

Buhay Frat: The Lived Experiences of the Fraternity Hazing Initiators in Palawan, Philippines



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Abstract

Hazing, one form of initiation rites within fraternities, steals public attention sporadically. Despite the implementation of Republic Act No.8049 or the Anti-Hazing Law – a law that prohibits any form of hazing in the Philippines, it is still secretly practiced by fraternities. The continued practice of this activity prompted the researchers to discover the phenomenology behind hazing as experienced by the hazing initiators in Palawan. This study employed the descriptive analytic approach to give a holistic perspective of the participants using the three main themes - (a) the fraternity characteristics, (b) the social environment of the participants, and (c) the psyche of the participants. The researchers looked into the twophase trail of fraternity involvement which begins with the neophyte phase and the membership phase.

Keywords

Filipino fraternities, hazing tradition paddling initiation, neophyte, fraternity hazing initiators, qualitative study

Fraternities have long been existing worldwide since ancient Greece. The term “frat” is derived from the Latin word “*frater*” which means “brother.” It is basically a term used to define a body of people associated for a common purpose or interest (Lapham, 2013). Despite the longrunning existence of fraternities, the average man still cannot completely grasp the concept, and often generalizes it as organizations that revel only on *hazing*. *Hazing* has been a commonly occurring phenomenon in many fraternities all around the Philippines, and is still present even after the signing of the R.A. 8049, or the Anti-Hazing Law (appendix E). Hazing-related death incidents have been reported numerous times, and one of the very recent incidents involved the case of DeLaSalle University St. Benilde student Guillo Cesar Servando in 2014, (Diola, Philstar.com, 2014). There have been many previous researches on *hazing*, but most are often based on Western cultural context. *The Evolution of Hazing* and *Hazing as a*

Manifestation of Evolved Psychology by Aldo Cimino are one of the examples of western researches. These become less reliable as an application to Filipino culture due to cultural differences; thus, research in such context would be required to close the said gaps in knowledge. Additionally, the phenomenology of fraternity initiators has not been duly explored as much as that of fraternity neophytes, making it a frontier for new research.

This study explains *hazing* phenomenon from another perspective - from the hazing initiators’ point-of-views. These hazing initiators are from Palawan, Philippines. The researchers sought answers to the following questions: What were the hazing initiators’ experiences and social environment? What is the psyche of the initiators who have gone through hazing as (a) neophytes, and as (b) initiators?

This study proves itself useful for it provides additional perspectives and/or approaches about *hazing*. Future researchers and psychology students may find this



research useful in deepening their understanding of social psychology and its dynamics within organized coalitions, including group aggression, under a Filipino cultural context. Furthermore, researchers may also use this material as reference for new studies and can be an aid to broaden the scope of published papers regarding hazing in the Philippines.

This study is limited to fraternities only; sororities are excluded. Eight (8) male fraternity members who served as participants that went through experiences as fraternity neophytes and as hazing initiators were selected – all are in their tertiary levels and residents of Palawan (from different municipalities). The researchers did not reveal specific information regarding the participants' identities, names of their fraternities, or any specific details regarding the execution of initiation rites because disclosing of information is not allowed by fraternities. Hence, other related subjects regarding fraternity dynamics such as group cohesion, wars and conflicts, fraternity principles, and activities other than hazing initiation rites were not covered by this research. This research did not include other forms of hazing, only inflicting of physical pain through paddling.

Hazing in the form of paddling has been considered as controversial activity done by fraternities in the Philippines and is questioned for the danger it poses. Youth patronage still continues despite the implementation of R.A. 8049 – an act criminalizing hazing activity of any organization. Philippine research study suggests that hazing can serve as a best “mechanism practice” in order to ascertain the most worthy individuals who can be counted and accepted as members of their organization” (Gener, 2013). Hazing is the abuse of new or prospective members (Cimino, 2011). What motivates initiators to do hazing though it induces severe physical pain? Why do the applicants still continue joining fraternities despite the risk they put themselves into? Why is hazing still accepted and practiced by fraternities?

Based on the gathered related literatures, the contributing factor that caused hazing initiators to physically haze their organization's applicants is the human's innate characteristic of being aggressive-- the product of the evolutionary circumstance of “survival of the fittest” which explains why some groups set certain conditions in selecting new members using evolutionary perspective as cited by (Lim, 2014). Considering this statement, majority of the hazing initiators keep their aggression within themselves.

The researchers looked into the chronological development of fraternity membership which starts from being an applicant who has undergone fledging, initiation until being a bona fide fraternity member who subjects neophytes to hazing. Using the researchers' pre-conceived themes, they identified the causes and influences or the triggering factors which induce aggression towards neophytes once the applicants survive the fledging program and the paddling initiation. The three themes are: (1) *organization characteristic (experience)*, (2) *social environment*, and (3) *internal processes (psyche)* of participants as their membership status progresses.

Fraternity Characteristics

It is the perceived qualities of a fraternity which is responsible in molding its group dynamics and traditions that directly influence the behaviors of its members and determines the formation of its group setting and forms of hazing.

Aggression to shape better members
Initiations may include activities perceived to be fun and rewarding, physically and emotionally demanding, embarrassing, socially deviant, degrading, painful, and sometimes dangerous or brutal. The activities designed for newcomers typically adhere to highly prescribed protocols defined by group traditions (Keating, 2005). In the Philippines, secretive group like the KKK imposed strict rules and guidelines for accepting new members. The organization adapted details of its initiation rites from the

American fraternity Freemason Lodge. It may be reflected on many fraternities in the country that is also secretive in nature to impose strict policies such as series of test of loyalty in accepting new members. Hazing practices are undeniably entwined to fraternal organization. This, with the evolutionary approach, allows the selection of members with high levels of intrinsic valuation. (Cimino, 2011)

Prospective members are punished harshly if they fail to carry out the assigned labor that is part of their induction. Punishment is manifested through hazing ordeals, which become a temporary set of powerful, negative incentives for doing anything that existing group members find the slightest bit objectionable. (Cimino, 2013)

Hazing is characterized as an anomaly in the light of Aldo Cimino's Macro-Theory (2013). He came up with Automatic Accrual Theory for explaining hazing phenomenon. He suggested the "newcomer" concept that prompts a set of adaptive responses in members toward new coalition members; among them being anti-exploitation responses to prevent their group from being exploited by said "newcomers". Two instances are given: newcomers might join a coalition and (1) contribute nothing, accruing automatic benefits until successfully excluded, or (2) increase free riding behaviors around the time of group entry, but reduce or cease this strategy as their tenure increases.

Establishment of a dominant position

A high-cost induction will presumably discourage those who desire only short-term association (and, thus, short-term benefits). This would be explained further through the Commitment Macro-Theory. According to the theory, another function of hazing is to show *dominance*, as initiators demand the applicants' submission while being subject to hazing, possibly leaving lasting impressions on the newcomers. (Cimino, 2011)

If hazing was a straightforward dominance display, one might expect them to say something akin to, "*when I haze you, you should never forget it.*" To be clear, "alpha" members often attempt to be scary and intimidating to prospective members, all the while trying to exercise hazing in ways that delineates it from everyday life. While Alpha men are pulled together to form one group, hazer-hazee relationships in other groups appear to contain implicit mutual knowledge that their interactions do not reflect the normal social order. That is, it is understood that hazers can order hazees around, make ridiculous demands and inflict high costs, but at a certain point, they must cease doing so.

The idea that hazers are seeking to establish or reaffirm a dominant position with respect to hazees is very common. Consider a few examples: Group members haze newcomers to "*make them understand how superior [they feel]*", Athletic hazing "*allows veterans to have their dominant position*", "*consolidated argues that hazing in male adolescent initiations is used to suppress*", "*open and violent revolt*", Veterans of a hazing discussion group is to "*maintain their power*", athletic hazers "*celebrating their power over rookies*". (Cimino, 2011)

Social Environment

It is the atmosphere within the organization wherein group dynamics, initiator-applicant interaction, and other phenomena take place.

Attachment formation

Hazing occurs because it is defined by students as necessary and desirable part of entry into an organization. The idea of "sense of belongingness" and "feeling accepted" amongst one's peers may triumph over any fears that new fledges may initially face. While some may see the initiation process as harmful and negative, others may be pushing aside this fear in order to actually raise their self-esteem and confidence amongst their peers. (Mercurio, et al 2014)

The implications of maltreatment effects for human attachments to groups are important. Individuals who undergo mental and physical duress can become dependent on and even attached to those inflicting the treatment, especially when a clear power differential is present and alternative social options are unavailable. (Keating, et. al. 2005)

Search for Personality Integration

Another factor why youth are motivated to join fraternity is due to the need of belongingness every person seeks, as it brings security and sense of being. According to Erich Fromm's theory of Humanistic Psychoanalysis Personality, humans are rational beings who act to fulfill their unique human needs to develop their personality. Those are to search for relatedness, rootedness, transcendence, and sense of identity that makes their frame of orientation as they try to create connections to the world by assimilation of things and by socialization to others and relate it to their selves. With freedom vested on them, they chose to act in either productive or non-productive orientation in solving human dilemmas (Jess Feist, 2009). A person who desires to integrate his personality to fulfill the missing aspect of his existence joins a chosen group to identify with people they would look up to. Joining a fraternity, they are given a chance to develop the sense of being connected to others and are motivated to transcend in the organization and may accept the consequence of joining the said fraternity, including the hazing he'll experience in order to be a bona fide fraternity member.

Circumstances Present

In the occurring process of the "in-group-out-group", bias people consider themselves as ingroup labeled as "us" and the outgroup people labeled as "them" (McLeod, 2008). Applicants must pass all the prerequisite requirements from being an "outgroup" to being an "ingroup" of fraternity and as the

one who interacts with other fraternity members and also given a chance to initiate hazing among neophytes. At some point of their membership, phenomenal events develop such as de-individuation as one of the characteristic of group dynamics, it is a psychological state characterized by lowered self-evaluation and decreased concerns to evaluation of others. It was proposed by Zimbardo as a result of his Stanford Prison Experiment. According to his theory, the said psychological state is aroused when an individual joins crowds and large groups. This social phenomenon diminishes awareness of one's' own individuality for each of them when trying to identify with majority of the group which consists of people who are perceived as faceless and anonymous. (Jarvis & Russell, 2009) Being exposed to this kind of environment, fraternities which consist majorly of members with high valuation to hazing practices can uplift others behaviors such as innate aggression of individuals who are new members of the fraternity and gradually can become accustomed with it. More specifically speaking, new fraternity members learn to conform to the group and may desire to be the new organization's initiator who hazes their new applicants, choose to be a bystander, or do what the majority of fraternity member does.

For those who choose to do hazing initiation, it is the environment that establishes powerful impetus for the hazing initiators' actions by influencing their personality and molding their behavioral patterns that lead them to become initiators. Albert Bandura's Social learning theory suggests that a person learns by observing others, including aggression, within an environment, even as early as in childhood. He also suggests that a child can learn by just observing role models with whom they identify. Through vicariously learning the consequences of aggressive behavior to those who use it, they assess a behavior whether or not such behaviors are worth adapting. Reinforced behaviors are most likely to be repeated by a child in the future with similar situations; children who are

rewarded for performing violent behavior will, therefore, come to considerably value it as they grow up. (Jarvis & Russell, 2009)

Environment also determines a state of evaluation for the course of action or practices of a person within the group. The Bystander effect describes the diffusion of responsibility which contributes to the continued practice of this harsh initiation. If hazing initiation stays acceptable within the group, fraternity members tend to take their hands off and let the hazing practice continue.

Psyche (Personal Processes of Individuals)

It is the psychological, cognitive, emotional, and personality aspect of an individual that contributes to the subject's behaviors throughout the membership process.

Identity formation

“To be identified as a member of a group” gives people reason to be proud of as an accomplishment in joining organizations. According to Henri Tajfel's theory of Social Identity, the group to which a person belongs, brings pride and self-esteem to the person. As a person follows a sequence of social identity formation which starts at social categorization followed by social identification and finally social comparison, along the process, discrimination takes place as a common result (McLeod, 2008). From this aspect, at any rate, hazing can occur from the course of discrimination. A male who agrees to undergo training was susceptible to be subjected as “them” as they are still in the process of being a genuine fraternity member. At this state, any form of hazing may arise aside from physical hazing and hazing may be not in the form of initiation but depends on the fraternity member desire to do so which most likely to happen during the fledgship between the interaction of a fraternity member figure as “ingroup” and applicant figure as “outgroup” run into.

Within the community, males and female are distinctly perceived. Males are

commonly understood to be aggressive and physically stronger so being perceived manly is taken as a compliment. According to Bem, (1981) as cited in a book section authored by (Eagly, 2009), a person adjusts his behavior to fit in with the gender norms and is enforced to fulfill the expectations on his gender category bound for their culture. This physiological triggering factor can influence a bona fide fraternity member to engage in physical hazing to express his aggression. This may be responsible for the fraternity initiators' harsh treatment to neophytes which every applicant might experience as they view the act as proving one's manliness. *Forms of self-justification*

The attraction of hazing probably extends beyond the dictates of tradition, forging bonds through shared, secretive experiences. (The) rituals are thought to strengthen the group by proving the devotion of newcomers but also by helping to create a sense of loyalty (Mercurio, et. al 2014). It is the reason many victims continue to support an abuser after the relationship is over. It's also the reason they continue to see “the good side” of an abusive individual and appear sympathetic to someone who has mentally and sometimes physically abused them which can occur to a newly initiate applicant that becomes a member.

The greater number of fraternity members belonging to a majority group and their actions can affect the perception of a new member – perception about himself and about what the organization does. According to social psychologist Leon Festinger's theory of Cognitive Dissonance Theory as cited by (Lim, 2014), humans as rational beings are sensitive to inconsistencies between actions and beliefs. Recognition of this inconsistency will cause dissonance, and will motivate an individual to resolve the dissonance. Dissonance will be resolved in one of three basic ways; it is (1) changing one's belief or (2) action or (3) perception of an action.

Although according to the Effort Justification theory of Aronson and Mills as cited by (Lim, 2014), it was argued that

cognitive dissonance led to self-justification for liking the group for which new members were subjected to because of the commitment they have in the fraternity. Some have criticized this however, because it is not possible to actually measure the amount of dissonance experienced by the participants. There is no way to "prove" that the individual maintains two contradictory cognitions at the same time, and that in order to diminish the dissonance, participants have to justify the situation in order to resolve this conflict.

Why does a new member decide to join the group of initiators and conduct hazing? A person can learn a behavior by the reinforcement present in the environment; it may be a positive or a negative one. (McLeod, 2014) The new member who belongs to the fraternity is given reinforcement in order for him to learn a new behavior by conditioning him like cognitively associating hazing activity with either a reward or punishment. Also the notion of revenge supported by psychodynamic perspective for a defense mechanism of displacement of anxieties can be a triggering factor that motivates them to do hazing activity.

Method

This section includes the research design, research participants and research instrument used in this study. This research is qualitative in nature. The researchers employed a phenomenological research design which focused on the perspective of college fraternity members who performed hazing initiation to candidates/applicants aspiring to be members of the fraternity. The participants who were qualified and selected in this study are: (a) residents of Palawan, (b) enrolled in tertiary education, (c) assigned to initiate applicants into the fraternity, (d) initiated candidates into membership at least once.

The researchers utilized a semi-structured personal interview with guided questions. The interview used open-ended questions to allow the participants to bring

up new ideas. The researchers also conducted a pilot testing of the semi-structured questions prior to the actual interview to validate its content.

Since this study focused on the phenomenology of fraternity initiation committee members, the researchers followed the analysis method as described by Kleiman (2004) and cited by Tracy, S. J. (2012). The collected write-ups, transcripts and notes were read and examined. The data were reviewed comprehensively and sections identified to have similar focus were integrated to make compact, efficient summaries of its content. The process consisted of examining, categorizing, tabulating and recombining of amassed information before progressing to deeper exposition. Findings, including descriptions of essential meanings, were elaborated and related to the collected data to justify the interpretations presented.

Results and Discussion

The findings of this phenomenal study focused on the trail/phases of the participants' membership into their respected fraternities and their experiences. Admission to fraternities has two phases/parts – (1) being a neophyte and (2) being a fraternity member who has become a fraternity paddling initiator. These two phases point to three supporting themes which covered the *participants' social environment, fraternity characteristics* and their *psyche* as their membership status upgrades. The three supporting themes are generated according to "Perfect Storm Theory" which pertains to the main influencing phenomenological aspects of hazing practices (Linkins, 2014).

PHASE I: THE NEOPHYTE PHASE

Researchers looked into the participants' accounts of events –what they experienced before and during their training which is commonly called „fledging“ (Mercuro, et al., 2014).

Social Environment as Factor for Neophytes to Join Fraternity

Most of participants' verbatim accounts revealed that their admission to fraternities started during high school. Media, close friends, and immediate family members as well as relatives were their primary sources of information about those fraternities. Some of them reasoned out that they joined fraternity because their family member or close friends are already members.

Bunso and FB ALE said they started fledging to a certain fraternity because their older brothers are members of it; though their older brothers did not recruit them. They voluntarily joined. On the other hand, James' parents are members of certain fraternity and sorority thus giving him a label as "Royal Blood". According to him, he chose to fledge for the environment which his parents belong. While according to Hinata, he said that:

"Nung hindi pa ako member niyan, ano...na ano ko na yan siya, nakita ko na sa tv o minsan sa radio, naririnig ko. Pero nung di pa ako nakasali dito, bale yung pagkasali ko di ko talaga iniaasahan na nakasali ako dyan kasi nga nung classmate ko, yung pinsan niya member na niyan tapos nirecruit siya, pag recruit sa kanya... nirecruit din ako. Kaya biglaan lang talaga yung ano ko talaga, pagsali."

In Hinata's case, he was aware of that certain fraternity because he saw it on TV and heard it on the radio. He was recruited by his cousin to fledge in a fraternity then. He subjected himself to fledging simply because he wanted to accompany his classmate. One of the main reasons why males join a fraternity is for acceptance (Daley, 2014). This may be true and applicable to the participants but this is not the only main reason why the participants joined their organizations. They have deeper reasons than just being accepted, like Hinata. His reason for joining the fraternity was not because of curiosity nor seeking for acceptance but primarily because of his closeness with his friend.

Experiences under the Fraternity: Being Neophytes

According to (Linkins, 2014), the victims who have undergone fledging are the neophytes. A unique characteristic of fraternity system with regard to membership is fledging which neophytes, being the lowest members in hierarchy, must undergo. This is based on fraternity's underlying usual principle. A course of training program is prepared which includes initiation and rituals.

There are phases such as:

Applicant Orientation

Most of the participants attended applicant orientation, which is called the "recruitment phase" through which fraternity members scout potential neophytes into admittance to their fraternity.

Fraternity orientation is held so that the applicants could have a clearer picture on the activities they would do when they become active members. Usually, it includes the pros and cons of joining and an open-forum. This is also the time when the non-members are introduced to the fraternity, its principle, and the kind of fledging program they are likely to undergo. They give non-members time to decide if they want to pursue or to decline the opportunity to be a member.

According to Jokjok,

"Oo pagdating sa... orient muna tapos kung gusto mo magtuloy kung ayaw, okay lang."

Bunso added:

"Ini-explain, tapos pinagbibigyan kami kung anong tanong namin, tapos hindi pa kami agad pinapapasok. Binigyan kami ng 1 week."

While James said:

"Oo naman. Sinasabi, kasi once na nag-orient ka, dapat lahat ng... gumugulo sa isipan mo... itanong mo... uh, sasabihin nila para malaman mo."

According to the above verbatim accounts, fraternities oriented their

applicants and were given time to decide if they really wanted to join the fraternity. They were told about the benefits and the possible consequences of joining the fraternity. Orientation is one of the first steps in the neophyte's decision-making. Applicants undergo stages of decision-making while they are undergoing training. Once the non-members (applicants) attended the orientation and showed on the first day of the membership process, their attendance served as an unwritten agreement between the non-members and the fraternity. An applicant allows himself to be under the fraternity's authority by obeying the fraternity members' command as long as the command is in line with the program. The initiation rite is also included in this unwritten agreement because the applicants are given hint to fraternity's tradition of initiation rite which will enable the applicant decide if he really wants to commit himself with the organization. Besides paddling, other forms of hazing are also practiced throughout the training program.

Perks from their Fledging Experiences

The experiences of the applicants during their fledging have an impact when they became fraternity members and initiators. Their standpoints are due to the experienced harsh environment, although there were neophytes who chose to quit, while the remaining neophytes continued the program and survived. As they recalled their fledging experiences, they said,

From Jokjok;

"Ay, uhm, parang salang sala kami masyado parang walang... parang hindi magkwan...parang hindi... anong tawag dito...parapagdating ng initiation di magbibigay yung katawan sa mga initiators."

From Rocksteddy:

"Kasi tuloy-tuloy sakin, pag service ko (form of exercising to a fraternity member), isang araw lang, nagpupush up lang... Paddle."

From Bado:

"Also may... paddling pa din, yun yung talagang...talagang hindi mawawala na, tradisyon na talaga."

While they were undergoing the membership process, their initiators told them that paddling is a sign of a warm welcome and it is how the fraternity shows their love to their new brothers. Some participants accepted that the initiation process was really necessary and it could never be removed because it is already part of the fraternity's tradition. So when they became initiators, they told the applicants the same thing.

Experience Point of Quitting

As the participants continued the training, the initiations became more dangerous for some who belong to fraternities with "one-day survival" program compared to those with longer phases of training program. In one-day survival program, hazing receive a greater number of paddle strikes. Paddling initiation is another stage when neophytes decide if they are ready to be active fraternity members. Some of them had thought of backing out during the process.

Bunso said:

"May time na dumarating ako sa time na ganun. May yung tipong, medyo mahirap na talaga, yung papiliin sa ganito-ganito na hindi mo na, mahirap, mahirap magdecide."

Bunso verbatim shows that they were pushed to their limit during the initiation rite which made them think of backing out. The effort to instil loyalty and devotion to the organization is pushed too hard sometimes (Mercuro, et al. 2014). Quitting during the initiation is considered as cowardice among the other members. They use the term "quitter" to describe a person who is weak enough to back out during the fledging process. Men do not want to be labelled as a quitter because it somehow insults their sense of manhood. Perhaps one of the largest groups of "victims" of masculinity battle is fraternity

men. Men feel the pressures from men in other fraternities, men in their own organization, to be the perfect picture of a fraternity man: smart, athletic, charismatic, and career-focused. Fraternity men have an especially vigorous demand placed on them to be the epitome of masculinity (Stratton, 2015). Participants endured the initiation rite to show that they were able to stand on their ground.

Psyche Dynamics of Being a Neophyte

The impressions, emotions, opinions and convictions of participants while they were going through the phases, starting from being a neophyte until being a bona fide fraternity member were accounted for. In Jungian psychology it has to be understood as a purposive system, an arrangement process of living matter ready for life. (Irene Gad, 2015)

A neophyte's psyche is his way out to be what he wanted for his life and his only gear to deal with reality inside the fraternity's world. Human psyche, on the other hand, is defined differently by schools of thoughts which have a unique perspective and approaches. The researchers eclectically considered those approaches.

Prior impression on fraternity

When participants were asked about their impression on fraternities while they were not yet fraternity members, majority said that fraternities build a strong sense of brotherhood that helps the community. This account is supported by statements of respondents, saying:

"yung fraternity parang ang dating sa kin, ano eh, parang. . . astig." . . . "Parang samahan sila ng matitibay, parang ganon". . . "parang makakatid na wala talagang iwanan"-Bado

"Yung Brotherhood. Kumbaga, siya na para makatulong ka sa... bayan. Maliban sa group na sinalihan mo."-Hinata

Other participants have negative impression on fraternity due to hazing and anarchy. They accounted:

". . . Syempre unang papasok sa isip mo pag fraternity, hazing talaga . . ." James

"pagsinabi kasing frat. . . involve sa gulo" – FB Ale

"Ayun baka, pahirapan ako dun."- Rockstеды

The above-cited accounts show opposing impressions (positive and negative) about fraternities. Other participants deemed fraternities as helpful to the community and are composed of great men despite their involvement in hazing practices which inflict pain; while others experienced confusion and began to doubt the organization and its commitment. This social psychology phenomenon is called dissonance where a person is having problem to the present inconsistency in his behavior and beliefs (Keating, 2005). There are verbatim accounts stating that they doubted the fraternity to secure their safety. They question their psychological and physical capacity for them to finish the race. This may be related why they came to a point of quitting but didn't do so.

Motivating factors for joining fraternity

With the given impression, participants continued to join fraternities for there are motivating factors that influenced them such as admiration for the fraternity's unique feature, relatives who are already members, curiosity and blunt decision to pursue it. These factors which helped them survive their training considerably came from influence of significant people in their lives and from their intrinsic motivation to cross the threshold, the harsh and violent process of membership. Participants' reasons are:

"Nung pagdating ko ng college, nung nalaman ko na may ganoong (unique feature) fraternity so doon na ako kaagad pumasok." –Bado

"Kasi nagustohan ko talaga, nagustohan yung ano nila, yung mga ganon, yung mga service nila." . . . "Bale, yung pinaka-unang purpose-- pinaka-gusto ko talagang reason yung sa idea ng org na pinasukan ko. Pangalawa nalang yung, ayaw kong magkahiwalay kami ng org ng kuya ko." – Bunso

“Choice” . . . “Syempre nacurios din ako diba? Di ko rin alam kung ano yung nandoon. Syempre, di pa ako nakapasok, iniisip ko ano-ano kaya ang ginagawa nila. Uh, parang kakaiba di ba? Napapaisip ka.”

–James

“Kasi ano, nakapasok ka na. Tuloy-tuloy na.”–Rocksteddy

There was an end goal for the hard training they went through. It could be form of give and take for aspiring members. It also formed another reason for them to pursue the course of membership, a reward in the end to keep them going. Participants learned about building bond with other respected people- professional people skills development, and preparedness for actual hardships in life. However, there are some participants such as Hinata and Jokjok who said that there are no benefits for being a bona fide member but others said;

“Syempre, sakín naman... nakita ko yung sa parents ko sa buhay nila ngayon... Syempre, maganda. So sakín, maganda naitulong ng fraternity na pinasukan nila na... pinasukan ko rin ngayon. Kaya yun.” . . . “Uh... kasi nga diba, syempre magpupulis. Kailangan ng backer.” –Jamess

“Bale, kung para sa'kin is, maganda eh, merong, magagamit sa aktwal na ano, na aktwal na pamumuhay, sa totoong buhay na. Parang ganun din sya. Connection din.” –Bunso

Perception and conviction on hazing

As the participants started the training under their respected fraternities, they were not a blank slate from the start. Hazing caused those mixed feelings of anxiety, fear and excitement at the same time. Having anticipated of what might happen to them, they already prepared themselves on how to handle hazing initiation. Some of them specifically said that:

“syempre pagsinabing fraternity, alam mo na, expected mo na yung ibat ibang paraan na (voice lowers) masasaktan ka.” –Bado

“Sabi nila, wala.” . . . “Kasi, di naman mawawala yan.” –Rocksteddy

“mahirap talaga, masasaktan ka” –FB Ale

“Bale, ano eh, noong unang pasok ko kasi eh, kahit-papaano may ano na sakín yung mga, yung kuya may sinabi nang ganitoganito. Medyo kinakabahan din eh. Na parang nae-excite. Ganun yung pakiramdam.” –Bunso

Stand point for not backing out

Thoughts of backing out during their training were unavoidable but they did not do so because it is shameful. Others said that it was against their principle of sticking to what they already decided. Being labeled as a quitter from fraternity members hinders them because it brings bad impression for the members of fraternity. There was no point for stopping for they already started fledging and they must go on. James specifically said that he is strong so that is why he did not go for it. On the other hand, Hinata did not back out because he was determined to accompany his cousin until they survived the fledging program. Some of their statements are:

“kasi dun na ako, aatras pa ba ako?” –FBAle

“...pero para sakín parang ano kasi eh npakapangit nang ganon na parang wala kang napatunayan sa sarili.” –Bado

“Kasi pag magpatalo ka sa pride mo... Tatawagin kang quitter.” –Oo. Di ka na pasasalihin ng ibang member.” –Rocksteddy

“So uuh...sa amin ah. nasimulan na.. parang nasimulan na namin tapos magaayaw pa kami parang ano na din masyado. Pinanindigan na lang namin.” –Jokjok

Emotional condition during paddling/hazing initiation

Before their initiators started the program, the participants felt nervous and frightened about untoward possibilities that might happen to them – would they stay alive or not. People might recognize this as overreacting but as they gave their statements, it was obvious that hazing or paddling initiation is an act which can cause a person lose his life. James stated that he must shout out all the pain he felt while receiving paddle strikes during their batch initiation. Hinata said that some of his

batchmates almost passed out during their initiation. Some of the participants revealed their emotions:

“syempre nung una pa lang makakaramdam ka talaga ng takot. yung unang pumasok sa isip ko sana di ako mamatay.”-Bado

“Sa training, yun yung isa sa nagpapakaba din saakin, yung sa training. Di ko alam yung pwedeng mangyari, basta ako nilakasan ko lang yung loob ko. Unang-una, syempre maraming nababalita about sa mga hazing na yan, diba”-Bunso

“Ayun, sa mismong time talaga nay yun ano, syempre ano, kabado ka... kakabahan ka di ba? Kung ano gawin sayo pero nung nalaman ko na ano pala, ganun, ssyempre ang inisip ko na lang para sa sarili ko... mabuhay. Kasi nga maraming na ano (died) doon di ba? Ma-maraming namatay dahil sa hazing na yan?”-Hinata

Participants handled emotional baggage of severe nervousness and apprehension by increasing their faith within themselves. They exercised through pumping and jogging to strengthen their bodies and were encouraged by significant people before and during the initiation. By being aware of “worst-case scenarios”, they boosted their self-efficacy to survive the training. Also, they received doctrines from fraternity members and initiators to ensure and check their preparedness before the paddling initiations. Paddling as a form of hazing initiation is considered as the most life threatening part of fledging program and usually the last initiation that tests and challenges neophytes to become full or bona fide fraternity members. But at times, paddling causes others to quit.

Formed feelings for the Fraternity members who hazed them

For the neophytes who endured several paddle strikes from fraternity members who survived paddling have developed hard feelings for the hazing initiators. Some participants affirmatively said that they felt anger and disgust over them for what they did, but they also feared them for they are their former Masters/Lords who gave them commands. Some stated that they have no

hard feelings for their initiators because when they joined the fraternity, they understood its mechanism. Rocksteddy said it was all right for him because he will just take revenge with the incoming applicants.

“Wala.” ... “Kasi pinasok ko e. Hindi ako magkakaroon ng galit kasi ako mismong pumasok doon.”-Hinata,

*:Dalawa yung naramdaman ko nun eh, sa totoo lang, nung nag-unde
Researcher : “Nakaramdam po ba kayo ng galit sa kanila?”*

“mm-mm..” “inis”-Jokjok

PHASE II: THE FRATERNITY MEMBER PHASE

After the neophytes were subjected to final paddling initiation and survived the initiation, they were subjected to induction of new members. Their induction is the end of the neophyte stage and the beginning of their full membership to fraternity. They now become bona fide members. Though accepted as bona fide member, there is no written agreement between the newcomer and the veteran. Newcomers will be loyal to their fraternity substantially and veterans must treat the new comers as equal to them to uphold an atmosphere of „brotherhood“ among members. Verbatim accounts from respondents suggest a whole new fraternity dynamics under the three covered themes.

Social environment as a nest of members' bonding

There are certain social environmental benefits that are earned such as the brotherhood and equality, a reward for surviving the initiation rites.

Brotherhood and equality

From the verbatim accounts of participants, one of the benefits that they got is the sense of brotherhood among them. Even though they felt fear and anger while they were undergoing the training, they felt the acceptance of the veteran members after they survived the training. All their anger towards their initiators faded as the treatment of equality among brother is

established and being a part of their organization is met. According to Bunso:

“Well yung sa ogr. kasi na pinasukan namin eh, pag nagundergo ka pa ng training, di mo maisip na ganito, ganun talaga yung mararamdaman mo, takot at saka galit. Nung sumervive ka na eh yung pag survive namin pala doon ko naramdaman na yung pag-welcome nila..”

This phenomenon of setting aside the negative thoughts and feelings held by a person for positive social interaction corresponds to the study of Mercurio, Merritt, Fiumefreddo (2014).

According to them, the idea of belonging and feeling accepted amongst one’s peers may triumph over any fears. So while some may see the initiation process as harmful and negative, others may be pushing aside this fear in order to actually raise their self-esteem and confidence amongst their peers.

Other verbatim accounts also support that brotherhood is met after they survived, for there are different activities and services on the fraternities. Members were obliged and required to attend these activities to show their commitment to the organization. More importantly, joining these activities develop the sense of brotherhood among the members especially to newly survived ones. Those activities have become a medium of interaction of the members of the organization. It creates shared experiences and shared common bond among them. Moreover, the establishment of brotherhood is accompanied by respect and guidance of other members. According to Bunso:

“Pinapaliwanag nila nila sa amin kasi naga undergo kami pa lang ng training. Ganito yan, pwede mong iapply sa ganito ganito, may purpose lahat ng ginagawa. Kumbaga para na rin sayo maging matibay ka. Pag survive mo.”

The equality of treatment to all members in the fraternity is met once a neophyte survives. According to Cimino (2011) there is a regularity of hazing that appears inconsistent with the idea that hazing is a one-time dominance display: hazing always increase in status once they

have completed their hazing process. That is, once hazing is done, newcomers are no longer required to perform the ordeals or servile labor associated with their status as hazingees. As they become part now of the organization, the equality will be bestowed to the new survived member. They no longer need to be obliged or perform personal favors for veterans. In addition to this, the seniority of the other members will be removed. This was also supported by Jokjok, saying:

“Wala naman.. (nagbobosing-bosing or seniority) hindi ka naman ituturing na ano, hindi ka na ituturing na applicante pag nagsurvive ka na at dahil na din sa matagal ka na..”

Two kind of members: Pro-hazing and anti-hazing members

According to the participants, there are fraternity members who are pro-hazing and anti-hazing. Bunso said:

“Di na maiiwasan yan. Mas ano talaga..yung mas bata..”

Bunso’s verbatim refers to the younger and new fraternity members who are pro-hazing. Although there are members who are against hazing. According to Jokjok:

“Yung iba ayaw. Marami yung may ayaw. Yung iba..yung mga edad kelangan may ganon kasi, uhh.. parang.. kondisyon..Sa kanila na nanggaling yan (pro-hazing) yung matanda”

Younger or older members, veterans or new, are pro-hazing; both want hazing to continue because for them, hazing is a condition in order to be admitted to the organization; they have come to value it. Undergoing the initiation process is a part of the fraternity. In Cimino’s (2011) study, he stated that certain experiences are necessary to be acknowledged as a “legitimate member”.

Experiences as a proof of having privileges

The participants were asked about their experiences when they have become

members of their fraternities. Verbatim accounts of some participants showed that being fraternity members gave them opportunity to shake hands with veterans and enabled them to join activities which their organizations held such as fellowships and rendering services. They began to initiate neophytes, which for them, a chance to inflict pain to these neophytes through paddling.

This experience brought different impacts to them. Experience can be a source of person's affective health according to Carl Roger; it could be positive or negative one that affects the person's sense of self (Feist, 2009). This aspect of initiators' phenomenology cannot be overlooked for it contributes to the development of their involvement to fraternity.

Fellowship

Upon survival from fraternity training program as a neophyte, the status of participants raised to being a bona fide member. Consequently, it exposes them to fraternity's activities and gives them opportunity to interact with other members and shake their hands with veterans; as James stated:

"Una . . . kasi, pagkagraduate ko nun, sakto, anniversary namin. Yun yung unang sama ko sa alin ng fraternity. Syempre. . . andami, di mo kilala kasi bago ka pa lang. Pero. . . pagdating naming dun, syempre, ipakilala naman kami diba? Yung mga tipong ano ba, mga talagang. . . uh tawag dito (silence). Yung makilala ka na rin talaga nila kasi nga diba pinakilala, kakamayan mo sila para magpakilala ka. Kasi ako undergrad.yung iba, alumni."

Shake hands are fraternity members' way of recognizing and of building connection to other members. According to Daniels (2014), shake hands are a symbol of agreement, often used to show goodwill and sincerity by statesmen, diplomats, and politicians and adopted by many fraternities. There are unique ways for each fraternity as it was associated with hidden meaning behind gesture. It is also called "*secret handshake*" of fraternities and

perceived by respondents as one of the privileges of being a full member.

Rendering Services

Fraternity members are able to join or handle social activities and events of their organization as staff and not just helpers. As most of the participants' fraternities are service oriented organizations, they offer services that help the needy sectors of community. They are also involved in school affairs. This was supported by the statement of Bunso saying,

". . .sa pagpakain ng mga bata, nagdodonate kami ng mga dugo. Basta alam naming na nakakatulong sa mga nakakarami"

Hinata also added,

"Yung ano talaga, sa school naming kami nag-aano ng mga activities kung anong pinapaano ng school, dun kami nag-aactive." . . . "Parang ano, kung intrams ganun, may mga palaro dito, nakiki-ano rin kami tapos nga naga, Uhggg (gesture of thinking something), yun tumutulong kami sa mga ibang org."

These statements are also similar to the results of one qualitative study about fraternity members conducted by (Mathiasen, 2005) Through the community services, fraternities have positive influence on members' moral development; thus they establish good reputation in the society. These are good points that the fraternity members acquired by joining a fraternity. This kind of influence of fraternity on its members is usually the reason their fraternities becomes popular to young aspirants and the most obvious way of showing their significance to community.

Hazing Initiators' Experiences

Most of the participants have already been members of their respected fraternities for over a year. Hinata has been a member of a fraternity for almost five years and James for two years. Throughout those years they interact with other members within the fraternity. This helps them learn more about their fraternity's rules. Participants as a

newbies of the fraternity stated that they had mixed emotions the first time they struck the paddle.

When they were assigned to initiate the neophytes, they were assisted and given instructions and tips by the experienced initiators. They were watched specifically by their M.I. (*Master of Initiation*) to determine if they would commit “foul” act which could result to severe physical injury or critical condition of an applicant. Foul is a term participants use when a member makes mistake in paddling. Hinata described his first swing of paddle experience as restricted. Eventhough he wanted to inflict excessive pain, he couldn’t do so because he might commit “foul”. He stated that,

“...First time mo hahawak ng paddle pero una, iisipin mo bakit mo papaluin ng sobra kung di ka pa naman marunong di ba? Kasi. . . pag first handle mo pa lang ng paddle, di ka pa marunong pumalo. May tinatawag na foul kaya may umaalalay naman samin. Pag papalo na syempre sasabihin samin pagpapaluin na, “ i-maintain mo lang muna. Alam ko gigil ka, kasi gusto mo bumawi, di ba?” Pero may ano naman kami, may . . . MI rin naman kami, may tagatingin kami kung papano yung proseso ng pagpalo kung foul ba. Mataas o mababa? Sinusukat din naming kung papano. Yun. Kung gugustuhin man naming lakasan, hindi rin naming magawa kasi may nagbabantay”

“Mmmm. . . ang hirap gumawa ng ganun (laughs a little) nagiging kwan mo rin tapos, pero, kailangan mo pa din pagdaanan, tamang kwan lang amang maramdaman mo lang kung ano yung bigat.”

Becoming a hazing initiator could be an open opportunity of avenging against neophytes. Bunso said that he thought of doing it many times but chose not to. On the other hand, Jokjok experienced difficulty doing it against the neophytes because they will become his brothers once they survive the fledging program.

The initiators experienced initiating their friends, classmates, acquaintances and relatives. Their fraternity strictly implements an equal number of paddle strikes that neophytes should receive. They obeyed the rules even though they were hesitant for

they experienced subjective emotion to those neophytes. Jokjok was hesitant to do it but he had to in order to maintain equality. He compensated for inflicting pain to those new neophytes by encouraging them to stay strong. It was the least help he could do. As Jokjok stated that,

“Ganun lang, patibayin mo lang yung loob ng mga kamag-anak, (he initiated some of his relative) mag-kwan ka lang, di naman kasi pwedeng bawasan yung ibibigay sa kanila, talagang pagtulong na sa salita na rin, pagtibay na lang ng loob.”

Throughout their membership in fraternity, participants stated that they have performed initiations to neophytes multiple times until now. Bado said “Lima”, Bunso said “Malapit na rin sigurong mga ano. . . sa isang taon, aabot ng apat na beses” while Rocksteddy said “marami na” and James Rodriguez “Marami na. Di ko na mabilang e. Sobrang dami na e (laughs)” As they performed the initiation to the neophytes, some neophytes backed out. FB ALE stated that it was normal in fraternities and Bado specifically said,

“Marami din, Mayroon kaming batch na mga sila e, 20 (composed of) ang naiwan na lang lima.”

Psyche of fraternity hazing initiators

The Researchers included participants’ opinions and perception regarding hazing (as a process of inflicting pain through paddling), their opinion on the total abolishment of hazing, their behaviors while initiating the neophytes.

Change in Perception

Participants’ impressions regarding fraternity changed specially about the negative ones. Their becoming fraternity members have developed them to become more responsible and more mature. In the case of Bunso, he said:

“Medyo nagbago. Kasi nung una, ang tingin ko nung di pa ako pumasok, naga-undergo palang ako ng training, akala ko sobrang ganito na, kapag pumasok ka na, kapag naka-survive ka na, yung tipong masaya, ganito nalang yung pakiramdam

mo, sobrang kailangan mong magyabang. Di pala. Nung mag-survive ako sa org na pinasukan ko, mahirap parin pala, isang malaking responsibility parin sya. Ganun yun."

In Bunso's case, he anticipated surviving the initiation process. He thought of it as the peak of all the difficulties within fraternity. He considered that surviving this process would be the greatest accomplishment in joining a fraternity. But when Bunso survived, he realized that it is more than surviving the initiation process. He viewed overcoming the initiation process as a beginning of his commitment and responsibility to the fraternity. This shows that surviving initiation may change one's perspective about himself. According to James:

"Syempre unang papasok sa isip mo pag fraternity, hazing talaga. Di ba? Umpisa pa lang may hazing dun, mahirap. Maraming member ito, baka di ko kayanin. Ganun diba? Pero nung pumasok ako, syempre... mali pala. Mali pala yung iniisip ko na ganun"

Fledging and initiation put participants in a fearsome activity which reduces their self-esteem. Nowadays, hazing in the form of paddling is considered as a brutal activity and a running stigma for many fraternities. Undergoing such activity affects a person's level of self-esteem (*how one feels about oneself*), but also a person's self-image (*identity*), feelings of competence (*or incompetence*), and sense of belonging (*or lack of belonging*). According to (June Price Tangney, 2007) shame causes enormous harm to the entire self-system and in order to remedy this inconsistency, respondents chose to justify their beliefs.

Another one that contributes to one's shame is his ego. The society nowadays sees men as a tough being who can endure any kind of pain, not a weak and failure kind of man. Measuring masculinity also pertains to a man's ability to endure a kind of pain. This is supported by (Kimmel, 2008). According to him, masculinity is a constant test – always up for grabs, always needing to be proved.

Although participants felt that certain emotion before; still, they continued to enter the organization knowing that any untoward possibility might happen to them. These thoughts were replaced with more positive thoughts as they are exposed to deeper core of fraternity through vicarious learning (Jarvis & Russell, 2009).

Psyche: the bright and dark side of Initiating Neophytes

Paddling (hazing) neophytes brought mixed feelings of worry, concern, fear to the participants for they, too, experienced the pain of being paddled. According to Hinata:

"Uhm, kinakabahan din. Kasi biruin mo may papaluin mo ang isang tao walang kasalanan. Syempre, kinakabahan ka. Malay mo kung ano mangyari doon."

While FB Ale says that:

"Sakin, (pause) takot din, parang mas triple pa yung ikaw mismo ang pinapalo kasi, sa ikaw ang papalo kasi di mo alam kung ano yung mangyayari sa ano."

Both Hinata and FB Ale showed concern to the hazes fearing that any untoward incident might happen when they paddle the neophytes. It can be concluded that these two participants did not hold any grudge or had no plan to inflict pains. In Hinata's case, he stated that *"bakit mo papaluin mo ang isang taong walang kasalanan?"* This verbatim account shows that Hinata sees this act of aggression as a punishment. He viewed aggression as a punishment to those people who committed mistakes or crime, but not the kind of aggression that he wanted to commit just because of some initiation process. While in FB Ale's case, he felt extremely scared because doing that action might pose danger to the person. Causing harm to others makes the person accountable to it, so was FB ALE. He did not want any mishaps to happen for he would bear the responsibility.

For other participants, they did not show any concern about the neophytes (hazees); instead, they focused more on how to execute the paddling process. This was supported by Bado, saying that:

“Nung una syempre kakabahan ka rin... kasi di mo alam kung... sasakto ba o hindi eh.”

While according to James:

“Syempre diba sati naman syempre masaya diba? First time mo hahawak ng paddle pero una, iisipin mo, bakit mo..bakit mo papaluin ng sobra kung di ka pa naman marunong”

Bado got nervous because he might commit mistake on executing the paddling. Being observed by other members might be the factor why he was tensed on carrying the process. Giving or assigning the paddle to him could be a privilege but still it is a big responsibility that he should carry. Aside from being observed by the other members, he was expected to execute properly the paddling. On the other hand, James felt happy that he was assigned to paddle a neophyte, because he considered it a big privilege as a member and a proof that he is trusted. But since that was James' first time to execute a paddling session, he still couldn't inflict too much pain because he is not skilled enough in executing it.

Subjective Opinion on Hazing

Participants' opinions about hazing are different from one another. Bunso said:

“Para sa'kin, yung hazing is, dalawa yan eh. Verbal at saka non-verbal. Pag sinabi mong hazing, di kaagad paddle yan eh. Kasi karamihan sa marami akong tinanong sa labas na di nakakaintindi ng hazing, ang pagkaalam nila, yung hazing, yung ginugulpi, pinapalo ng paddle, hindi. Di ganun yung hazing. Once kasi na pinapagsalitaan ka palang eh, yung minumura, para sa akin, hazing na yun eh. Pag nag-undergo ka ng training, napagsasalitaan ka na. Pag sinabing hazing, masyadong broad yun.”

While according to James:

“Kumbaga, may-may-may ano rin siya, tawag nito, may paddling din naman talaga siya. Yun naman e.... Tradisyon na tinatawag. Kumbaga, hindi na siya pwedeng alisin. Simula nabuo yung fraternity na yun, dun na nag umpisa yung lahat. Kaya ang tinanggal namin is yung tinatawag na hazing. Yung hazing kasi, hindi nila

naintindihan di ba? Yung hazing naman, yun yung sobra. Lahat-lahat tatanggapin mo sa isang semester. Tatanggap ka ng congratulations, graduation, welcome, yung pangalan ng fraternity. Lahat. Yung balat na sinturon dapat maputol sa braso mo. Bago ka makasurvive di ba? Yun yung hazing na sinasabi.”

According to Klerk (2013), initiation may involve nothing more than the pranks or antics of young students. There are forms of initiation imposed by the group on a newcomer that lead to harassment, abuse and humiliation. In Bunso's account, simple verbal humiliation of someone can be considered already as hazing. It is explained clearly that hazing is not all about paddling. However in James account, he stated that paddling is another form of hazing. Since James fraternity is an anti-hazing organization, they removed the hazing processes such as degrading, abusing or humiliating the applicants in a long period of time (one semester) but the paddling process must remain. James added that:

“So ngayon... yung paddling naman, yun naman yung pang-welcome na lang. Kumbaga, acceptance right na lang na tinatawag. Kumbaga, para maramdaman nila na yung pagmamahal namin, yung pagmamahal nila samin.. May ibibigay silang tatlong palo, yun na yon.”

With these statements, the participants justified that the term, *hazing* is broad. Paddling as form of initiation is somehow unique for it has become a tradition that does not aim at putting harm to neophytes; thus, it gives them reason to continue with the practice.

Secretly continuing hazing process

Hazing is now prohibited in the Philippines because there have been numerous reports of death casualties. But this activity is still secretly present among fraternities. They cannot easily remove it since it has become a tradition and the foundation of their organization which makes them uniform and equal. This is supported by the results from an exclusive study conducted in the country (Gener,

2013). Almost similar to Bado's verbal account:

"Oo kasing unang-una, yung ano eh..yung ano eh.. ano eh.. sa isang organisasyon ano kumbaga... mas...mas nagiging nagkakaroon ng unity ang isang kapatiran kung pagkapare-pareho kayo ng pinagdaanan. Kasi nagkakaroon, sa ganitong uri ng organisasyon, nagkakaroon ng diskriminasyon kung yung iba mga nakasurvive na hindi nakatikim ng ganoon."

One of the fraternity's requirements to be a member is to undergo this hazing process (paddling). Bado says it is necessary to experience this kind of process to have a sense of unity and equality among the members inside the group. Cimino (2011) stated that hazing rituals help to maintain the power structure of the team or the organization. This was supported by the verbatim of James account below:

"Kumbaga, yung hazing namin ginagawa na lang namin exercise... Also, may... may paddling pa din, yung yung talagang..hindi talaga mawawalan na tradisyon na talaga."

Rocksteddy added:

"Kung tatanggalin natin yun, pangit na rin sa mga nagsimula. Parang ano na yan, parang ritwal. Kasi ginawa na rin sa'yo eh. Gawin mo rin, para tuloy-tuloy.Parang kasanayan."

Since hazing has been already a tradition, it persists, because fraternity members believe its a responsibility to do so. It became the organization's power structure, so all the members undergo this process. Members think it is the only effective way to prove their commitment and loyalty to their organization. According to Bunso's account:

"Dun na rin kasi nasusubukan yung sarili mo, dyan papasok yung pride. Pag sinabihan ka ng ganito, pag sinabihan ka ng ganyan, once na di mo makaya, nandyan pa rin yung pride mo, ikaw rin mismo yung magki-quit ka. About din naman sa paddling, na contact-contact na yan, dyan din masusubukan, dun din, papasok yung pride saka yung loyalty mo. Tapos yung meron sa punishment din. Matututo ka talaga"

Other than proving one's loyalty, as what Bunso stated, keeping their pride

during the fledging period could motivate them to quit. The members will examine how tough the neophytes are, to determine if they are going to stay and continue or they will quit during the fledging process. It functions as filtering mechanism for the aspiring applicants - who really deserve to be part of their organization and who do not (Cimino, 2011).

Opinions on Removal of Hazing process (paddling)

When asked about removing paddling as a form of initiation, participants gave many verbatim accounts. Others said it needs to be continued while others want it removed. One of the positive factors that would happen if hazing will be removed is there would be many males that will join their fraternity. Like what Jokjok says:

"Mas maganda..mas madaming miyembro..... yung ibang aplikante gustong gustong pumasok kaso takot sa hazing. Pwede.kung ako tanggalin na kung tanggalin magservice na lang yung mga applicante. Kung sa akin tanggalin."

Many people do not want to join fraternities since they are scared to undergo the hazing process, and also because of the bad reputation of fraternities due to the cases of death that happened before. Jokjok prefers to remove the hazing process so there will be a great number of applicants who would want to join them and he also suggests that they should just subject them to rendering services. But the majority of the respondents supported the continuation of the hazing process due to the perceived positive effects. One of them is Bado:

"Parang..parang... napakahirap eh. Kasi kumbaga yung mga susunod na magiging miyembro... ano na..parang lousy na talaga. Kasi parang di mo yagakapin yung organisasyon niyo kapag hindi ka naghirap."

Removal of hazing will give reason to the incoming members to be lousy and not to be fully committed to the organization and there will be no sense of responsibility among the new members. They reasoned out that during the time of training for

neophytes, they trained them to trust the fraternity by giving them challenges and “worst-case” scenarios to develop the neophytes’ loyalty for the organization. They will not understand the true meaning of being responsible and committed members of the organization unless they have experienced it. There is also a possibility that the future members will lose respect to the brotherhood and its members.

Like what Rocksteddy said:

“Madaming sasali. Di na nakatakot. May mga papasok na mayabang, parang babastusin yung mga members. Parang wala na sanang ganunganun kung pasok lang nang ganun ba. Papasok nalang yung mga sira-ulo ba.”

Respect for other member is very important to their organization. Based on Rocksteddy’s verbatim, once the paddling initiation is removed, respect for the other members will not be established. Hazing (paddling) of applicants may impose a dominant position over them.

Therefore, hazing is still a very important condition in joining a fraternity. As the neophytes become fully aware of the superiority of the initiators, respect will be established unto them. Moreover, the applicants will manifest good characteristics that can contribute to their dedication to the fraternity.

It is clearly noticed that the participants psyche was affected by the experiences and social environment throughout their membership succession. Their psyches developed and made them mature, responsible, and committed members who conform to the established scheme of their fraternities. The participants’ training and initiation process (experienced) contributed to their holistic perspective of hazing function in their organization. It molded and polished them to uphold the tradition despite the moral dilemma that hazing has brought.

Conclusion

Based on the analyses of the gathered data, the following conclusions were made.

People learn about fraternities from their social environment, most often during their high school years. Social environment becomes one of the means for the participants to be aware of fraternities and also one of the motivations to joining the organization. Social environment such as participants’ immediate family members, friends, classmates and their community become their primary sources of information. Most of these social environment influences were encountered during high school. Social environment has also become their tool to understand more about their fraternity. Becoming an official member of the fraternity will earn social benefits such as brotherhood and equality, which is very important in establishing a strong bond among fraternity members.

Fears and doubts gradually melt away throughout the experience, and are replaced with determination and faith in one’s self. The participant’s experience as an applicant enables him to learn the dynamics of the fraternity and how important it is to produce a resilient member. During the training process (on becoming a member), the participants’ perseverance was tested for they had to endure all the hardships - the experience of being humiliated and the physical pain from their initiators. Though they thought of backing out, but their determination helped them survive these hardships. Their determination proved their capabilities to other members as they continued the process. Participants handled their emotional baggage of severe nervousness and apprehension by keeping and strengthening their faith – a proof that they could survive the training without quitting. These experiences helped them to become eligible members of the fraternity.

The hardest part of entering a fraternity: getting paddled. The hardest part of being a member of a fraternity: paddling applicants. Being official members of their fraternity gave them chance to join activities which their organization held such as fellowships and community services. Being a member helps them to learn more about

their fraternity's dynamics and gave them significant experiences of being the hazing initiators. Proving their commitment to the fraternity would give them privilege to initiate the neophytes – an opportunity to inflict pain through paddling. Their experience as an initiator was also tested. On being applicant, enduring the all the training process was challenging. On the other hand, paddling a neophyte was the most challenging for them. Participants as new members of the fraternity had mixed emotions during their first experience of swinging the paddle for they had to consider different factors in initiating a neophyte, such as the right way of paddling. This aspect of initiators' phenomenology cannot be disregarded for it contributes to the development of their involvement to fraternity.

The social environment and experiences contribute significant factors in the psyche of the participants, on being an applicant and being an official member/initiator.

People join fraternities to learn, adapt, and prosper. Looking into the participants' psyche as applicants, they formed negative and positive impressions on their fraternity. Some of them doubted the fraternity's capacity to secure their safety due to the hazing process (paddling). The participants felt nervous and frightened over the possibilities of what might happen to them—will they stay alive or not. These formed negative thoughts contributed to the uncertainty of their psychological and physical capacity to finish the training process. This may be connected why they got into the point of quitting. But they were motivated to continue with the training process due to the formed positive impressions - their basis to achieve their goal on becoming official members of the fraternity. Participants considered the following benefits of being official fraternity members – social acceptance, skills development, preparedness for actual hardships in life and formation of bond with other respectable people.

On becoming official members of their fraternity, the participants' perception about

fraternities changed especially the negative ones. Their experiences inside the fraternities have widened their understanding, developed them to become more mature, and responsible. Proving their commitment to the fraternity gave them the privilege to initiate the neophytes. Other participants showed concerns towards the well-being of the neophytes whom they paddled. Their stereotype of thinking - that the initiators use paddling as a way of getting back and as a medium of revenge over what happened to them during the training process also changed.

Hazing creates an equal ground for every member. Regarding the continuation of hazing, hazing is necessary to experience this kind of process to develop a sense of unity and equality among the fraternity members. It has become the organization's power structure since all the members undergo this process. The members will examine how tough the neophytes are, to determine if they are going to stay and continue or they will quit during the fledging process. It is the only effective way to prove their commitment and loyalty to their organization.

Hazing keeps freeloaders away and puts irresponsibility at bay. In terms of removing the hazing process (paddling), its positive effect is that a greater number of applicants will be inclined to join fraternities if hazing will be removed. Many people do not want to join fraternities because they are scared to undergo hazing process. But the removal of hazing will give a lot of negative effects to the fraternities especially to the members. The incoming members might be lousy and might not be truly committed to the organization. They may not have sense of responsibility as members. There is also a possibility that the future members will lose their respect to the brotherhood and their members as well. They reasoned out that during that time they were training the neophytes, they trained them to trust the fraternity through the hardships they endured. Hazing somehow develops the neophyte's loyalty for the organization. The applicants will not understand the true

meaning of being a responsible and committed member of the organization if they never experience hazing.

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