HBCU and one PWI. Besides a discussion of the rationale for the research methodology and design, I will also present a detailed discussion on the setting of the study, participants and sample, data collection, and the data analysis procedures. A discussion of the study's validity and ethics will be presented. The chapter ends with a summary of the critical sections and a transition to Chapter 4, where the research findings are presented.

## **Rationale for Methodology**

A survey was employed to investigate the attitudes and beliefs about hazing practices within BGLOs at selected HBCUs and PWIs. Quantitative research methodology is used by researchers when the goal of the study is to investigate relationships between the dependent and independent variables (Bloomfield & Fischer, 2019). Agreeing with Bloomfield and Fischer (2019), Bauer et al. (2021) noted that in establishing a relationship between variables, researchers collect numerical data that can be analyzed using mathematical or statistical techniques such as inferential and descriptive statistics. A distinguishing characteristic of quantitative research methodology is using numerical data to identify patterns and trends, test for causal relationships between variables, and generalize the findings to the larger population (Kandel, 2020).

A quantitative research methodology was appropriate for this study for the following reasons. First, quantitative researchers collect and analyze numerical data to establish relationships between the study variables or identify patterns or trends within the phenomenon of interest (Bloomfield & Fischer, 2019). In this context, I collected numerical data to examine the attitudes and beliefs about hazing practices within BGLOs. One of the significant questions in this research was to discover if there are differences in beliefs and attitudes between Black males in BGLOs at selected HBCUs and PWIs. The extensiveness of hazing practices and their associated negative impacts, such as reduced academic performance and mental health illnesses (Parks & Hooker, 2020), informs the need for research that is extensive and could represent the impacts of hazing practices on the general population.

The second rationale for selecting quantitative research methodology was generalizing the study findings to the general population. Researching the quality and outcomes of quantitative research methodology, Plonsky and Gass (2011) reported that using larger sample sizes in quantitative research methodology allows researchers to quantify and generalize the findings to the general population. Thus, with this quantitative research study, I wanted to generalize as much as participants' findings to the larger Black male institutional population regarding their attitudes and beliefs on hazing practices in higher education and outside the learning environments (see Schiffer et al., 2022). Although the sample was not random to establish generalizability, I aimed to collect data from as large a sample as possible to describe the breadth of beliefs and attitudes about hazing.

The issue of hazing in BGLOs is highly dynamic, especially among African American males who were once members of BGLOs. Parks and Hooker (2020) noted that for many African Americans, BGLOs were crucial for their integration, acceptance, and feeling of belonging while in school, especially at PWIs. Subjectivity may have hindered the credibility of the participants' responses; however, with quantitative research methods, investigators can collect and analyze data from a large sample with precision (see Kandel, 2020). Gutterman (2020) explained the computational technology and techniques utilized to analyze numerical data were exact and minimized errors with analysis. The credibility of the findings was also based on the numerical data rather than the participant's views, perceptions, and experiences (Apuke, 2017).

Before settling for a quantitative research methodology, I examined the appropriateness of a qualitative or mixed methods research design. Because of the

topic's sensitive nature, using interviews could have been more threatening to the respondents. Additionally, collecting interview or focus group data would be too difficult in these institutional contexts. Collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data would have allowed me to investigate a phenomenon in-depth (Shorten & Smith, 2017); however, I decided only to collect survey data for pragmatic reasons. I assumed that because of the sensitive nature of hazing, respondents would be reluctant to participate in interviews or focus groups. Completing an anonymous survey allowed the participants to express their genuine opinions without fear of exposing themselves or expressing an opinion that might be too controversial. It was for this reason that I decided only to collect survey data.

I used a survey to collect the data. Survey research is designed to systematically investigate a phenomenon and present information about the phenomenon in a systematic manner (Apuke, 2017). The goal of such research is to investigate a problem without manipulating any of the variables (Siedlecki, 2020). In this study, I intended to demonstrate whether or not there was a difference in attitudes and beliefs about hazing practices in BGLOs among Black males from selected HBCUs and PWIs. Compared to experimental research that begins with specific hypotheses, survey research is used to answer a series of questions about the phenomenon under investigation.

The second rationale for selecting a survey research design was the opportunity it provided me to gather in-depth information about a problem and to develop an in-depth understanding of the study's objective (see Siedlecki, 2020). In a different study, Mohajan (2020) asserted by quantifying participant's attitudes, behaviors and opinions in numerical data, the researcher develops an understanding of the problem under

research. Survey research was also utilized because it was easy to implement and the extensive data collected from participants could be generalized to the larger population (see Fischer et al., 2023). Quantitative research design helped me to not only investigate the attitudes and beliefs about hazing, but also help evoke an understanding how hazing practices impacted the wellbeing of Black males in BGLOs.

### **Site Selection**

The participants for this study were selected from two public higher education institutions: one HBCU and one PWI. The names of the institutions were omitted to protect the identities of the study participants. The combined enrollment at these two institutions was approximately 43,300 students. The two public institutions were selected because they provided me with a rich pool of participants for this study. The institutions were also selected because they had a substantial number of students in BGLOs.

The selected HBCU was located in the Southern part of the United States. The institution had a student population of 7,404, and most of the students were African American. The university was committed to a broad program of research, both basic and applied. The creative work was designed to stimulate the faculty and students who were in a quest for knowledge. The research programs in this institution were also meant to help society to resolve its scientific, technological, socioeconomic, and cultural problems. This institution had an approximate graduation rate of 30%.

The selected PWI was larger than the selected HBCU in that it served an approximate student population of 35,900 students and White students were the predominant group. As the flagship institution of the state, the university was the leading research-extensive university, challenging undergraduate and graduate students to achieve

the highest levels of intellectual and personal development. Designated as a land, sea and space grant institution, the mission of the institution was the generation, preservation, dissemination and application of knowledge and cultivation of the arts.

Both institutions represent thriving communities within the southern part of the United States. There was a huge disparity in the budgets of both institutions which may indirectly impact the system of support for student organizations such as BGLOs. These institutions provided a participant pool with a wide and varied range of hazing experiences, which resulted in a high probability of selecting study participants who met the study inclusion criteria: formerly enrolled college students who were members of the selected BGLOs who attended either one of the selected study sites.

### **Selection of Participants**

The participants for this study were recruited from the selected HBCU and PWI in the southern part of the United States. The target population for this study was Black males who attended either one of the institutions and were members of BGLOs. The appropriate sample for this study was recruited using a convenience sampling technique. Convenience sampling technique is used by researchers to select and recruit participants who were easily accessible, available to the researcher and are willing to participate in the study (Stratton, 2021). The rationale for convenience sampling for this study was informed by cost, time, and accessibility (see Stratton, 2021).

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized to examine the attitudes and beliefs about hazing activities within BGLOs. SPSS Version 29.0 was used to analyze the data. MANOVA, *t*-tests, factor analysis, and structural equation modeling were used to analyze the data. The variables that were assessed included age, gender,

levels of education, and beliefs and attitudes of Black males. A sample of 150 participants provided the data needed to examine and establish the differences in attitudes and beliefs in hazing practices within BGLOs for Black males at the selected HBCU and PWI.

### **Survey Instrument and Data Collection**

The data for this study were collected using the Examination of Black Males Attitudes and Beliefs about Hazing within Black Greek Letter Organization Survey (see Appendix VII) posted on SurveyMonkey. In consultation with national leaders of BGLO organizations and hazing experts, I developed a 10-item survey to measure general beliefs and attitudes about hazing. My goal was to create a short and accessible instrument to increase levels of participation. The first part of the survey consisted of ten Likert type items (“strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”) that assessed participants’ thinking about hazing, its tradition, and their experiences. Three additional demographic and background items were also included in the survey (i.e., age and highest level of education). The original survey approved for this study by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) included a gender variable, which would be appropriate for a study of men and women in BGLOs.

The procedures for collecting data included the following steps. I sought permission from the selected HBCU and PWI to recruit Black males for this study. Although the participants graduated from the learning institution, permission from the study sites allowed me to post information about the study on the school’s social media platforms for easy recruitment. On the other hand, the school administration, with

permission, provided me with contact information (such as e-mails) for their students who were members of BGLOs while attending the institution of higher education.

To seek site permission, I sent a formal e-mail to the school administration at both the HBCU and PWI. In the e-mail, I detailed the purpose of the study, the problem to be investigated and how data were to be collected. I also assured administrators that the confidentiality of the participants and the institutions were ensured. After site permission, I sought approval from the Temple University's IRB. Approval from the IRB allowed me to contact the participants and begin the process of collecting data. With both site permission and IRB approval, I developed a recruitment flyer to be posted on the specific institution's social media accounts/platforms: Facebook, X formerly Twitter, and WhatsApp groups. On the flyers, I summarized the purpose of the study, problem of the study, objectives, data collection procedures and my contact information. The link to the SurveyMonkey was included in the recruitment flyer.

Interested participants clicked on the link and were directed to SurveyMonkey where they responded to screening questions first before being allowed to proceed to the actual survey. After responding to the screening questions the participants proceeded to section two of the survey where they answered questions that collected data about their demographic characteristics such as age, gender, and levels of education. Prior to accessing the surveys, the participants were required to read the attached consent form and agree to the terms of the study (failure to complete this task meant they were not allowed to proceed to the next section of the survey).

The survey questions were designed to collect data that allowed me to not only examine the attitudes and beliefs about hazing practices within BGLOs, but also



investigate the mental health impacts of hazing practices, acceptance and bonding between the members. The time to complete the survey was approximately 10 to 15 minutes. The participants had up to 5 days to complete the survey before the link expired. After 5 days, I downloaded the completed survey from SurveyMonkey for data analysis.

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

The data analysis process was divided into three phases: (a) data preprocessing, (b) descriptive analysis, and (c) inferential statistics. In the data pre-processing phase, I downloaded the completed survey from SurveyMonkey and prepared the analysis. In this stage, I reviewed the downloaded data files for incomplete surveys checking for errors, incomplete responses, and inconsistencies in the surveys. Only a few surveys returned were incomplete with missing items.

I omitted them from the data analysis. I used this stage to label the surveys for easy identification and SPSS analysis. After cleaning the data files, I loaded the survey forms onto the SPSS Version 29.0 for statistical analysis. The demographic and background variables assessed in this study were age and highest level of education which are categorical variables and the items assessing participants' attitudes and beliefs are treated as interval/continuous variables.

In the second phase of data analysis, I performed a descriptive analysis of the data from the surveys. SPSS version 29.0 was utilized for descriptive statistics. I performed descriptive statistics to describe the sample's main features which in this study included age and highest levels of education. Means and frequency of the data were also calculated and presented.

After descriptive statistics, the last phase of data analysis was inferential statistics. To establish the differences in beliefs and attitudes between the participants from the HBCU and the PWI, I employed MANOVA and *t*-tests.. The use of MANOVA was employed as multiple dependent variables and multiple independent variables were tested. Both the *t*-test and MANOVA allowed me to demonstrate if there were differences in attitudes and beliefs about hazing within BGLOs among Black males in the selected HBCU and PWI. The results of this analysis can be found in Chapter 4.

### **Methods of Validity, Credibility and Research Ethics**

Validity examines whether a study measured what it was designed to measure and establishes the accuracy of the research findings (Sürücü & Maslakçi, 2020).

Validity measures the accuracy of the findings devoid of external interference or bias either from the researcher or participants. The validity of this study was ensured using an expert panel. I utilized an expert panel to assess the content and construct validity of the Examination of Black Males Attitudes and Beliefs about Hazing within Black Greek Letter Organization Survey. Responses from the expert panel ensured the survey measured what it was designed to measure. This quantitative research was conducted in accordance with ethical considerations stipulated by Temple University's IRB. I initially obtained site permission and IRB approval prior to contacting and recruiting participants for the study. The second ethical consideration ensured participant autonomy. I attached an informed consent to the survey link. The participants were required to read the consent form, understand and confirm the contents prior to being allowed to proceed with the survey. Only the participants who confirmed they had read the tool and

understood the information in the consent form were allowed to proceed with the survey.

The other ethical consideration upheld was the participant privacy and confidentiality. Since the survey was completed via SurveyMonkey, I took precautions with the questions to ensure no identifiable participant information was collected. The surveys were coded with alphanumeric codes rather than participant identities. Storage and destruction of data used was another important ethical consideration. The data for this study have been stored where they will remain for 5 years after which they will be destroyed. I stored electronic data in an encrypted folder in a password protected computer. Hardcopy data were stored in a safe at an undisclosed location for the same period. After 5 years, my computer will be formatted while all hardcopy material was shredded and burned.

### **Assumptions, Biases, and Positionality**

As a member of a BGLO, I had intimate knowledge of both the practice and culture of hazing; therefore, it was possible to unwittingly skew the findings to better align them with a personal point of view, thereby creating researcher bias (see Creswell, 2018; Neuman, 2006). To address this potential bias, I used an expert panel to assess the survey questions for consistency and instances of bias. An expert panel allowed me to align the survey questions with the purpose of the study and the problem being investigated. The key assumption in this research was that the participants were honest in responding to the survey questions regarding their attitudes and beliefs of hazing experiences. I also assumed the measures taken to protect the participants' anonymity and privacy were sufficient. Positionality was vitally important to this research. In this

study, I described how my identity influenced and potentially biased individuals' understanding of hazing. To minimize potential researcher bias, the use of expert panels proved to be crucial.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

#### Introduction

I explored the attitudes and beliefs of Black males on hazing practices within BGLOs at a selected HBCU and PWI in the United States. Chapter 4 is presented in five sections. Section 1 presents descriptive data on the respondents who completed the survey. Section 2 answers the research questions using each of the 10 questions from the survey as the dependent variables.

Section 3 presents results from a factor analysis on the 10 questions from the survey and will answer the research questions using the factor scores derived from the factor analysis. Section 4 presents the results of a structural equation model using the individual questions. Finally, Section 5 presents a summary of the results. The following research questions and hypotheses will be addressed in the chapter:

**RQ1:** Are the attitudes and beliefs of Black males on hazing practices within BGLOs different as a function of the type of institution the respondent attended?

**RQ2:** Does the age of the respondent affect the attitudes and beliefs of Black males on hazing practices within BGLOs?

**RQ3:** Does the educational degree of the respondent affect the attitudes and beliefs of Black males on hazing practices within BGLOs?

#### Descriptive Data on the Respondents

Descriptive data on the respondents are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *Demographic Characteristics of Participants (n=150)*

Characteristic	<i>n</i>	%
Highest level of Education		
Bachelor’s	75	50
Master’s	34	23
Doctorate	41	27
Age (at time of study)		
18–24	82	55
25–44	32	21
45–65+	30	20

**Participants and Settings**

This study included 150 males ranging from ages 18 to 65+ across the United States who were recruited to participate in the study. Demographic information included gender, level of education, and age (see Table 1). Primary data collection took place between December 2022 through January 2023. During that time, data were collected employing SurveyMonkey. Letters highlighting the purpose of the study were distributed to all participants once Temple University’s IRB formally approved the research. All participants were informed that the research is voluntary and at any time were allowed to leave without penalty. As shown in Table 1, most of the respondents had obtained a bachelor’s degree and were primarily in the 18 to 44 age range.

**Analyses Using the Individual Questions as Dependent Variables**

Descriptive data on the 10 questions on the survey are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. *Descriptive Data on the Question From the Survey*

Question	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean
Q1: Hazing as a tradition is so strong in fraternal organizations that it will always be a part of the pledge/intake	6	5	13	41	85	4.29

process.

Table 2. *Continued*

Question	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean
Q2: I do not feel the need to be hazed to belong or be accepted to any group or fraternal organization.	11	25	20	33	61	3.72
Q3: Hazing causes emotional harm to the individual and the group at large.	18	22	30	53	27	3.33
Q4: Hazing is not an effective way to create bonding with all new and old members in fraternal organizations.	17	32	31	43	27	3.21
Q5: Being part of a Black Greek letter organization, I will be presented with opportunities to give back to my community and would be connected with causes I would not have known, and therefore physical and mental activities are viewed as important component of the membership intake process.	8	7	20	66	49	3.94

Table 2. *Continued*

Question	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean
Q6: My experiences in a Black Greek letter organization will allow me to develop leadership skills applicable to future job prospects even with any exposure to hazing.	11	24	30	41	44	3.5
Q7: Hazing exposes me to psychological stress and long-term mental health even if the outcome is positive.	20	32	28	41	29	3.18
Q8: Hazing activities teach important values such as respect and unity.	0	38	47	25	40	3.45
Q9: Being in a Black Greek letter organization represents legacy and the risk or exposure to hazing activities is minimal in comparison the opportunities you will have in the future.	12	24	38	37	39	3.45



Q10: Hazing instills a greater sense of organizational commitment and pride into new members of BGLOs.	29	21	22	47	31	3.20
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From the data presented in Table 2, it is evident there was a wide diversity of responses. Unlike typical Likert data scales where responses tend to cluster at either end of the spectrum, several questions exhibited a flat distribution. This could be attributed to the sensitive nature of the topic concerning attitudes and beliefs about hazing within BGLOs, with participants still acclimating to the discussion. Despite this variability, a significant portion of survey participants expressed the belief that hazing remains deeply ingrained in BGLOs and will persist as a part of the pledge processes (Q1). Based on responses to Q5, study participants recognized the opportunity for community engagement within BGLOs. There was lingering uncertainty regarding whether hazing exposes individuals to psychological stress and harm (Q7)—a response that may vary across different age groups.

**RQ # 1:** Are the attitudes and beliefs of Black males on hazing practices within BGLOs different as a function of the type of institution the respondent attended?

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the respondents came from two different institutions in the South: one HBCU and one PWI. A two group MANOVA was conducted on the 10 questions from the survey comparing the means for the HBCU and PWI respondents. The omnibus test was not significant (Wilks' Lambda = .954,  $p = .747$ ). In addition, the univariate tests on the 10 questions separately were all insignificant.

**RQ # 2:** Does the age of the respondent affect the attitudes and beliefs of Black males on hazing practices within BGLOs?

To answer RQ # 2, a two-factor MANOVA was conducted with type of institution and age group as the between subject factors and the 10 questions as the dependent variables. To simplify this analysis, age was divided into three categories: (a) 18 – 24, (b) 25 – 44, and (c) 45 and older. As before, the main effect for the type of institution was not significant, nor was the interaction. There was, however, a significant effect for age with a large effect size (Wilks’ Lambda = .653,  $p = .001$ , partial eta squared =.192). There were significant differences on Questions 2, 8, 9 and 10. The means for these questions are presented in Table 3 and the univariate ANOVA results are presented in Table 4. Table 4 also contains the results of the Tukey post hoc test.

Table 3. *Means for Significant Questions by Age*

Question	Age 18 –24	Age 25 – 44	Age 45+
Q2. I do not feel the need to be hazed to belong or be accepted to any group or fraternal organization	3.09	3.92	3.83
Q8. Hazing activities teach important values such as respect and unity	3.56	3.34	2.67
Q9. Being in a Black Greek letter organization represents legacy and the risk of exposure to hazing activities is minimal in comparison the opportunities you will have in the future	3.55	2.82	2.77

Q10. Hazing instills a greater sense of organizational commitment and pride into new members of Black Greek letter organization	3.40	3.24	2.60
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Table 4. ANOVA Results for Significant Questions by Age With Tukey Post Hoc Results

Question	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial eta squared	Tukey test
Q2. I do not feel the need to be hazed to belong or be accepted to any group or fraternal organization.	8.257	.001	.101	18 – 24 < 25 – 44 18 – 24 < 45+ 25 – 44 = 45+
Q8. Hazing activities teach important values such as respect and unity.	5.835	.004	.074	45+ < 18 – 24 45+ < 25 – 44 18 – 24 = 25 – 44
Q9. Being in a Black Greek letter organization represents legacy and the risk of exposure to hazing activities is minimal in comparison the opportunities you will have in the future.	6.979	.001	.087	45+ < 18 – 24 45+ < 25 – 44 18 – 24 = 25 – 44
Q10. Hazing instills a greater sense of organizational commitment and pride into new members of Black Greek letter organizations.	3.630	.029	.047	45+ < 18 – 24 45+ < 25 – 44 18 – 24 = 25 – 44

It is evident from Tables 3 and 4 that the pattern of the means for the questions that are significant are highly similar. As age increases the support for hazing decreases. In all cases, the 18–24-year-old respondents demonstrated a more positive

attitude toward hazing. In general, this was the same pattern for most of the questions although the differences among the means were not statistically significant.

**RQ # 3:** Does the educational degree of the respondent affect the attitudes and beliefs of Black males on hazing practices within BGLOs?

To answer RQ #3 a two factor MANOVA was conducted with type of institution and educational degree (bachelors, masters, and doctorate) as the between groups factor and the 10 survey questions as the dependent variable. As before, the main effect for type of institution and the interaction were not significant. There was, however, a significant effect for educational degree with a large effect size (Wilks' lambda = .606,  $p = .001$ , partial eta squared = .217). There were three questions that were significant at the univariate level. The means for these three questions are presented in Table 5 and the univariate statistics in Table 6.

Table 5. *Means for Significant Questions by Educational Degree*

Question	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate
Q5. Being part of a Black Greek letter organization, I will be presented with opportunities to give back to my community and would be connected with causes I would not have known, and therefore physical and mental activities are viewed as important component of the membership intake process.	3.11	4.48	3.53

Table 5. *Continued*

Question	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate
Q6. My experiences in a Black Greek letter organization will allow me to develop leadership skills applicable to future job prospects even with any exposure to hazing.	3.09	4.86	4.17
Q9. Being in a Black Greek letter organization represents legacy and the risk of exposure to hazing activities is minimal in comparison the opportunities you will have in the future.	3.63	2.99	2.66

Table 6. ANOVA Results for Significant Questions by Educational Degree With Tukey Post Hoc Results

Question	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial eta squared	Tukey test
Q5. Being part of a Black Greek letter organization, I will be presented with opportunities to give back to my community and would be connected with causes I would not have known, and therefore physical and mental activities are viewed as important component of the membership intake process.	11.077	.001	.133	Bachelors < Masters Bachelors < Doctorate Masters = Doctorate
Q6. My experiences in a Black Greek letter organization will allow me to develop leadership skills applicable to future job prospects even with any exposure to hazing.	10.508	.001	.057	Bachelors < Masters Bachelors < Doctorate Masters = Doctorate

Table 6. *Continued*

Question	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial eta squared	Tukey test
Q9. Being in a Black Greek letter organization represents legacy and the risk or exposure to hazing activities is minimal in comparison the opportunities you will have in the future	4.366	.015	.057	Doctorate = Masters Doctorate < Bachelors Masters < Bachelors

The results for education indicate that respondents with bachelor’s differ from those with master’s or doctorate’s. Those with bachelor’s degrees agree less that being a part of a BFLO will allow them to give back, or that it will help them develop leadership. On the other hand, as shown with age, those with bachelor’s degrees are somewhat more positive about hazing. Upon further consideration, I hypothesized that the age distribution and the level of degree attainment might be closely related. To investigate this hypothesis, I conducted a chi- square analysis (see Table 7). The results revealed a highly significant association between age and degree attainment (chi-square = 157.38,  $p = <.001$ ).

Table 7. *Cross Tabulation of Age and Degree*

Age	Bachelor’s	Master’s	Doctorate
18 – 24 years old	75(91.5%)	7(8.5%)	0(0.0%)
25 – 44 years old	0(0.0%)	27(71/.1%)	11(28.9%)
45 or older	0(0.0%)	7(23.3%)	23(76.7%)

The data indeed revealed a clear pattern: individuals with bachelor’s degrees tend to be younger, while those with master’s degrees are somewhat older, and



individuals with doctorates are the oldest. While there were slight variations in the significant questions across different degree levels, age appeared to be the primary determining factor. Although degree level may have added some nuance to the analysis, it does not seem to be a substantially relevant variable compared to age.

### **Analyses Using Factor Scores**

A principal component factor analysis followed by a varimax rotation was conducted on the 10 questions. This produced two factors with eigenvalues over 1. The rotated factor matrix is presented in Table 8.

Table 8. *Rotated Factor Matrix*

Question	Factor 1	Factor 2
Hazing activities teach important values such as respect and unity.	.811	-.297
I do not feel the need to be hazed to belong or be accepted to any group or fraternal organization.	-.782	.196
Hazing instills a greater sense of organizational commitment and pride into new members of Black Greek letter organizations.	.741	-.379
Being in a Black Greek letter organization represents legacy and the risk or exposure to hazing activities is minimal in comparison the opportunities you will have in the future.	.698	-.253
Hazing as a tradition is so strong in fraternal organizations that it will always be a part of the pledge/intake process.	.584	-.047

Table 8. *Continued*

Question	Factor 1	Factor 2
Being part of a Black Greek letter organization, I will be presented with opportunities to give back to my community and would be connected with causes I would not have known, and therefore physical and mental activities are viewed as important component of the membership intake process.	.546	-.012
Hazing is not an effective way to create bonding with all new and old members in fraternal organizations.	-.483	.364
Hazing exposes me to psychological stress and long-term mental health even if the outcome is positive	-.026	.901
Hazing causes emotional harm to the individual and the group at large	-.350	.827

As depicted in Table 8, Factor 1 encompassed attitudes and beliefs that could be characterized as pro-hazing, or more accurately labeled as “traditional attitudes and beliefs,” highlighted in red. On the other hand, Factor 2 comprised questions related to stress and emotional harm, aptly termed “emotional distress,” outlined in green.

Factor scores were calculated for these factors and subsequently transformed into *t* scores, with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10.

**RQ # 1:** Are the attitudes and beliefs of Black males on hazing practices within BGLOs different as a function of the type of institution the respondent attended?

Consistent with the previous analysis, the two group MANOVA computed on the factor scores was not significant (Wilks' Lambda = .989,  $p = .811$ ).

**RQ # 2:** Does the age of the respondent affect the attitudes and beliefs of Black males on hazing practices within BGLOs?

The two-factor MANOVA using type of institution and age group as the between subject factors and the two factor scores as the dependent variables produced a significant effect for age (Wilks' Lambda = .930,  $p = .031$ , partial eta squared = .036) The means for the factors and the univariate results are presented in Tables 9 and 10.

Table 9. *Means for Factor Scores by Age*

Factor	Ages 18–24	Ages 25–44	45+
Traditional attitudes and beliefs	51.92	48.44	46.73
Emotional distress	49.31	49.12	53.01

Table 10. *ANOVA Results for Factor Scores by Age With Tukey Post Hoc Results*

Factor	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial eta squared	Tukey Test
Traditional beliefs	3.696	.027	.048	18–24 < 45+ 18–24 = 25–44 18–24 = 25–44
Emotional distress	1.715	.184	.023	-

As shown in Tables 9 and 10, there was a significant effect for age on the traditional attitudes and beliefs factor but not on the emotional distress factor. As shown using the individual questions, younger respondents were more positive about hazing and accept the traditional view of its benefits. While the result for emotional distress is not significant, the pattern of the means indicates that older respondents had a stronger belief that hazing causes emotional distress.

**RQ # 3:** Does the educational degree of the respondent affect the attitudes and beliefs of Black males on hazing practices within BGLOs?

The two-factor MANOVA using degree as the between groups factor was marginally significant (Wilks' Lambda = .942,  $p = .04$ , partial eta squared = .043). One of the univariate results was significant. These data are presented in Tables 11 and 12.

Table 11. *Means for Factor Scores by Degree*

Factor	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate
Traditional attitudes and beliefs	51.62	49.96	46.47
Emotional distress	49.03	52.07	49.64

Table 12. *ANOVA Results for Factor Scores by Degree With Tukey Post Hoc Results*

Factor	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial eta squared	Tukey test
Traditional beliefs	3.195	.034	.042	Doctorate < Bachelors Doctorate = Masters Masters = Bachelors
Emotional distress	1.257	.288	.017	-

As shown, respondents with doctorates had the most negative beliefs about hazing while respondents with bachelors had the most positive beliefs.

### **Structural Equation Model Results**

In the results of the CFA significant loadings were observed across the factors, indicating a robust relationship between the observed variables and their respective constructs. The detailed findings can be referenced in Table 13.

Table 13. *Emotional Distress/Tradition Questions*

Factor/ item	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Emotional distress				
Q3. Hazing causes emotional harm to the individual and the group at large	-1.066	0.104	-10.258	<.001
Q7. Hazing exposes me to psychological stress and long- term mental health even if the outcome is Positive	-0.586	0.093	-6.290	<.001
Q8. Hazing activities teach important values such as respect and unity	0.835	0.054	15.449	<.001
Q9. Being in a Black Greek letter organization represents legacy and the risk or exposure to hazing activities is minimal in comparison the opportunities you will have in the future.	0.683	0.063	10.851	<.001

Table 14. *Emotional Distress/Tradition Questions*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
To emotional distress				
Tradition to tradition	0.600	0.093	6.426	<.001
45+	-0.361	0.094	-3.817	<.001
I do not feel the need to be hazed to belong or be accepted to any group or fraternal Organization				
Tradition	-0.760	0.069	-11.020	<.001
35–44	0.186	0.073	2.560	.010
Indirect: Tradition → To emotional distress				
45+	-0.216	0.072	-2.997	0.003
Indirect: Tradition → I do not feel the need to be hazed to belong or be accepted to any group or fraternal Organization				
45+	0.274	0.082	3.336	0.001

There was an indirect effect of identifying 45+ influenced tradition, which subsequently influenced I do not feel the need to be hazed to belong or be accepted to any group or fraternal organization ( $\beta=0.274$ ,  $p=.001$ ).

Table 15. *Structural Equation Model*

Statistic	Value
$\chi^2$	10.30
Df	7
P	.17
RMSEA	.06
CFI	.99
SRMR	.03

The structural equation model (see Table 4.15) adequately fit the data:  $X^2 (10.3)$  ,  $p = .17$ ,  $CFI = .99$ ,  $RMSEA = .06$  and  $SRMR = .03$  . Item loadings for the latent variables in CFA demonstrated construct validity for JH, tradition, and emotional distress. See Figure 1.

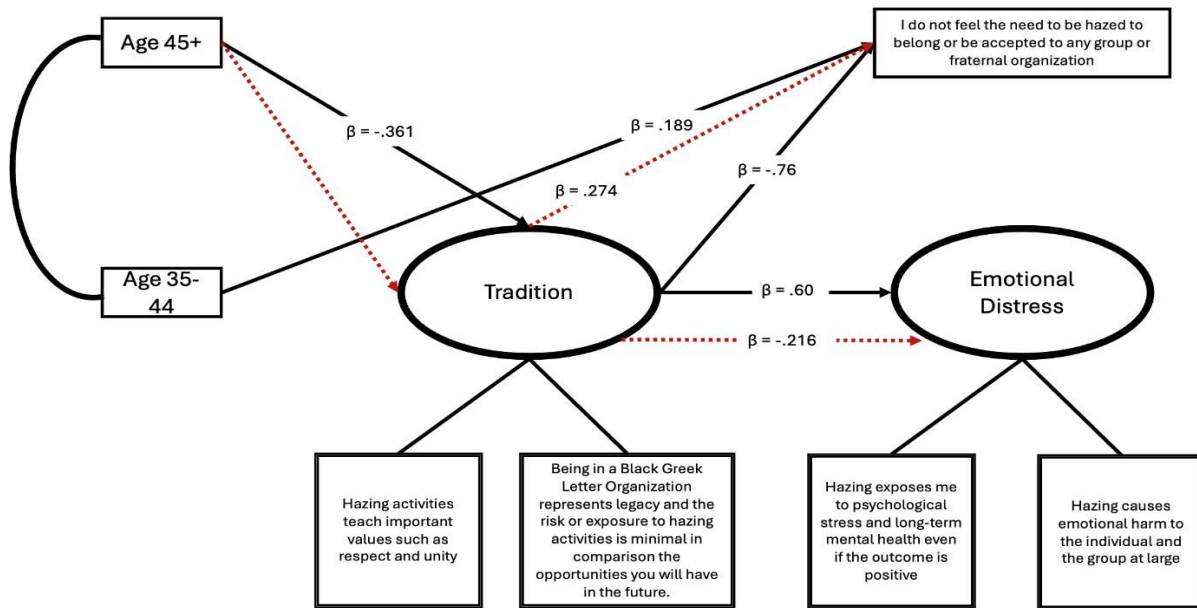


Figure 1. Structured Equation Model Graphic

The structural equation model offers valuable insights into attitudes and beliefs regarding hazing within BGLOs, revealing a pronounced generational divide in perspectives. For the older generation, BGLOs represented more than just organizations; they embodied cherished values and principles. Despite their respect for tradition, they also demonstrated an understanding of the harmful effects of hazing. This nuanced viewpoint recognized the potential for hazing to inflict emotional distress and lasting psychological harm. Conversely, the younger generation valued tradition but perceived hazing as a necessary rite of passage for acceptance within the organizations. While they acknowledged the emotional toll of hazing, they were willing to endure it for the sake of

belonging. Overall, the model illustrates the complex interplay between generational attitudes and hazing within BGLOs, underscoring the importance of holistic strategies to address these attitudes and cultivate positive organizational environments.

### **Summary**

In Chapter 5, a detailed discussion of the reported results will be presented. The conclusions drawn from these results will also be presented. I will also use the chapter to discuss the implications of the obtained results and make recommendations for practice and future research. I will discuss these findings in relation to the findings of prior research as synthesized in the literature review section of the study.



## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to describe the attitudes and beliefs among members of BGLOs about hazing. Specifically, quantitative survey data were collected to show how Black men who are members of BGLOs describe their attitudes and beliefs about hazing and explore if there are differences in their responses based on institutional type (HBCU versus PWI), age, and educational/degree level. This chapter includes a summary of findings followed by a discussion of these findings. The chapter also includes a discussion of how findings are informed by the MHBs model (see Schiffer et al., 2020). The chapter ends with the limitations of the study and implications for practice, theory, and future research.

#### **Summary of Findings**

The first part of this chapter will discuss the results from the 10 questions on the survey. Regarding the first question, it is evident that a significant majority of participants hold the belief that hazing will continue to be a part of the pledge process within BGLOs. This indicated a prevailing attitude among respondents that hazing is deeply entrenched within the culture of BGLOs and is likely to persist in the future.

Regarding the second question, a considerable portion of participants did not feel the necessity to undergo hazing to gain acceptance or belonging within a group or fraternal organization. This insight underscored a potential shift in attitudes towards hazing, particularly among male respondents. The notion that male masculinity may have influenced this response is a noteworthy observation, indicating that traditional

notions of masculinity may be evolving within the context of organizational membership.

The data for the third question revealed a significant number of participants hold the belief hazing inflicts emotional harm, both on the individual being hazed and on the larger group with 80 out of the 150 (53.3%) either agreeing or strongly agreeing that hazing may cause emotional hard. This insight highlights a widespread concern among respondents regarding the negative psychological effects associated with hazing practices. The recognition of such emotional consequences underscored the need for further examination and potential intervention to address these harmful practices within organizational contexts.

Regarding the fourth question, a divided perspective emerged among participants regarding the effectiveness of hazing to foster bonding within fraternal organizations. While some respondents may perceive hazing as an effective tool for creating bonds between new and existing members, others may hold contrasting views, suggesting that hazing may not be an optimal method for fostering such connections. This split in opinions underscored the complexity of attitudes towards hazing practices within fraternal organizations and highlights the need for further exploration to better understand the underlying factors shaping these perceptions.

The data from the fifth question indicated that a significant majority of participants perceive being part of a BGLO as providing opportunities to contribute to the community and connect with causes they may not have previously encountered. Consequently, physical and mental activities are seen as crucial components of the membership intake process. This suggests that participants value the community

engagement and service-oriented aspects of BGLO membership, viewing them as integral to the organization's mission and purpose. The strong consensus on this matter underscored the importance of community involvement and service initiatives within BGLOs, reflecting a commitment to social responsibility and philanthropy among members.

The sixth question examined how participants believed their involvement in a BGLO would enable them to cultivate leadership skills relevant to future employment opportunities, regardless of any exposure to hazing during their membership. This suggests participants perceived BGLOs as valuable platforms for personal and professional development, recognizing the potential for leadership growth within these organizations. Despite concerns about hazing, participants maintained confidence in the leadership-building capacity of BGLO experiences, emphasizing their belief in the transferability of skills acquired through membership to the broader context of career advancement. This perspective underscored the perceived benefits of

BGLO involvement beyond the immediate challenges associated with hazing, highlighting the long-term value of leadership development within the fraternity community. The seventh question revealed that participants acknowledge the potential for hazing within BGLOs to subject them to psychological stress and long-term mental health implications, irrespective of any perceived positive outcomes. This suggested a nuanced understanding among participants regarding the multifaceted impact of hazing on their psychological well-being, recognizing the adverse effects that may endure beyond the immediate context of their BGLO experiences. Despite potential benefits associated with membership, participants

expressed concern over the detrimental effects of hazing on their mental health, indicating a need for further examination and mitigation of these risks within BGLOs. This insight underscored the importance of addressing psychological well-being within fraternity and sorority communities, emphasizing the significance of fostering supportive and inclusive environments that prioritize the holistic health and safety of members.

The eighth question indicated a divergence in participants' perspectives regarding the perceived value of hazing activities in teaching important values such as respect and unity within BGLOs. While some participants viewed hazing as a means of instilling these values and fostering camaraderie among members, others expressed skepticism or disapproval of hazing practices as incompatible with principles of respect and unity. This suggested a nuanced discourse surrounding the role of hazing in promoting organizational values, with participants weighing the potential benefits against the ethical and moral implications of such practices.

The responses to the eighth question underscored the complexity of attitudes toward hazing within BGLOs, highlighting the need for critical reflection and dialogue to address the broader cultural and organizational dynamics at play. The data regarding the ninth question revealed participants' perceptions regarding the significance of belonging to a BGLO in terms of legacy and the associated risks of hazing activities. Many participants expressed a strong belief in the enduring legacy and positive opportunities afforded by membership in a BGLO, suggesting the potential risks or exposure to hazing activities are outweighed by the long-term benefits and sense of belonging within the organization. This viewpoint reflected a deep-seated commitment

to the values and traditions upheld by BGLOs, as well as a recognition of the transformative potential of membership despite any challenges posed by hazing practices.

The 10th and final question illustrated mixed beliefs among participants that hazing plays a significant role in fostering a greater sense of organizational commitment and pride among new members of BGLOs. This uneven perception was evident in the data, with about half of the participants expressing agreement with the notion that enduring the challenges of hazing contributes positively to the development of organizational loyalty and pride. However, the graphic display of the SEM highlighted the cultural significance attributed to hazing rituals within these organizations, reflecting a shared belief in its transformative impact on new members' sense of belonging and dedication to the organization's mission and values.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The previous section focused on the summary of the results from the individual questions on the survey. This section presents a discussion of these results based on the following research questions, which guided the study:

1. Are the attitudes and beliefs of Black males on hazing practices within BGLOs different as a function of the type of institution the respondents attended?
2. Does the age of the respondent affect the attitudes and beliefs of Black males on hazing practices within BGLOs?
3. Does the educational level of the respondent affect the attitudes and beliefs of Black males on hazing practices within BGLOs?

The findings were consistent with previous research, which revealed when a student successfully joins campus, they eventually gain membership into a group such as BGLOs, and they get to enjoy the privileges and benefits that accompany being a member of society (see Anderson & Smith, 2016). In contrast with current study findings, previous research findings also revealed BGLOs enhance the adaptive capacity of minority groups and provide various forms of support in college, especially in PWIs (see Clark & Brooms, 2018). It is also worth noting that, in general, the attrition rate for African American students is higher compared to their peers. For instance, being the minority group, especially in PWIs, assimilating to the strange environment can be tricky, and those who lack social support may opt to drop out in the process (Dancy & Hotchkins, 2015). The findings in the current study failed to show a significant difference between members of BGLOs at HBCUs and PWI.

Most Black male students end up joining BGLOs to get the support they need to adapt on campus. Aligning with current study findings, past research indicates when a student joins an institution of higher learning as a freshman, they often feel out of place because most students are members of different social clubs where they tend to interact exclusively amongst themselves, and these groups require an individual to get a membership to interact with their members (Baker, 2008). While the current study findings revealed lower levels of importance given to hazing—whether Black males should be hazed to belong or be accepted, attitudes about the tradition of hazing among BGLOs require additional study to get at the core issues of its value (see Cooper, 2018).

Regarding emotional harm, the findings demonstrated hazing causes emotional harm to the individual or the group at large. The findings revealed notable differences

in attitudes and beliefs regarding the effects of hazing including emotional harm on the individual and the organization at large. Although some participants refuted that hazing caused emotional harm among Black males, other participants agreed that hazing causes emotional harm among Black males who want to join BGLOs. The findings imply that hazing was likely to lead to emotional harm among some Black males joining BGLOs. These findings were consistent with previous research that revealed that the initial hazing process can be quite demeaning and can also cause physical and psychological injury to Black males as the human rights laws of the country criminalize any form of hazing (Bawan et al., 2017; Cooper, 2018).

The current study findings demonstrated hazing was not an effective way to create bonding with all new and old members in fraternal organizations; however, a significantly larger proportion of the participants agreed that by being part of the organization, they would be presented with opportunities to give back to their community and would relate to courses they would not have known. This was especially true for older respondents. The results imply that despite hazing not helping Black males bond with all new and old members in fraternal organizations, being part of the organization provides opportunities for Black male students in HBCUs and PWIs to give back to the community and connect them with courses they would not have known.

The results concurred with previous research that indicated that many students willingly participate in hazing because of the desire to have a social group and, develop a sense of belonging to help them cope in the new, unfamiliar college environment as they adopt a group identity and could serve the community (Jones, 2015). The findings refuted those of Williams (2021) who established that while hazing was used by BGLOs

as a bonding strategy, the negative health consequences on some members led schools and authorities to pass strict laws to contain such activities. The discrepancy in findings could be due to diverse sample sizes, settings and methodologies used in these studies.

The current study findings revealed there were no notable differences in opinion among participants regarding the notion that their experiences in a BGLO would allow them to develop leadership skills applicable to future job prospects even with any exposure to hazing. Most participants strongly agreed their experiences in a BGLO would allow them to develop leadership skills that would help in future job prospects even with minimal exposure to hazing practices.

Like current study findings, previous studies indicated that BGLOs have historical practices that are deeply rooted in positioning African Americans for a greater share in political leadership by instilling leadership skills while simultaneously preparing them for leadership roles in all sectors of society (Mitchell & Dancy, 2018). These organizations contributed countless hours of service, scholarships, and leadership to communities all around the world (Miller, 2018). Though they all differ in their founding principles in one way or another, they all come together as a unified body to create social change and leave the world a better place (Miller, 2018)

Concerning the effects of hazing on psychological distress and long-term mental health, there were no notable differences as an equal number of participants agreed or disagreed on whether hazing exposes them to psychological stress and long-term mental health even if the outcome is positive. There was an age difference as older participants were more concerned about the negative effects of hazing. The study findings provided insight that some BGLO members believe that hazing is likely to



cause psychological distress and long-term mental health effects among Black males joining the BGLO. The current study results aligned with previous research findings which indicated that private entities including BGLOs, developed unorthodox initiation rites, which often entailed subjecting a student to physical and mental torture (Anderson & Smith, 2016). The initiation process can be quite demeaning, and it can also cause physical and psychological injury to the students (Bawan et al., 2017). The convergence in findings between current study findings and previous research suggested that hazing can lead to psychological distress and long-term mental health problems among Black male students in HBCUs and PWIs.

The MHBs model was adopted for this study. MHBs assign higher values to individuals with tough reputations and aggressive decisions to uphold those reputations (Schiffer et al., 2020). From the MHBs perspective, individuals, particularly males, need dominance (Cohen et al., 1996). Individuals higher in MHB tend to see romantic rejection and the questioning of their masculinity as personally insulting (Stratmoen et al., 2020). Under the framework of MHBs, men see honor and manhood as precarious; thus, the protection of self and loved ones is critical to their identity. MHBs demand any threat to honor be met with fierce reactions. Otherwise, there are implications for perceived weakness without a strong defense in the protection of their reputation (O’Dea et al., 2017). MHBs also dictate physical fights should be won at any cost and threats must be met with aggression (O’Dea et al., 2018). The MHBs model has been established as a relevant framework for hazing research (McCready, 2020). Individuals in MHBs often view hazing as an opportunity to demonstrate manhood. This aligns with the findings of the current study, which established that joining BGLOs promotes

leadership skills among Black male students.

Specifically, hazing has been associated with the need to gain and maintain honor by any means necessary (Saucier et al., 2016). Peer influence, valuing a tough social reputation, and engaging in risky behaviors are all attributes of hazing and MHBs (Barnes et al., 2012). The issue of hazing reveals that the practices are often designed to humiliate the intended members (Jones, 2017). This is consistent with current study findings that hazing causes psychological distress and mental health issues among some Black male students joining BGLOs. In the process of making pledges feel ashamed and causing injury to their dignity and self-respect in a public format, somehow those who are perpetuating hazing may feel as though they are strong men, who in turn, would produce stronger men with unquestionable masculinity through the various hazing practices (Saucier et al., 2018). The cycle is repeated to firmly establish the culture of hazing within the BGLO as it instills a greater sense of organizational commitment and pride into new members of BGLOs.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study was limited by researcher bias. As a member of a BGLO, I have intimate knowledge of both the practice and culture of hazing; therefore, it was possible to unwittingly interpret the findings to better align them with a personal point of view, thereby creating researcher bias (Creswell, 2018; Neuman, 2006). To address this bias, I used an expert panel to assess the survey questions for consistency and instances of bias. The expert panel also allowed me to align the survey questions with the purpose of the study as well as the problem investigated.

The research was also limited by self-reported data from the participants. The

key assumption in this research was that the participants would be honest in responding to the survey questions regarding their attitudes and beliefs about hazing experiences. I also assumed that the measures taken to protect the participants' anonymity and privacy were sufficient; however, the dishonesty in response would limit the validity of the study findings. The study was also conducted using an undiversified sample size. In this study, the sample size consisted of Black male students, thus limiting the generalizability of the findings across different genders. The target population for this study was Black males who attended either of the institutions and were members of BGLOs in the selected institutions of higher education.

Another limitation was the use of convenience sampling, which could have limited access to participants with rich data. The appropriate sample for this study was recruited using a convenience sampling technique that is prone to researcher bias based on the positionality of the researcher. In this study, I described how my identity influenced and potentially biased individuals understanding and outlook on the issue of hazing. To minimize potential researcher bias, the use of expert panels and bracketing proved crucial. Although these limitations are present in this study, the findings provided useful information about the attitudes and beliefs of Black men who are members of BGLOs. The findings offer potential insight and perspectives about hazing that have implications for practice and future research.

## **Implications of the Study**

This section presents the implications of this study. The implications are presented in two subsections, including implications for practice and future research. The chapter ends with a conclusion section.

### ***Implications for Practice***

This study's findings would provide great insight into the understanding of the potential differences in attitudes and beliefs in hazing practices within BGLOs at HBCUs and PWIs. The findings of this study can have important implications and a foundation for future quantitative studies. Hazing research has produced an empirical understanding of the various motivations for perpetrating and actively accepting this cultural practice (Mitchell, 2018). One of the practical significances of this study is that the findings can be used to formulate policies that both HBCUs and PWIs may use to mitigate hazing practices within BGLOs. While this study's findings did not reveal significant differences between the respondents at the HBCU and the PWI, a more diverse sample might discover that such differences exist.

Formulating new policies would help reinforce existing policies that failed to prevent hazing practices. While hazing is often regarded as normative behavior for fraternities due to the frequency with which it occurs, institutions are confronted with greater liability in terms of financial costs and irreparable damage to reputations. This confrontation and reputational damage can impact enrollment and the institution's ability to generate multiple forms of revenue among HBCUs and PWIs. The findings of this study would help HBCUs and PWIs exercise greater control over BGLOs and, as

such, mitigate any negative and consequential impacts of hazing practices on the reputation of such institutions and as such maintain their sources of revenue.

Black male students may use this study's findings to understand the effects of hazing, including psychological distress and mental health issues. This would help them find solutions to address their psychological distress and mental health issues, including hiring mental health professionals. Additionally, many litigants are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder because of their previous experiences with hazing (Munson, 2019). These issues lay bare the significance of this study and the need for ongoing research that is designed to capture not only individual motivations and the beliefs associated with their group identity but also to tap those idiosyncrasies that may influence the adoption of views that could lead to and promote the outright rejection of hazing as an accepted cultural practice. That said, this study's findings can help institutions of higher education such as HBCUs and PWIs mitigate hazing for students joining BGLOs.

Besides policies that would help institutions of higher education to minimize hazing practices within BGLOs, the findings of this study would also help recommend strategies that might be adopted to help individuals impacted by hazing practices to seek medical help. This study's findings can help Black male students make informed decisions regarding joining BGLOs as they allow them to develop leadership skills applicable to future job prospects even with any exposure to hazing.

### ***Implications for Future Research***

Future research should be conducted using both primary and secondary data sources to enhance the validity of the findings, as the research was limited by self-

reported data from the participants. Self-reported data may be devoid of honesty in response to the participants. I also assumed the measures taken to protect the participants' anonymity and privacy were sufficient; however, the dishonesty in response would limit the validity of the study findings. Future researchers should consider adopting mixed methods research to collect both qualitative and quantitative data to enhance the validity of the study findings.

The study was also conducted using an undiversified sample. In this study, the sample consisted of Black male students, thus limiting the generalizability of the findings across populations of different genders. Future researchers are recommended to consider using a diverse sample size with both Black male and Black female students in BGLOs within the HBCUs and PWIs. The use of diverse samples with unique characteristics, such as gender, would enhance the generalizability of the research findings.

This study also warrants further research to address the ongoing effects of hazing. It is essential to implement more town hall meetings and campus conversations dedicated to this critical issue. These meetings can provide platforms for students, faculty, and administration to openly discuss their concerns, share experiences, and propose solutions. Meetings with national NPHC leadership may want to be convened to revisit and provide suggestions to revise initiation processes, ensuring a more inclusive intake process for all to be accepted.

## **Conclusion**

Traditions of hazing span decades. Through the years, hazing has taken several forms. There are generational differences in hazing. For example, when discussing this topic with members of BGLOs who pledged in the 1960s, the reason for enduring various

forms of hazing was due to the value placed on tradition. Older members of BGLOs participated in certain kinds of pledge rituals/hazing because it was a means to an end to be a part of a recognized group of scholarly leaders. However, even more importantly, the reason it was so important to suffer through these types of rituals was because the older subjects understood the purpose of BGLOs and their importance to the Black community. Sixty years ago, the need for BGLO stemmed from a higher purpose of social justice and activism. BGLOs were comprised of courageous Black scholarly leaders seeking equality in the United States. College students were attracted to these organizations because of their desire to enact change for Black Americans. The process of becoming a member of BGLOs was a small sacrifice to pay to join a group of like-minded people committed to a movement. In examining the younger generation, there are vast differences in motivation to join BGLOs. Younger people seek acceptance, popularity, and male masculinity. All of which counter the true purpose of the founding of BGLOs. Enduring unreasonable hazing behavior is worn as a badge of honor socially, but often without knowledge of the real purpose of BGLOs. I would argue that the younger generation has gotten away from the purpose of BGLOs, but rather, has placed a higher value on hazing rather than the real work that begins once they become members of BGLOs. For them, it is the demonstration of what they endured rather than the true purpose of what BGLOs represent. Evidence suggests that it does not matter whether the student is at an HBCU or a PWI. The culture and traditions of hazing are prevalent among Black males and in either type of institution, generational differences remain true. This study provides great insight to help address the problem of hazing throughout higher education. The persistent hazing practices within BGLOs in the United States can be

problematic among Black male students. Despite differences in opinions, some participants believed hazing can be an effective way to create bonding with all new and old members in fraternal organizations such as BGLOs. We learn from this study that despite the negative effects of hazing, being part of the BGLOs can present Black male students with opportunities to give back to their communities, thus creating a sense of belonging and support. Hazing practices have also been associated with psychological distress and mental health problems. This research offers significant insight into the effects and causes of hazing practices and how to mitigate them.



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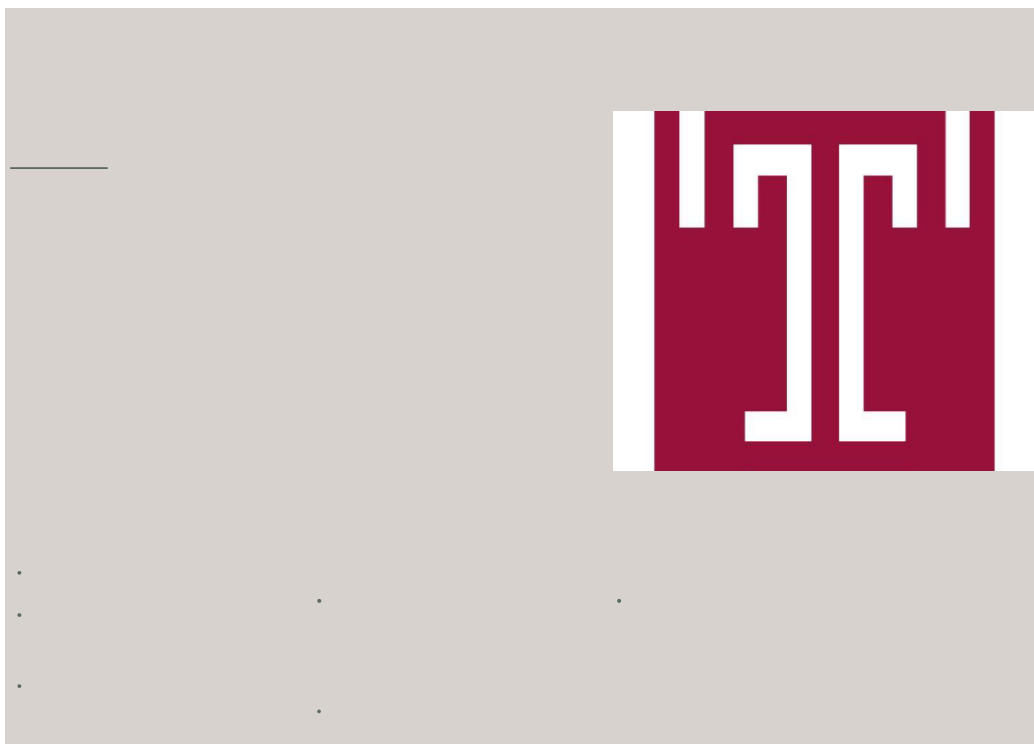
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## APPENDIX A

### EMAIL FOR STUDY PARTICIPANTS



Dear Alumnus,

My name is Ryan E. Tucker, and I am currently enrolled as a graduate student in the Higher Education Doctoral Program at Temple University. Using SurveyMonkey, I am planning to conduct a ten-question survey with fraternity members of a selected Black Greek Lettered Organization (BGLO). Approximately, half of the surveys will be conducted with study participants who attended Historically Black Colleges and Universities and the other half will have attended Predominantly White Institutions to capture first-hand experiences with hazing.

If you choose to participate, the purpose of this study is to analyze the perceptions about the acceptance or rejection of hazing as explained by fraternity members. The survey should only take 10 minutes. Please email ([Tuk83235@temple.edu](mailto:Tuk83235@temple.edu)) to receive consent form and survey.

Thank you for your time and I eagerly look forward to hearing about your experiences. Sincerely,

Ryan E. Tucker

## APPENDIX B

### IRB EMAIL

**Temple University**  
Office of the Vice President:  
for Research

Research Integrity & Compliance  
Student Faculty Center  
3340 N. Broad Street, Suite 304  
Philadelphia PA 19140

Institutional Review Board  
Phone: (215) 707-3390  
Fax (215) 204-4609  
e-mail: [irb@temple.edu](mailto:irb@temple.edu)



Date: 23-Nov-2022

Protocol Number: 29856

PI: J.A.J., IES DAVIS

Committee: A2

Project Title: An Examination of Attitudes and Beliefs About Hazing Within A Black Greek Letter Organization

This letter is related to submission# **29856-0003**

Via discussion with the Student Investigator over email, the IRB has modified the submitted consents slightly for approval. These have been attached to this email. They must be used when consenting subjects for this research. Additionally, the IRB has added the new recruitment material sent via email to the submission and added the prefix, "IRB Approved."

Please contact the IRB at (215) 707-3390 if you have any questions

## APPENDIX C

### SURVEY QUESTIONS

Hazing as a tradition is so strong in fraternal organizations that it will always be a part of the pledge/intake process.

Strongly agree  Agree  Neither agree nor disagree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

I do not feel the need to be hazed to belong or be accepted to any group or fraternal organization

Strongly agree  Agree  Neither agree nor disagree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

Hazing causes emotional harm to the individual and the group at large  Strongly agree

Strongly agree  Agree  Neither agree nor disagree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

Hazing is not an effective way to create bonding with all new and old members in fraternal organizations

Strongly agree  Agree  Neither agree nor disagree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

Being part of a Black Greek Letter Organization, I will be presented with opportunities to give back to my community and would be connected with causes I would not have known, and therefore physical and mental activities are viewed as important component of the membership intake process

Strongly agree  Agree  Neither agree nor disagree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

My experiences in a Black Greek Letter Organization will allow me to develop leadership skills applicable to future job prospects even with any exposure to hazing

Strongly agree  Agree  Neither agree nor disagree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

Hazing exposes me to psychological stress and long-term mental health even if the outcome is positive

Strongly agree  Agree  Neither agree nor disagree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

Hazing activities teach important values such as respect and unity

Strongly agree  Agree  Neither agree nor disagree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

Being in a Black Greek Letter Organization represents legacy and the risk or exposure to hazing activities is minimal in comparison the opportunities you will have in the future.

Strongly agree  Agree  Neither agree nor disagree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

Hazing instills a greater sense of organizational commitment and pride into new members of Black Greek Letter Organizations

Strongly agree  Agree  Neither agree nor disagree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

AGE

18–24  25–30  35–44  45–54  55–64

Highest Level of Education Achieved

Doctorate's  Master's  Bachelor's  Other

Gender  Male