

“Looking from the outside in” – Emotional and cognitive reactions of sport, non-sport
and ex-sport playing adults to initiation practices.

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MSc Psychology (Conversion)

PS7211 Research Dissertation

2016/2017

University of Chester

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and ex-sport playing adults to initiation practices.

Word Count: 11, 563

Declaration

This work is original and has not been submitted in relation to any other degree of qualification.

Signed.....

Date.....

With thanks to my supervisor Professor Moira Lafferty for her outstanding assistance with this piece of research.

Department of Psychology**Research Module Meeting Log 2016/2017**NAME: Joseph GatelySUPERVISOR: Moira Lafferty

Date	Discussion topics
16.02.17	Theories of hazing, ethical submission, research methods, research questions.
01.03.17	Research Methods and study design
05.04.17	Section by section deadlines.
19.04.17	Study live for participants. Discussion on the theories of hazing and the sections they apply to.
30.05.17	Discussion on the aspect of athlete/student transition. Focus on the layout of introduction and literature review.
25.07.17	Update on online questionnaire position. Continue with work on methodology.
15.08.17	Discussion on the results and statistical analysis
16.08.17	Update on result section and alterations to previous sections.
31.08.17	Methodology alterations and discussion topics. Discussion on statistical analysis.
11.08.17	Update on work in discussion section and where the focus should be.

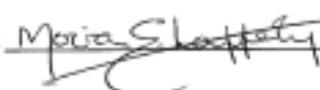
SIGNED
STUDENT  DATE: 22.09.17SUPERVISOR  DATE: 22.09.17

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Abstract

Research examining hazing and the motives behind the events have received significant focus over recent years. While research has enhanced the understanding and provided interesting insight of hazing events, it has been done exclusively with those directly involved in the events. However, to date, research is yet to examine the perceptions from the wider general public and understand their opinions of hazing. The present study was an exploration in order to gain understanding of the general public's emotional and cognitive response to modern day hazing events in the United Kingdom. Sixty-Seven participants of a mixed general public population completed quantitative and qualitative questions based on their experiences of watching hazing videos. Following each video, participants completed a self-report measure of arousal and I-PANAS-SF. In addition, participants were then required to answer 3 short qualitative questions on their perceptions of the videos viewed. Results of quantitative measures revealed that participant's self-reported arousal and I-PANAS-SF scores were significantly effect by hazing videos. In addition, results of qualitative questioning revealed that participants provided a mixture of responses regarding hazing. In general, participants were accepting of events that involved no physical harm however, were also quick to highlight their disapproval of events where they perceived issues of hierarchy and power. While participants noted issues of hierarchy, participants generally, neglected any aspect of psychological harm that may occur following involvement in hazing events.

Introduction

Humans have an innate need to attach and be involved in groups (Baumesiter & Leary, 1995). It is common for individuals to seek proximity with persons who they perceive to be similar to themselves, for example, those holding an interest in sport will form relationships with others that share related interests (Keating et al., 2005). The experience of entering a new sporting team or club is fraught with potential uncertainties surrounding integration to the group and how athletes will fulfil their role as a newcomer (Benson, Evans, & Eys, 2016). Newcomers, frequently given the name 'rookies' enter into an environment where there is a complex and distinct hierarchical structure (Jones & Wallace, 2005). Finding harmony is often at the forefront of a rookies mind when joining a new group and can present one of their principal challenges, particularly in the aspect of social acceptance, where research has suggested making friends in a new social environment can significantly impact individual's level of self-worth (Adams, Santo, & Bukowski, 2011; Johnson & Chin, 2016). In addition, meeting new peers, improving social bonds and being accepted by new teammates are highly motivating and cherished outcomes of sport participation (Daniels & Leaper, 2006).

The importance of social status and popularity as a reflection of sporting ability has frequently been highlighted within existing literature (Chase & Machida, 2011). Research has conveyed how excelling in a sporting context can influence popularity among peers (Chase & Machida, 2011) However, following the transition to new institutions and sporting teams, athletes may struggle to adapt as they no longer hold the same social status held in previous teams (Chase & Machida, 2011). Mooreland and Levine (as cited in Hogg & Vaughan, 2013), developed a model of group socialisation (see Figure 1) that highlights the process of transition between organisations and the passage of individuals through different groups over time. The model provides 5 distinct phases of group socialisation, involving reciprocal evaluation

and influence by the group and individual, each heralded and concluded by a clear transition of group role over a period of time (Mooreland & Levine, as cited in Hogg & Vaughan, 2013). Furthermore, the model also indicates how rookies must be accepted by those higher in the hierarchical structure in order to achieve full membership (Mooreland & Levine, as cited in Hogg & Vaughan, 2013).

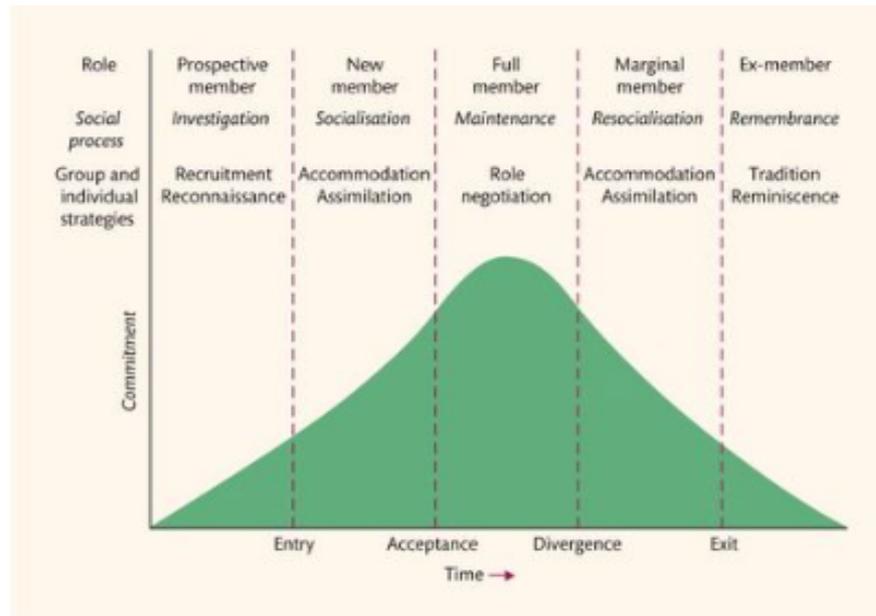


Figure 1. Mooreland and Levine's (as cited in Hogg & Vaughan, 2013, pp. 293) Model of group socialisation.

The process of transition for athletes within sports teams is not uncommon throughout their career (Wylleman, Alfermann, & Lavallee, 2004). Athletes encounter various instances where they move from team to team, often aligned with educational transition (Wylleman et al., 2004). As athletes progress through education; this coincides with alterations of friendship networks and therefore, a desire for cohesion with new teammates (Wylleman et al., 2004). As a result of transition, the model of group socialisation indicates how individuals find themselves as 'prospective members' in their new sports team. Consequently, this social ranking can often lead athletes to involve themselves in risky behaviours in order to facilitate relationships with their new teammates (Messner, 2002).

Introduction to hazing

At the initial stages of membership, according to the model of group socialisation rookies are considered 'prospective members' with the overall objective to attain 'full membership' (Mooreland & Levine, as cited in Hogg & Vaughan, 2013). In order to be fully accepted into the new social matrix of organisations and sports teams they join, rookies are commonly put to the ritualistic test (Nuwer, 2000). Generally, such tests involve the existing members or veterans of the group submitting rookies to a set of rituals, with the overall aim of integrating them into the team (Dias & Sa, 2014). The rituals fall on a spectrum from mild rituals, such as singing to teammates and wearing humiliating clothing, to those considered more harmful, such as binge drinking, kidnapping, physical beatings and sexual assault (Waldron, 2012).

The terminology utilised to define these activities, commonly called 'hazing' or 'initiations' are often used interchangeably. This has been suggested to have contributed to the misinterpretation of what constitutes rituals and rites of passage events (Kirby & Wintrup, 2002). Therefore, in order to clarify any misinterpretation, Initiations have been conceptualised as:

"The rites, ceremonies, ordeals, or instructions with which one is made a member of a sect or society or is invested with a particular function or status" (Initiation, 2008).

Alternatively, the ritual activities are referred through the term 'hazing' (Waldron, 2012).

By definition, Hazing is:

Any activity expected of someone joining a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses or endangers, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. This does not include activities such as rookies carrying the balls, team parties with community games, or going out with your teammates, unless an atmosphere of humiliation, degradation, abuse or danger arises. (Hoover, 1999, p. 8).

While examining the topic of hazing, it is also imperative to highlight the difference between 'hazing' and the often closely associated concept of 'bullying'. The terms are often used synonymously because both are forms of interpersonal violence in which a power-differential exists or is implied which can cause immediate and long-term consequences (Diamond, Callahan, Chain, & Solomon, 2016). However, while related, there are significant differences between the two concepts (Diamond et al., 2016).

Bullying is characterised by an imbalance of power, through which bullies use their power to control or harm individuals in an attempt to ostracise those they are bullying (Olweus, 1999). In addition, research has proposed that bullying can also be employed as a method to contain individuals to a group, utilising the power imbalance to cause further physical and psychological harm to the individual, who remains in the group through fear of further harm for leaving the group (Neal et al., 2015; Diamond et al., 2016). Principally, bullying is adopted to exclude and ostracise individuals however, in contrast, the primary purpose of hazing is to 'legitimise' new group members to convert into full group members (Cimino, 2011). Conversely, hazing definitions do not indicate the expectation that the behaviour will be repeated as commonly associated with bullying (Waldron & Kowalski, 2009). Moreover, definitions also highlight how activities are considered hazing as participation is willingly accepted by the participants (Waldron & Kowalski, 2009).

Hazing's Historical Past

Hazing practices can be traced back many centuries; for example, Plato often encouraged individuals within his academy to play practical jokes on newcomers (Alvarez, 2015). Plato believed it was essential for newcomers to receive these actions before they could be considered members of the institution (Alvarez, 2015). Similarly, in a sporting context, new competitors were subjected to various humiliations in an attempt to infuse team spirit in Ancient Greece (Tavares, 2008). Hazing practices have also been shown to be present in diverse cultures that have employed the process as a 'rite of passage' (Dias & Sa, 2014). Commonly, young members of the community are put to the test in order to confirm their transfer from childhood to adulthood and the change in their status within the community (Dias & Sa, 2014).

Such rituals and rites of passage were adopted into British public schools in the eighteenth century (Alvarez, 2015). Known at that time as 'fagging', hazing initiations became common within prestigious organisations such as Cambridge University and the University of Oxford (Alvarez, 2015). The formation of student organisations in higher education, particularly within Europe, was extremely popular during this period (Dias & Sa, 2014). These commonly secret organisations held hazing initiations where the principal aim was to determine whether a newcomer was worthy of future employment (Alvarez, 2015).

The popularity of hazing within British public schools in particular, led to the adoption of practices in the United States, where together with sports teams, Greek letter organisations, also known as fraternities and sororities were formed (Dias & Sa, 2014). Within fraternities, newcomers to the organisation named 'pledges', were required to undertake various, often hazardous tests of courage to gain entry to the group (Dias & Sa, 2014). However, while these dangerous events are designed to integrate rookies, with the aim of progressing through social dynamics of the group, as

expressed by Mooreland and Levine (1982, as cited in Hogg & Vaughan, 2013), there is the potential to leave victims with significant psychological issues, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, suicide ideation and depression (Sussberg, 2003; Crow & MacIntosh, 2009).

It is also important to note that although existing literature on the topic of hazing has commonly addressed the presence of hazing activities in North America and Europe, hazing has also been shown present all over the world in various organisations (Grubbs, 2013). Grubbs (2013) highlighted the prominence of hazing rituals in South East Asia where it remains common practice for 'welcoming activities' to take place for the incoming students in an education setting (Grubbs, 2013).

Hazing in the media

Images within mainstream media have commonly depicted male and female sports teams dressed as superheroes, nuns or nurses at end-of season celebrations (Light & Kirk, 2000). However, more severe hazing cases have also been reported expressing accounts of sexual violence against females from individuals within male sports teams (Light & Kirk, 2000). The startling variety of ordeals suffered by individuals hazed includes physical assaults, scarification and sleep deprivation (Cimino, 2011). Media reports within America have highlighted various hazing related events ranging from indecent assault on rookies by established team members (Boston Globe, 2017) to forced gladiator style fighting between rookies (Washington Post, 2016).

While the practice of hazing has become synonymous with the United States, student initiation ceremonies have also been widely reported in the British Media (Groves, Griggs, & Leflay, 2012). The existing popularity in the United States and subsequent media and internet exposure has led to hazing being embraced within British culture, predominantly within Universities and Colleges sports teams and societies (Groves et al., 2012). Reports have detailed the fundamental role of alcohol in hazing activities, with rookies subject to drinking large quantities of alcohol, often mixed with substances such as sun cream and shower gel (Telegraph, 2015). While media representations are quick to express the physical danger involved in hazing, there remains an absence of focus on the potentially significant psychological trauma that may be caused (Diamond et al., 2016). Such neglect within the media simply expands the misconceptions held by those involved with regards to hazing and the effect of the events (Van Raalte, Cornellius, Linder, & Brewer, 2007).

Coupled with the incidents reported in the American media, the British media has also reported fatal cases of hazing initiations. A student died following an event where rookies were forced to consume half a litre of vodka or face humiliating penalties

(Daily Mail, 2016). However, more recently, widespread media reports have identified how widely accepted initiations have become in society. Various media platforms across Britain publicised images of former England Football captain John Terry, performing a 'singing' initiation in front of his new teammates, something that has become a common event in recent years (Daily Mirror, 2017).

Reports in the mainstream media often promote the events as comical and express how initiations are common practice within professional sports teams around the world (BBC, 2017). However, the acceptance within the media of 'little hazing' events simply leads to a tolerance for events on a larger scale, where the consequences are potentially severe. In particular, there is greater risk of physical and psychological trauma that may manifest following the event (Crow & MacIntosh, 2009; Diamond et al., 2016). Moreover, media representation of hazing fuels the thriving 'lad culture' that has been widely adopted in British society (Phipps & Young, 2015). Seen by some as harmless fun and strongly condemned by others, 'lad culture' has been associated with the participation and acceptance of hazing activities, while simultaneously disregarding the potential psychological damage that can be caused (Phipps & Young, 2015; Diamond et al., 2016).

Effects of hazing

Hazing is a complex event that can have embarrassing, painful and challenging effects on recipients (Keating et al., 2005). There has been significant movement toward anti-hazing laws in the United States over recent times, with 44 of the 50 states currently having anti-hazing legislation in place (Hazing Prevention, 2017). Despite such legislation, the event remains heavily present across a variety of institutions, including the armed forces and prison settings where brutal attacks are commonly inflicted on newcomers (Pulley, 2005; Hernandez, 2015).

Under common practice in an athletic setting, professional personnel are suspended or dismissed from their positions and athletes are removed from team rosters, following the reporting of illegal hazing practices (Mowrey, 2012). However, for the recipients of hazing initiations, the ordeal of the event does not simply end there (Hamilton, Scott, LaChapelle, & O'Sullivan, 2016). Following involvement, significant physical and psychological issues, such as depression, low self-esteem and post-traumatic stress can arise and persist over time (Hamilton et al., 2016; Silveria & Hudson, 2015).

As numerous media reports of hazing have indicated, there is the potential to leave recipients with significant physical injuries (Allan & Madden, 2011). Research has further outlined the extreme levels that hazing events can reach, as Finkel (2002), reported that common injuries from hazing practices include beating, branding, cigarette burning and whipping. As early as 1975, a report of hazing indicated how a college student was pushed into a wall, causing serious skull and brain injuries that subsequently led to death (Nuwer, 1999). While no official organisation is responsible for the collection of statistics regarding deaths as a consequence of hazing, it has been estimated that in the United States alone, there is on average one hazing related death per year (Silveria & Hudson, 2015).

Beyond the physical impairment caused, existing literature has indicated the often neglected psychological impact that can descend from hazing experiences (Hamilton et al., 2016). In the most severe cases, the psychological trauma caused as a direct result of hazing has led to the onset of depression, post-traumatic stress disorders and even suicidal thoughts (Marks, Mountjoy, & Marcus, 2012). Moreover, in a sporting context, research has expressed that welcoming athletes into a team can inadvertently affect the team with individuals ceasing participation as a consequence hazing involvement (Sussberg, 2003). In addition, a reduction in overall team performance has been demonstrated (Sussberg, 2003). While research has indicated the potential psychological harm that hazing can have on individuals, there remains a widely held perception that hazing events are harmless in their nature (Hamilton et al., 2016). However, if undertaken with individuals who have low self-esteem and high social anxiety, involvement can lead to severe and prolonged mental trauma (Hamilton et al., 2016).

What causes people to haze?

Misconception of Team Cohesion

Although hazing activities are generally illegal across various states in America (Hazing Prevention, 2017), perpetrators have proposed they persist for a number of reasons. Central to this is the belief that hazing facilitates team cohesion levels (Van Raatle et al., 2007). Therefore, it is important to understand concept of team cohesion. Team cohesion has been defined as:

“a dynamic process that is reflected in the tendency for a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its instrumental objective and/or for the satisfaction of members affective needs” (Carron, Brawley & Widmeyer, 1998, p. 213).

Developing on this approach of team cohesion, researchers have also proposed it is a crucial aspect that provides team mates the motivation and drive to work for each other (Casey-Campbell & Martens, 2009). Team cohesion has proven to be central to the success of a team but is also positively related to both greater athlete satisfaction (e.g. Loughead & Carron, 2004) and increased motivation for participation (e.g. Hallbrook, Blom, Hurley, Bell, & Holden, 2012). However, in circumstances where individuals perceive the cohesiveness of a team is lacking, their motivation levels are reduced creating an effect on their overall participation and support towards achieving the team goals (Salas, Grossman, Hughes, & Coultas, 2015). Such findings have been supported in literature examining hazing, conducted by Van Raatle et al. (2007).

Van Raatle et al. (2007) embarked one of the few studies that have directly aimed to explore the effects of hazing on perceived group cohesion in the USA. Following the data gathered from the thoughts of One Hundred and Ninety-Six athletes at American colleges, findings indicated that activities considered being associated with hazing, the less cohesive athletes perceived their team to be in sport-related tasks (Van Raatle et al., 2007). Alternatively, when asked about more appropriate team building

activities such as team meals and team oaths, findings indicated that athletes perceived their team to be more socially cohesive (Van Raatle et al., 2007).

More recently, Johnson and Chin (2016) conducted a qualitative examination of the experiences and impact of participation in outdoor-based team-building activities, such as rope courses, rock climbing and canoeing in contrast to traditional forms of hazing. Following a weekend of participation in the outdoor activities, findings aligned with Van Raatle et al. (2007) that the implementation of alternate team building activities, over tradition hazing practices facilitated a welcoming environment that helped foster relationships and enhance cohesion for rookies (Johnson & Chin, 2016).

Although Johnson and Chin (2016) demonstrated the positive aspects of outdoor team building activities, alternate research has proposed that when utilised outside of a controlled research environment, these activities are not simply being used alone over traditional hazing practices (Campo, Poulos, & Sipple, 2005). Research has indicated that this may be a method utilised to promote a positive atmosphere surrounding subsequent hazing events, where the potential for physical and psychological harm exists (Campo et al., 2005). Campo et al. (2005) discovered a positive relationship between hazing and positive team building activities, indicating that these actions are supplemented to, and not simply replacements for hazing. Research has suggested that this process leads to the prevention of disciplinary action towards perpetrators and those hazed already feel accepted in the team unit (Campo et al., 2015). Moreover, Waldron, Lynn, and Krane (2011) proposed the code of silence present among student-athletes where individuals remain silent about the events; even if they deem it uncomfortable ensuring hazing will continue in the future and therefore, ensure repeated physical and psychological harm to new members.

Building on Van Raatle et al. (2007) study, Lafferty, Wakefield, and Brown (2016) investigated student-athletes observations of and engagement in hazing

activities to determine whether there was a significant relationship to team cohesion. One-Hundred and Fifty-Four UK university students completed the Group Environment Questionnaire, assessing cohesion through group attraction and integration and also the Team Cohesion Questionnaire measuring acceptable, unacceptable, questionable and alcohol-related behaviour aspects of hazing (Lafferty et al., 2016). Results of the study indicated that there was no significant relationship between hazing and cohesion, supporting the results previously indicated by Van Raatle et al. (2007).

While the examination of hazing activities has continually demonstrated team cohesion is not facilitated following hazing activities (e.g. Van Raatle et al., 2007; Johnson & Chin, 2016; Lafferty et al., 2016), perpetrators of hazing initiations persist in the belief that the events enhance the dynamics of the group and in turn, cohesion levels of their team (Waldron et al., 2011). Consequently, researchers have drawn conclusions that this belief is a clear misconception of the reality of the events (Van Raatle et al., 2007; Lafferty et al., 2016). Research is clear that hazing is a method of social integration that is ineffective in facilitating team cohesion, while also encouraging alternate positive team building methods that have been shown to foster levels of team cohesion (Van Raatle et al., 2007; Lafferty et al., 2016; Johnson & Chin, 2016).

Masculinity and Over-conformity

Hazing initiations are commonly held in settings that place significant emphasis on the reinforcement of masculinity (Nuwer, 2000). Dominant social expectations of heterosexual masculinity have continually reinforced the idea that males in particular, should be tough, aggressive and courageous as well as having the ability to withstand pain (Kivel, 1999). This concept of masculinity has been acknowledged within the power and performance model of sport that emphasises doing 'whatever it takes to win' (Coakley, 2004). The model also places emphasis on the use of strength and power to dominate others, including those in the same team (Coakley, 2004). Furthermore, the

model expresses how such dominant behaviours reinforce the clear hierarchical structure present in teams (Coakley, 2004). In order to be considered a 'real' athlete, individuals must comply with these values regardless of whether acceptance may cause potential health-compromising behaviours, such as involvement in hazing initiations (Waldron & Krane, 2005).

Research has consistently expressed how sport operates as a male-dominated institution, where an idealised form of masculinity exists (Connell, 1987). However, post Title-IX, female opportunity within sport has seen substantial increase (Waldron & Krane, 2005). Moreover, research has proposed that these advancements have led to the adoption of the power and performance model by females (Waldron & Krane, 2005). Research has been quick to indicate that female sports have become aligned with the traditional aspect of masculinity (Young & White, 1995). As a consequence, females have developed behaviours that align with the model, such as participation in hazing initiations (Johnson & Holman, 2009). Allen (2003) suggested this adoption of behaviour occurs as individuals strive for social acceptance from their peers in order to feel they have the group's approval. However, the adoption of such cultures significantly increases the potential for females to be susceptible to the physical and psychological trauma that has been associated with participation in hazing activities (Hamilton et al., 2016).

Embracing the power and performance model also can lead to the adoption of a win at all costs mind-set, from coaches and athletes, where little or no regard is left for opponents and competitors (Waldron & Kowalski, 2009). This belief has been termed the 'sport ethic' (Hughes & Coakley, 1991). The sport ethic requires athletes to make sacrifices for the sport, such as playing through pain and refusing to accept limitations with the goal of victory (Hughes & Coakley, 1991). Within this masculine environment, athletes commonly engage in over-conformity to the sport ethic and begin to engage in risky behaviours that could place them in danger, such as hazing (Coakley, 2004).

Following extended periods of time spent within the team, the ethic becomes internalised and subsequently utilised as a method of judging individuals against their peers (Waldron, 2015). As a result, the desire for social acceptance leads rookies to recklessly engage in risky behaviours, such as hazing events where individuals leave themselves open to potential physical and psychological harm (Marks et al., 2012; Hamilton et al., 2016).

Theoretical Concepts

Achievement Goal theory (AGT) has provided a clear structure explaining why over-conformity to the sport ethic occurs (Waldron & Krane, 2005). The theory is grounded in the principle that individuals are motivated to demonstrate competence and feel successful (Waldron & Krane, 2005). AGT is subdivided into 3 aspects of task-orientated goal, ego-orientated goal and social-orientated goals, respectively (Waldron & Krane, 2005). Those dominant in a task-orientated view, interpret successful achievement through personal improvement and place importance on prosocial behaviours such as, respect and fairness (Nicholls, 1989). Alternatively, ego-orientated individuals hold the primary objective of winning, with a focus on the superiority over others (Waldron & Krane, 2005). Thirdly, those athletes dominant in social-goal orientation strive for social acceptance within their team and social group and feel most positive when they have the approval of other group members (Allen, 2003).

Although all three aspects of AGT are apparent in hazing, individuals high in social-goal orientation are those who demonstrate behaviours that aim to enhance social acceptance (Waldron & Krane, 2005). Therefore, these individuals are likely to involve themselves in hazing practices, an event that has been identified as a clear expression of over-conformity (Waldron & Krane, 2005). Hazing provides a method of instilling the conditions for team membership and clearly presents the hierarchical structure of power and masculinity to those newly involved (Waldron & Krane, 2005;

Holman, 2004). As newcomers, it is common for athletes to lose sight of their own individuality and begin to conform to the expectations set by older teammates (Messney, 2002). As a consequence, athletes willingly include themselves in risky behaviours, such as hazing in an attempt to please their older teammates (Messner, 2002). For example, in the Hoover (1999) report on hazing within American College and Universities, it was highlighted how common it was for rookies be coerced into committing crimes, such as destroying property, making prank phone calls and harassment of other students. Adoption of such behaviours has been explored through Janis' (1982) theory of Groupthink.

Groupthink describes the thought processes of individuals that have the desire to conform to a group so much so that they begin to imitate the common behaviours of that group, culminating in the overtaking of their own rationale judgements (Janis, 2015). As alluded to, moving to university or college is a significant moment in a young person's life, it may be the first time students find themselves away from home leaving them searching for a place to belong, principally within new social circles (Massey & Massey, 2017). Fearing loneliness and ostracism, students frequently conform to group's values and engage in risky behaviours, such as hazing as the need for social support outweighs the potential harm caused by participating (Nuwer, 1999). Groupthink indicates how this process is replicated over time. As loyalty to the group requires individuals to avoid raising any controversial issues, such as discontent with hazing events, which may cause expulsion from the desired group (Janis, 2004). This provides further support to Waldron et al. (2011) concept of the code of silence where those hazed remain quiet about their experiences through fear of exclusion.

Research has also indicated that when hazing events are more extreme in their natures, greater levels of conformity are produced by rookies in an attempt to gain the acceptance they crave from peers (Anderson, McCormack & Lee, 2012). This perspective has been attributed to Festinger's (1957) cognitive dissonance theory. The

theory provides a framework understanding why student-athletes often diminish the negative aspects of hazing initiations and attribute greater value to group membership (Massey & Massey, 2017). Literature has also expressed that following an increase in hazing severity, teams become more appealing to newcomers and therefore, membership becomes more valued (Massey & Massey, 2017). In turn, individuals are likely to endure the events due to their raised evaluations of the team (Massey & Massey, 2017).

While engagement in hazing enhances the potential of physical and psychological trauma (Hamilton et al., 2016), Diamond et al. (2016) concluded that although newcomers are aware of the dangers involved their involvement is justified by the rewards of gaining group membership. Indeed, Gerard and Mathewson (1966) discovered that students who endured more embarrassing or painful initiations were more likely to provide higher ratings to the group's value, providing further support for the framework of cognitive dissonance and students reasons provided for participation.

Perceptions of Hazing

Student-Athlete Perception

In recent times, research has continually concluded that a clear misconception of hazing is present with student-athletes, particularly in the aspect of team cohesion (e.g. Van Raalte et al., 2007; Lafferty et al., 2016). However, it is important to understand the reasoning behind the misconception held by student-athletes that hazing is an effective method of facilitating team cohesion. Allan and Madden (2008) proposed that one potential explanation for the widespread acceptance of hazing is student-athletes own inaccurate concept of hazing and their inability to define it. The researchers conducted an extensive study investigating hazing initiations with a population of student-athletes and established there was a significant absence in knowledge regarding the events and in particular, what constituted hazing. (Allan & Madden, 2008). Consistent in their findings was the aspect of physical force, participants expressed they perceived hazing events to include physical beatings and physical restraint (Allan & Madden, 2008).

Comparable responses have also been cited in more current research (Massey & Massey, 2017). In their examination of a general student population, 9% of participants expressed they themselves had been involved in hazing initiations, whereas 39% suggested that they knew it went on at the University. Massey and Massey (2017) deliberated that the reasons for such findings were due to individuals own inaccurate interpretations of hazing. Participants frequently cited that the event must be against ones will to be deemed hazing, this consistent with Allan and Madden's (2008) findings. Fundamental to this belief was the concept of acceptance. Participants indicated that if individuals had agreed to be hazed, the event was considered to be acceptable and not hazing (Allan & Madden, 2008). However, this assumption, that hazing events are acceptable following consent, simply legitimises

hazing activities and underestimates the potential danger and significant psychological harm that can be caused (Fields, Collins, & Comstock, 2007). Moreover, participants with existing low self-esteem and confidence issues may feel that consenting to such events is their only option and in turn, cause further harm to their psychological state through participation (Hamilton et al., 2016).

Research carried out by Massey and Massey (2017) emphasised how participants neglected any potential psychological issues that can be caused following hazing events. Massey and Massey (2017) stressed how students were quick to dismiss hazing if no physical harm was caused; instead, the events were perceived as harmless fun that did not constitute hazing. Comparable conclusions can be drawn from Allan and Madden's (2008) research. Participant's perception of hazing was perceived through physical, not psychological harm (Allan & Madden, 2008). However, while student-athletes have neglected the notion of psychological harm, literature has clearly expressed the significant harm that can be caused following hazing (Hamilton et al., 2016). Indeed, Lafferty et al. (2016) suggested this is inclusive of events such as singing for teammates if humiliation is felt by the individual.

The justification provided by student-athletes for hazing has also placed emphasis on the notion of tradition (Massey & Massey, 2017). Waldron et al. (2011) conducted a study involving focus group interviews with former high-school athletes and their experiences of hazing. Findings emphasised how individuals willingly accepted hazing initiations as they were considered to be 'tradition' within the sports team and institution they were joining (Waldron et al., 2011). Comparable conclusions were discovered in Waldron (2015) findings, indicating that athletes frequently justified the practice of hazing arguing that these events are traditions within the University or team.

More recently, Massey and Massey (2017) similarly concluded that a key theme of acceptance for hazing were participants notions of tradition. Participants were happy to accept their involvement in hazing as they believed that due to the history of the university and team, the event was justified (Massey & Massey, 2017). Such responses indicate how the internalisation of the sport ethic affects the continual use of hazing initiations (Coakley, 2004). The hierarchical structure internalise the sport ethic and express their influence and concept of transition into rookies, in order for those individual to participate in hazing events and subsequently, adopt the ethic themselves (Coakley, 2004). Therefore, a continuous cycle of hazing behaviour in ensured, passed on through each team generation while simultaneously guaranteeing the potential of physical and psychological harm for rookies in future years (Coakley, 2004; Hamilton et al., 2016).

Purpose of the Research

The examination of hazing activities, coupled with understanding for the motives behind the events has seen significant development over recent years. Research has centred on broadening the understanding of why hazing takes place, with particular focus on the groups involved in the events (Allan & Madden, 2008). Both hazers and hazes have highlighted their own concept of hazing initiations relating to why the events take place. Research has discovered that both groups primary perception of hazing initiations is the belief that the event will facilitate levels of team cohesion (Van Raatle et al., 2007). However, research has suggested that this perception is a misconception of the reality, with findings indicating that hazing does not enhance team cohesion levels (Lafferty et al., 2016; Van Raatle et al., 2007).

Researchers have argued that the misconceptions held by student-athletes derive from a clear lack of knowledge of the events (Lafferty et al., 2016). This misconstrued view presented also indicates the deficiency of understanding for the associated consequences of hazing (Massey & Massey, 2017). Student-athletes and coaches have commonly outlined how they perceive hazing initiations to be safe as long as no physical harm is caused (Caperchione & Holman, 2004; Massey & Massey, 2017). However, research has consistently highlighted the potential psychological harm that can be caused as a consequence of being hazed, regardless of physical force (Hamilton et al., 2016).

Although research has commenced examination of perceptions of hazing, it has been conducted almost exclusively with athletes themselves (e.g. Allan & Madden, 2008), with limited input from coaches perspectives (e.g. Caperchione & Holman, 2004). Research has also taken the step of assessing perceptions of hazing amongst a wider population, with the examinations of a general-student population at university (Massey & Massey, 2017). However, to date, research is yet to examine the

perceptions from the wider general public and gain an understanding of their opinions of hazing. Public perception has been examined in various other areas of sports such as anti-doping (e.g. Engelberg, Moston, & Skinner, 2012), new facilities (e.g. Lasley & Turner, 2010) and 'mega sporting events' (e.g. Zawadzki, 2016). However, public perception of hazing activities has remained neglected in the literature.

Understanding the public perceptions regarding the issue of hazing is salient for a number of reasons. Firstly, research has outlined how there is consistently large scale outrage following media reports of hazing (Light & Kirk, 2000) however, the public rarely receive an opportunity to provide their opinion regarding hazing. Secondly, public perceptions regarding sports teams are important as the public are the primary consumers, financiers and fans of sports teams across the world (Mondello, Piquero, Piquero, Gertz, & Bratton, 2013). This point is particularly crucial in the United States where college sport has become a commercial enterprise, recuperating millions of dollars each year (Suggs, 2005).

Providing the public with an awareness of the hazing that takes place at universities, colleges and professional sport institutions is an important aspect. Moreover, it is important to develop their understanding regarding the potential long-lasting psychological effects that can be associated with hazing (Hamilton et al., 2016). Indeed, as research has identified that 91% of those individual hazed, fail to consider themselves as being victims of hazing (Allan & Madden, 2008), it provides an opportunity to highlight whether the general public hold similar perceptions to those who have been involved.

To date, much of the research that has examined perceptions in athletes (e.g. Waldron et al., 2011) and the limited research with coaches (e.g. Caperchione & Holman, 2004; Johnson & Donnelly, 2004) has been conducted in the United States. However, research has indicated how the prevalence of hazing in the British society is

rising (Lafferty et al., 2016). Generally, reports of hazing in the British media that has received nationwide attention have portrayed the events from professional football clubs as jovial, harmless events (e.g. Daily Mirror, 2017) However, the present research provided an opportunity to develop the understanding of the British general public with regards to hazing activities that take place and also apprehend whether the media expression has transferred into wider, public perception.

Therefore, the purpose of the present explorative research was to gain an understanding of the general public's emotional and cognitive responses to hazing initiations engaged in by student-athletes in the United Kingdom. It was hypothesised that hazing videos would have a significant impact on participant's emotional responses. Furthermore, it was expected that the general public's perceptions of hazing events would align with existing student-athlete and coach's perceptions, particularly in the concept of physical harm.

Methodology

Participants

A total of Sixty-Seven participants, of a mixed general public population ($n = 43$ males, $n = 24$ females) participated in an online study exploring the affective and attitudinal responses of observing current day hazing activities. Of the Forty-Three male participants, ages ranged between 21 and 59 years (28.69 ± 8.91), while the Twenty-Four female participants were aged between 22 years and 60 years (31.29 ± 12.55).

Of the Sixty-Seven participants, 47 indicated that they regularly participated in sporting pursuits. The remaining participants chose to either not disclose their sporting participation or did not partake in sporting activity at the time of research being conducted. See Table 1 for a breakdown of the sports regularly participated in by participants. A range of participation level was indicated by those participants. See Table 2 for a breakdown. In order to participate, all participants were required to be 18 years of age. Participant's responses to the online study ranged between the period of May 2017 and August 2017.

Table 1. Indicates a breakdown of the sports regularly participated by participants.

Sports Participated	Number of Participants
Football	18
Gym/Health training	7
Running	4
Netball	3
Rugby	3
Swimming	3
Hockey	2
Tennis	1
Dance & Yoga	1
Football & Running	1
Walking	1
Did not disclose	3
Total	47

Table 2. Breakdown of the highest level of performance participated by participants.

Highest Level Participated	Number of Participants
University	5
Recreational	11
Club	5
County	18
Regional	6
National	2
International	2
Other	1

Study Design and Overview

The present research was an online study exploring the affective and attitudinal response and impact of observing modern day initiations activities. Administered using Bristol Online Surveys, the study was designed through a mixed methodology, with participants responding to quantitative and qualitative questioning. Figure 2 provides an overview of the survey package and study outline diagram.

The synergy of quantitative and qualitative research methods has emerged as an approach researchers utilise to best understand research problems by capitalising on their complementary strengths and weaknesses (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Using qualitative methods as a follow-up to initial quantitative results in a sequential mixed methods design allows the research to address questions that ask what and why or who and how (Plano Clark, 2017). Existing literature examining hazing activities has incorporated a mixed methodology approach and demonstrated the suitability of the method (e.g. Allan & Madden, 2011).

Prior to quantitative and qualitative questioning, participants were required to watch separate hazing related videos. Details of the video's and justification for their inclusions relative to the research are provided below:

Video 1: This clip shows a group of young players singing as part of an initiation event. While singing may be deemed a harmless act, if an individual is coerced into the activity it becomes hazing.

Video 2: This clip shows many aspects that are traditionally associated with hazing practices in the United Kingdom and focuses on the role of alcohol at such events.

Video 3: The clip combines many of the core aspects associated with hazing including humiliation, bullying and fear. Moreover, it also shows the bystander effect. In terms of the hazing severity, this clip would be categorised towards the extreme end of the continuum.

Video 4: This clip provided a short emotional regulation which was present to participants prior to the study debrief.

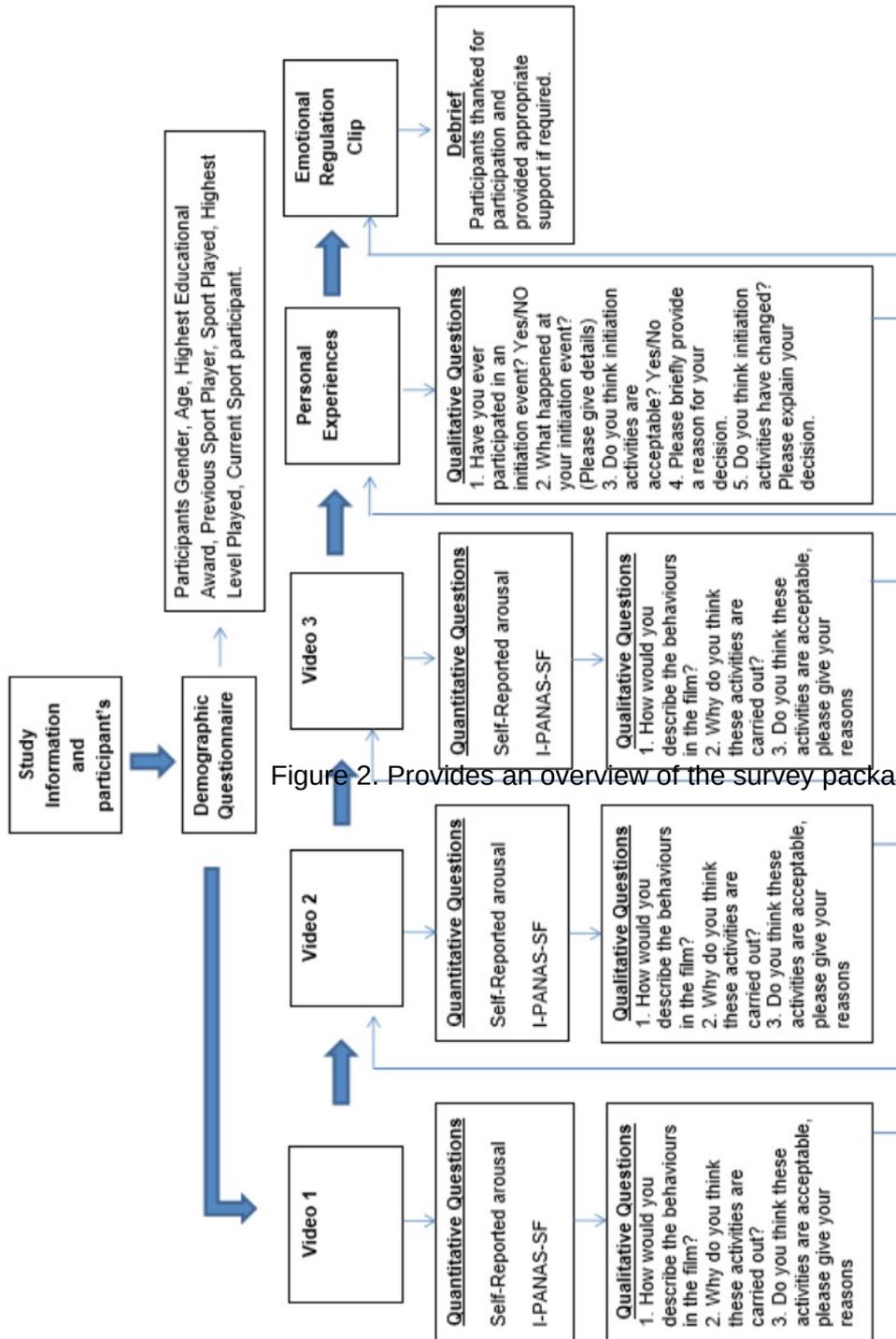


Figure 2. Provides an overview of the survey package and study outline.

Measures

To assess the suitability of the online questionnaire, 4 participants conducted a pilot test ensuring the questionnaire was fit for purpose prior to the study being made available to the general public. Findings derived from pilot tests were excluded from the data collated and were not included in the final research findings. Based on the feedback from the pilot tests, relevant changes to the questionnaire were made to enhance suitability.

Following each video clip, participants were assessed via the use of a quantitative measure of self-reported arousal (Schafer, Nils, Sanchez, & Philippot, 2010). Schafer et al., (2010) developed the measure in order to provide a tool that could be administered across a variety of research questions examining emotion. Participants were required to express how emotional they felt, rated on a 7-point Likert scale, where a response of 1 indicated 'Not emotional at all' and 7 indicated 'Very intense emotions'.

Subsequently, participants were measured via the International Positive and Negative Affect Schedule Short Form (I-PANAS-SF) (Thompson, 2007). I-PANAS-SF is a 10-item shortened version of the 20-item Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) originally developed by Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988). PANAS is administered as a method of assessing emotion via two 10-item subscales designed to measure positive (i.e. active, alert, attentive, determined, enthusiastic, excited, inspired, interested, proud, and strong) and negative affect (i.e. afraid, ashamed, distressed, guilty, hostile, irritated, jittery, nervous, scared, and upset) (Watson et al., 1988). Negative affect and positive affect reflect dispositional dimensions, with high negative affect typified by individual's distress and un-pleasurable engagement, and low negative affect by the absence of such feelings (Watson et al., 1988). Alternatively, positive affect represents the extent to which an individual experiences pleasurable engagement with the environment (Watson et al., 1988).

I-PANAS-SF was utilised due to the repeated measure nature of the study. Participant's responses to the I-PANAS-SF were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, where a response of 5 indicated 'A Lot' and 1 indicated 'Not at all'. Reliability and Validity reported by Watson et al. (1988) was moderately good. For the Positive Affect Scale, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was 0.86 to 0.90; for the Negative Affect Scale, 0.84 to 0.87. In the current study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient for Positive Affect Scale was 0.52 and for the Negative Affect Scale 0.62.

Following completion of self-report measures, participants were required to answer 3 questions based on their perceptions of each video viewed. Each 3 questions were replicated following each video were as follows:

Question 1: How would you describe the behaviours in the film?

Question 2: Why do you think these activities are carried out?

Question 3: Do you think these activities are acceptable? Please give reasons for your decision.

Procedures

As the study was conducted in an online environment, each participant was instructed to read the consent and participant information sheet providing detail of the nature and the purpose of the research prior to confirming consent via a click. Involvement in hazing events is a sensitive topic and as such, there was the potential that participants may have personally been the victim or such activities or, know of someone who has been affected and thus experienced stress. Therefore, participants were informed that participation was completely voluntary and they were able to withdraw from the process at any time throughout the questionnaire. Furthermore, participants were provided with various sources of support and information both inside and outside of the University of Chester. If a participant left prior to completion by closing their browser, this partially collected data was deleted and omitted from the research. Those participants who provided consent to engage with the study were directed through to the next phase of the questionnaire.

After each short video viewed, participants were informed they could exit the study by closing the browser. Participants may have felt that by participating they could inadvertently bring either their sports team or organisation into disrepute. Therefore, the participant information sheet clearly stated that all responses were to remain confidential. While geographical data with respect to home country was asked for, this was at a global level (e.g. UK, USA, & Canada) and no detailed locational data was collected, thus reducing participant's identification through deductive disclosure. Importantly, no questions related to University sport, therefore confidentiality was protected. Furthermore, the collated data was accessed solely by the researcher.

Data Analysis

Data derived from quantitative questions was processed using IBM SPSS statistical package (version, 24). Upon collation of the quantitative data, descriptive analysis was conducted providing mean scores for self-reported arousal and PANAS. Subsequently, a One-way repeated measure ANOVA was conducted to identify the effect of hazing video on self-reported arousal. Paired samples *t*-test were conducted in order to identify any significant difference between each hazing video and self-reported arousal score.

Upon examination of I-PANAS-SF scores, a 3 x 2 repeated measure ANOVA was conducted to identify the effect of hazing video on positive and negative I-PANAS-SF scores. Subsequent paired samples *t*-tests were conducted in order to identify any significant difference between each hazing video and positive and negative I-PANAS-SF scores.

In order to examine and deconstruct the qualitative data derived from participant's questionnaires, a thematic analysis was conducted. Thematic analysis is a method utilised for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data sets (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The six phases proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) for conducting thematic analyses were adopted during questionnaire examination. The six phases of thematic analysis comprised of: familiarisation with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and finally producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis was implemented to analyse the qualitative data due to its flexibility as a research tool that has the ability to identify, analyse and report patterns from rich data in considerable detail (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Results

Table 3. Contains means and standard deviations for self-reported arousal and I-PANAS-SF scores. In addition a count of the positive and negative comments from each question for the respective video is provided.

	Arousal Mean & SD	I-PANAS-SF Mean & SD		Q1. Comment Count		Q2. Comment Count		Q3. Comment Count	
		Ve +	Ve -	Ve +	Ve -	Ve +	Ve -	Ve +	Ve -
Video 1	3.15 ± 1.56	10.11 ± 4.12	6.29 ± 2.52	78	32	62	7	75	13
Video 2	3.79 ± 1.71	7.74 ± 2.62	11.03 ± 5.04	20	38	39	36	33	48
Video 3	3.68 ± 1.88	8.15 ± 3.43	12.67 ± 5.78	6	69	36	34	15	59

Note. SD = Standard Deviation, Ve + = Positive (I-PANAS-SF score & comments), Ve - = Negative (I-PANAS-SF score & comments).

Statistical Analysis

Self-Reported Arousal

A one-way repeated measures ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of each hazing video on self-reported arousal scores. Analysis indicated there was a significant effect of video watched on self-reported arousal, Wilks' Lambda = .859, $F(2, 63) = 5.19$, $p = .008$. Three paired samples t -tests were used to make post hoc comparisons between each video condition. A first paired samples t -test indicated there was a significant difference between self-reported arousal level following video 1 ($M = 3.17$, $SD \pm 1.56$) and video 2 ($M = 3.79$, $SD \pm 1.71$) $t(66) = -3.318$, $p = .001$. A second paired samples t -test indicated there was no significant difference between self-reported arousal level following video 1 ($M = 3.17$, $SD \pm 1.57$) and video 3 ($M = 3.68$, $SD \pm 1.88$) $t(66) = -1.929$, $p = .058$. A third paired samples t -test indicated there was no significant difference between self-reported arousal level following video 2 ($M = 3.79$, $SD \pm 1.74$) and video 3 ($M = 3.68$, $SD \pm 1.88$) $t(66) = .635$, $p = .528$.

I-PANAS-SF

A 3x2 repeated measures ANOVA was conducted on a sample of 67 participants to examine the effect of hazing video 1, 2 and 3 on I-PANAS-SF score. Machuly's test indicated that the assumption of sphericity had been violated, $X^2(2) = 39.963$, $p < .001$, therefore degrees of freedom were corrected using Greenhouse-Geisser estimates of sphericity (ϵ).

Results indicated that the main effect of hazing video was significant, $F(1.516, 97.007) = 13.04$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .169$. Moreover, the main effect of I-PANAS-SF score also produced significant results, $F(1.00, 64.00) = 8.21$, $p = .006$, $\eta^2 = .114$. The pattern observed in the main effect was qualified by a significant interaction, $F(1.361, 87.092) = 55.81$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .466$. Thus, the data showed that there was an effect of hazing video on participant's overall I-PANAS-SF scores.

Simple main effect analyses were run to further examine the significant interaction between hazing video and I-PANAS-SF score. These revealed that there was a significant difference between Positive I-PANAS-SF score following video 1 ($M = 10.11$, $SD \pm 4.42$) and video 2 ($M = 7.79$, $SD \pm 2.61$) $t(66) = 4.924$, $p = .000$. A second paired samples t -test indicated there was a significant difference between Positive I-PANAS-SF score following video 1 ($M = 10.11$, $SD \pm 4.42$) and video 3 ($M = 8.15$, $SD \pm 3.45$) $t(64) = 2.77$, $p = .007$. A third paired samples t -test indicated there was no significant difference between Positive I-PANAS-SF score following video 2 ($M = 7.79$, $SD \pm 2.61$) and video 3 ($M = 8.15$, $SD \pm 3.45$) $t(64) = -1.180$, $p = .242$.

Further paired samples t -tests indicated there was a significant difference between Negative I-PANAS-SF score following video 1 ($M = 6.40$, $SD \pm 2.70$) and video 2 ($M = 10.95$, $SD \pm 5.00$) $t(66) = -6.936$, $p = .000$. A paired samples t -test indicated there was a significant difference Negative I-PANAS-SF score between video 1 ($M = 6.40$, $SD \pm 2.70$) and video 3 ($M = 12.66$, $SD \pm 5.78$) $t(64) = -8.518$, $p = .000$. A

third paired samples *t*-test indicated there was a significant difference between Negative I-PANAS-SF score between video 2 (M = 11.03, SD ± 5.00) and video 3 (M = 12.66, SD ± 5.78) $t(66) = -2.795, p = .007$.

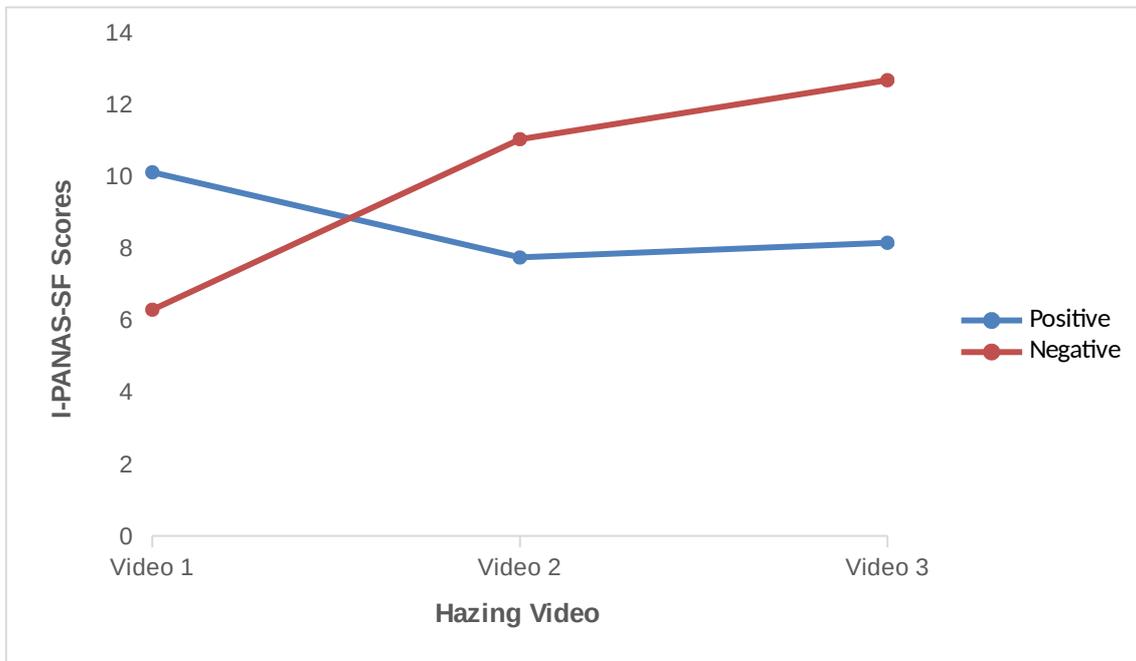


Figure 3. Indicates the mean differences between positive and negative I-PANAS-SF scores over the three hazing videos.

Thematic Analysis

The subsequent tables outline participant's responses to the questions within the present study and have been produced via a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Table 4. Depicts participant's responses following video's 1, 2 and 3 to the question "How would you describe the behaviours in the film?"

General Dimensions	Higher-Order Themes	Raw Data Units (Unit separated by commas)
Video 1		
Positive Perceptions	Perceived Enjoyment (<i>n</i> = 54)	Fun, excitable, positive, uplifting, care free, loving, active
	Traditional Aspect (<i>n</i> = 4)	Normal
	No Physical Danger (<i>n</i> = 3)	Harmless, relaxed
	Team Cohesion (<i>n</i> = 17)	Bonding, confidence, motivational
Negative Perceptions	Behaviour (<i>n</i> = 4)	Banter, boisterous, idiotic
	Hierarchical Issues (<i>n</i> = 22)	Forced, bullying, outdated, humiliating, nervous, afraid
	Viewer Issues (<i>n</i> = 6)	Embarrassing to Viewer, awkward, boring
Video 2		
Positive Perceptions	Perceived Enjoyment (<i>n</i> = 16)	Fun, positive, active
	Traditional Aspect (<i>n</i> = 4)	Normal
Negative Perceptions	Behaviour (<i>n</i> = 1)	Idiotic

	Hierarchical Issues (n = 33)	Forced, afraid, abusive, unacceptable, humiliating
	Viewer Issues (n = 4)	Awkward
Video 3		
Positive Perceptions	Traditional Aspect (n = 5)	Normal, acceptable
	Perceived Enjoyment (n = 1)	Active
Negative Perceptions	Hierarchical Issues (n = 50)	Forced, humiliating, abusive, unacceptable, power, afraid, bullying
	Behaviour (n = 5)	Idiotic, pathetic
	Team Cohesion (n = 1)	Prove-Self
	Viewer Issues (n = 13)	Awkward, boring

Note. *n* indicated the number of participants that stated the categorised raw data theme.

Data analysis for question 1 depicted in Table 4 revealed 243 raw data themes from all three videos that were subsequently categorised into 7 higher-order themes before division into 2 general dimensions of 'positive perceptions' and 'negative perceptions'. Participant responses to question 1 indicated the reduction in positive perceptions of hazing practices as they progressed through each of the videos. Participants made clear reference to 'hierarchical issues' as they described each of the hazing videos, particularly evident in video 3 responses. To see a full numeric breakdown of each individual 'raw data unit' for question 1, please see **appendix X**.

Table 5. Depicts participant's responses following video's 1, 2 and 3 to the question "Why do you think these activities are carried out?"

General Dimensions	Higher-Order Themes	Raw Data Themes
Video 1		
Positive Perception	Perceived Enjoyment (<i>n</i> = 6)	Fun, positive
	Team Cohesion (<i>n</i> = 51)	Confidence, character building, bonding
	Traditional Aspect (<i>n</i> = 7)	Normal, relaxed
Negative Perception	Hierarchical Issues (<i>n</i> = 5)	Humiliating, nervous
	Behaviour (<i>n</i> = 1)	Idiotic
	Viewer Issues (<i>n</i> = 1)	Awkward
Other	Unsure (<i>n</i> = 3)	Not Sure
Video 2		
Positive Perception	Perceived Enjoyment (<i>n</i> = 10)	Fun
	Team Cohesion (<i>n</i> = 26)	Bonding
	Traditional Aspect (<i>n</i> = 3)	Normal
Negative Perception	Hierarchical Issues (<i>n</i> = 27)	Bullying, afraid, abusive, power, forced, humiliating
	Behaviour (<i>n</i> = 1)	Banter
	Team Cohesion (<i>n</i> = 8)	Prove-self
Other	Unsure (<i>n</i> = 3)	Not sure

Video 3

Positive Perceptions

Perceived Enjoyment (<i>n</i> = 2)	Fun
No Physical Danger (<i>n</i> = 2)	Harmless, acceptable
Team Cohesion (<i>n</i> = 26)	Bonding, prove-self
Behaviour (<i>n</i> = 1)	Banter

Negative Perceptions

Traditional Aspect (<i>n</i> = 5)	Normal
Hierarchical Issues (<i>n</i> = 29)	Power, humiliating
Behaviour (<i>n</i> = 1)	Attention

Other

Unsure (<i>n</i> = 4)	Not Sure
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Note. *n* indicated the number of participants that stated the categorised raw data theme.

Data analysis for Question 2 seen in table 5 revealed 213 raw data themes from all three videos that were categorised into 8 higher order themes before being devised into 3 general dimensions of 'positive perceptions', 'negative perceptions' and 'other'.

Participants were clear in the belief for each of the hazing videos that 'team cohesion' related terms were crucial to the reasons for the hazing events taking place.

Participants also felt that for video's 2 and 3, 'hierarchical issues' such as, bullying and power were crucial to reasons behind the events. To see a full numeric breakdown of each individual 'raw data unit' for question 2, please see **appendix X**.

Table 6. Depicts participant's responses following video's 1, 2 and 3 to the question "Do you think these activities are acceptable? Please give reasons for your decision".

General Dimensions	Higher-Order Themes	Raw Data Themes
Video 1		
Acceptable activity	Perceived Enjoyment (<i>n</i> = 31)	Fun, positive, acceptable
	Team Cohesion (<i>n</i> = 27)	Bonding, character building, done for correct reasons
	Traditional Aspect (<i>n</i> = 1)	Normal
	No Physical Danger (<i>n</i> = 11)	Harmless, relaxed
	Responsibility (<i>n</i> = 5)	As long as they were given the choice
Unacceptable activity	Hierarchical Issues (<i>n</i> = 9)	Bullying, outdated, abusive, unacceptable, humiliating, power, afraid
	Subsequent Issues (<i>n</i> = 3)	Mental Harm, alienation
	Viewer Issues (<i>n</i> = 1)	Boring
Video 2		
Acceptable activity	Perceived Enjoyment (<i>n</i> = 16)	Fun, positive, acceptable
	Team Cohesion (<i>n</i> = 7)	Bonding, done for correct reasons
	Traditional Aspect (<i>n</i> = 3)	Normal
	No Physical Danger (<i>n</i> = 7)	Harmless
	Responsibility (<i>n</i> = 2)	As long as they were given the choice

Unacceptable activity

Hierarchical Issues (<i>n</i> = 27)	Forced, bullying, abusive, unacceptable, power, humiliating, nervous
Anti-Social Nature (<i>n</i> = 14)	Alcohol, not in public
Behaviour (<i>n</i> = 3)	Idiotic
Subsequent Issues (<i>n</i> = 2)	Health Risk, ramifications for not taking part
Responsibility (<i>n</i> = 1)	Their own fault
Viewer Issues (<i>n</i> = 1)	Embarrassing to watch

Video 3

Acceptable activity

Perceived Enjoyment (<i>n</i> = 3)	Fun
Team Cohesion (<i>n</i> = 1)	Bonding, done for the correct reasons
Tradition (<i>n</i> = 1)	Normal
No Physical Danger (<i>n</i> = 7)	Harmless, acceptable
Responsibility (<i>n</i> = 3)	As long as they were given the choice

Unacceptable activity

Hierarchical Issues (<i>n</i> = 43)	Forced, afraid, bullying, abusive, unacceptable, power
Behaviour (<i>n</i> = 3)	Idiotic
Subsequent Issues (<i>n</i> = 3)	Mental Harm, health risk, ramifications for not taking part.
Anti-Social Nature (<i>n</i> = 6)	Not be in public

	Responsibility (<i>n</i> = 2)	Their own fault
	Viewer Issues (<i>n</i> = 2)	Embarrassing to watch, awkward
Other views	Unsure (<i>n</i> = 1)	Not sure

Note. *n* indicated the number of participants that stated the categorised raw data theme.

Data analysis for question 3 seen in table 6 revealed 246 raw data themes from all three videos that were categorised into 11 higher order themes before being characterised into 3 general dimensions of ‘acceptable activity’, ‘unacceptable activity’ and ‘other views’. Examining the breakdown of participant’s responses to question 3 is the indication that as the videos progressed, they became deemed less acceptable. Furthermore, participant’s reference to ‘team cohesion’ was also reduced through each video, with only 1 reference to the theme, in contrast to 27 for video 1. More consistent in participant’s responses throughout the videos was the notion of ‘no physical harm’ making activities deemed acceptable. To see a full numeric breakdown of each individual ‘raw data unit’ for question 3, please see **appendix X**.

Discussion

Study Aims

The principle aim of this explorative study was to establish the perceptions of a general public sample in regards of British modern day hazing activities. The current exploration was undertaken through the synergy of a mixed methods design, inclusive of both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Firstly, it was hypothesised through quantitative methods, that hazing videos would have a significant impact on both participant's self-reported arousal and I-PANAS-SF scores. Secondly, it was expected that following qualitative enquiry, members of the general public would express responses that align with student-athletes and coaches perceptions (e.g. Caperchione & Holman, 2004; Allan & Madden, 2008; Massey & Massey, 2017).

Quantitative Research Findings

Self-Reported Arousal

During the examination of self-reported arousal scores, statistical analysis demonstrated a significant main effect of hazing videos, thus accepting the primary hypothesis. Analysis indicated that participant's emotions were significantly affected following the viewing of the hazing material. Findings provide support for existing literature that has articulated the substantial effect that exposure to negative events can have (Lang, Newhagen, & Reeves, 1996). Indeed, Lang et al. (1996) expressed in their classic research that following the viewing of negative events in a visual format, a significant effect was demonstrated in individual's emotion levels.

Interestingly, Lang et al. (1996) also proposed that if individuals perceive images they view initially to be of a negative nature and in turn, this promotes the onset of negative emotions, the entire viewing experience can be rendered as negative irrespective of the subsequent images presented. Indeed, the current research similarly

discovered that those expressing negative emotion following the viewing of video 1, were replicated throughout the research. However, of crucial importance to this emotional alteration was the change in severity of the videos shown. Research has articulated that the severity of an event is the single most important factor for determining an individual's emotional response (Frijda, 2007). Therefore, the current research is able to state that as hypothesised, the viewing of hazing material has been demonstrated to have a significant effect on the emotion levels of members of the general public. However, of critical importance to this finding is the change in severity of hazing event shown and the subsequent impact this has on individual's emotional responses.

However, while findings indicated a significant difference in participant's emotional responses, this only existed between video's 1 and 2. Mann, Feddes, Doosje, and Fischer (2015) concluded that such findings are due to the concept of humiliation and the extent to which individuals feel others are humiliated. Individual's humiliation is encompassed by their experiences that may be mentally or physically degrading (Mann et al., 2015). Furthermore, the researchers suggest that of significant importance is the element of public derogation and shame (Mann et al., 2015). Interestingly, video 2 centred on the clear public humiliation of University students and provided an extremely different version of events to those in video 1, as such highlighting the significant change in participant's arousal. However, such a significant increase was not replicated following the viewing of video 3. While video 3 involved what may be considered more sinister events, Mann et al. (2015) research indicates due to the events not displaying increased public humiliation, no significant difference was discovered between videos 1 and 3, and 2 and 3. Therefore, the current research may suggest that for members of the general public, the concept of public humiliation is critical factor in their emotional response to hazing.

Interestingly, research examining a student-athlete population has provided an alternative explanation for participants change in emotion following exposure to hazing. Van Raatle et al. (2007) findings demonstrated that exposure to hazing was negatively correlated with task attraction and group integration. In contrast, higher levels of social attraction and integration were associated with appropriate hazing events (Van Raatle et al., 2007). While the current research did not focus or assess participant's level of attraction to the group, it is interesting that a significant difference in participant's emotion was noted following increased exposure to negative hazing videos. Moreover, as Van Raatle et al. (2007) indicated an increase in social attraction and integration following exposure to appropriate hazing events, this may support the current research in outlining the significant impact that increased severity of negative hazing events has on the general public's emotional responses.

I-PANAS-SF

Findings of the present research also indicated, as hypothesised, a significant effect of hazing video viewed following analysis of participant's I-PANAS-SF scores. Results established an interesting relationship surrounding the change in participant's negative emotions coupled with the increased severity in hazing video shown. As demonstrated in participant's arousal scores, levels of emotion also increased as the hazing videos increased in severity, supporting research that has expressed the importance of event severity and its impact on individual's emotional responses (Habermas & Diel, 2010). Moreover, research has suggested that humans are highly sensitive to perceived signals of danger, such as those present in hazing events (Levita, Howsley, Jordan, & Johnston, 2015). Indeed, following the transition from video 1 to video 2, where events became noticeably more dangerous for those involved, results displayed a significant alteration in participant's negative emotions. Therefore, this supports the explanation that participant's negative I-PANAS-SF scores were altered due to an increase severity of the hazing video shown.

While findings demonstrate that exposure to hazing events of increased severity has a significant effect on emotional responses; existing literature suggested that alternatively, hazing severity is positively related to the liking of a group (Aronson & Mills, 1959). In their classic research, Aronson and Mills (1959) expressed the severity-attraction hypothesis, grounded in the assumption that the severity of an initiation event is positively related to an individual's fondness of a group. This hypothesis has been supported in more current literature, where it was discovered from student-athletes own perspectives, increased levels of hazing severity and therefore danger, produced an increase in conformity levels to the event (Anderson et al., 2012). This increase is suggested to be as a consequence of individuals need to gain acceptance, particularly from perpetrators who control group membership (Anderson et al., 2012). However, while rookies have demonstrated increased levels of conformity as hazing severity

increases, members of the general public have alternatively, demonstrated an increase in negative emotions towards the events. Therefore, findings suggest that members of the general public and those involved hold contrasting opinions regarding increases in hazing severity.

The effect of the severity-attraction hypothesis has been interpreted as a consequence of a reduction in dissonance (Festinger, 1957), whereby individuals endure the events due to their raised evaluations of the group. Moreover, Massey and Massey (2017) have more recently stated that individuals reduce their apprehension towards hazing events in order to focus on their primary goal of group membership (Massey & Massey, 2017). However, to date, the hypothesis has received little support; in contrast, research has indicated that the severity of an event produces a negative rather than positive relationship between hazing severity and group attraction (Lodewijx & Syroit, 2001). Such findings align with participant's negative perceptions of the events that increased in severity and may also provide further support to the indication that student-athletes hold clear misconceptions of hazing events in particular, concerning student-athletes perceptions of the benefits following taking part in the event (Crow & MacIntosh, 2009).

Coupled with rookies own misconceptions, explanation for their behaviour that has been shown to contrast the general public, has been interpreted through groupthink theory (Janis, 2015). Groupthink creates a suspension in rookie's ability to think, causing an overlooking of their rationale judgement leading to engagement in risk behaviours that the group deem necessary (Janis, 2015). Interestingly, this explorative study required participants to view hazing from an indirect perspective whereas, previous investigation involved rookies whom were responding to the events based on their own experiences (e.g. Anderson et al., 2012). While groupthink affects those who hold the principle aim of attaining group membership (Janis, 2004), it cannot explain responses relating to the reaction to an event. Indeed, Finnbogardóttir and Bernsten

(2014) suggested that individual's involvement in an event can have a significant effect on their emotional output, thus explaining the differing responses. However, it may also be argued that groupthink may affect individuals who have previously participated in events such as, hazing and become conditioned to the group's values, therefore affecting responses (Janis, 2015).

Qualitative Research Findings

Coupled with the focus on quantitative examination, the present research also aimed to analyse participant's responses of hazing videos through a thematic analysis. It was expected that responses would support existing research in the theme of acceptance, with particular focus on the notion of physical harm. As anticipated, findings confirmed the researcher's expectations whereby those citing hazing events to be acceptable in their nature, centred on the absence of physical harm during the events. These findings concur with existing literature where both student-athletes and coaches have reported that activities cannot be considered hazing where no physical harm has been caused (Caperchione & Holman, 2004; Allan & Madden, 2008; Massey & Massey, 2017). Although it was not examined in the present research whether participants would deem the events as hazing or not, the responses produce a worrying trend. While participants perceived events to be acceptable if physical harm was absent, research has previously expressed that all forms of hazing are liable to cause psychological harm (Hamilton et al., 2016), something that findings may suggest the general public are currently be unaware of.

In addition, Massey and Massey (2017) discovered comparable findings and aimed to provide understanding for such perceptions of acceptance. The researchers stressed participant's attempts to minimise the harmful nature of the events as a method of confirming their implementation (Massey & Massey, 2017). Prevalent in participant's responses were the perceptions that due to the fun and enjoyable nature of the activity, the event was deemed acceptable as no danger or physical harm was imparted to those hazed (Massey & Massey, 2017). Consistent with these conclusions, responses to video 1, involving a group of young footballers singing to a group of older professionals, were dominated by the theme of fun and enjoyment. Although the theme of fun was prevalent throughout the present study, it was particularly dominant in participants responses to video 1 (see Table 4). While it was expected participants

would deem this event as acceptable, results signify a worrying trend that the general public not only deem the events as acceptable but they do so due to the perception that event is enjoyable. Central to this concern, are the existing issues regarding a suitable definition (e.g. Crow & MacIntosh, 2009). While events such as singing may seem innocuous, there is the potential to cause psychological harm to those who feel humiliated (Hamilton et al., 2016; Lafferty et al., 2016). Therefore, without suitable a suitable definition the public will continue to consider the event as acceptable due to their lack of knowledge regarding the impact of the events (Crow & MacIntosh, 2009).

Interestingly, research has also expressed the effect that images viewed can have on individual emotion levels (Lang et al., 1996). In particular, Provine (2005) reported that laughter can affect the emotions of those watching, triggering laughter in those who hear it. Thus, it may be suggested that the emotions displayed in video 1 produced a subconscious effect on the participants, leading to responses that focused on the elements of fun and enjoyment. Furthermore, this notion can be supported by participants responses to videos 2 and 3 where the element of fun and enjoyment was not overtly present and subsequently, reported minimally.

While the effect of emotions viewed has been suggested as a potential explanation for participant's responses, research has also proposed the importance of comprehending the often overlooked factor of the manner in which the media report hazing events (Nuwer, 2004). Nuwer (2004) expressed that members of the media are often hasty to criticise student-athletes involvement in hazing events while at the same time make little of, or ignore professional athletes who participated in hazing events. This issue has been salient in the response to hazing activities in the British media, where reports have commonly centred on the aspect of fun during commentary on professional athletes undertaking hazing events (e.g. Daily Mirror, 2017). Crow and MacIntosh (2009) suggested that this style of reporting, where the events are depicted in a harmless nature has have created a level of tolerance within the eye of the

student-athletes for hazing. However, as the present findings suggest, this level of tolerance may have also be present within members of the general public.

Psychological Neglect and Understanding

Additional concerns based on the present findings were participant's absence of acknowledgement for the potential psychological harm that may be present following hazing. Research has expressed on a number of occasions the potential psychological harm that can occur following hazing (Hamilton et al., 2016). Indeed, Marks et al. (2012) stated that individuals low in levels of self-esteem and also high in social anxiety are particularly susceptible to suffer from severe and prolonged mental trauma, irrespective of the physical nature of the events. However, the perception that psychological harm may affect those involved in hazing was in general, largely neglected throughout the present study. As has been expressed, research has been hasty to suggest that the absence of consideration for psychological well-being is due to a significant lack of knowledge and understanding of hazing and its impact (Van Raatle et al., 2007; Crow & MacIntosh, 2009).

Literature has articulated on numerous occasions that perpetrators of hazing fail to understand the event and as a consequence hold misconceptions regarding their impact (Van Raatle et al., 2007; Lafferty et al., 2016). Researches focused on understanding this imbalance of knowledge have argued that the widely held misconceptions derive from inconsistent media portrayals (Crow & MacIntosh, 2009). The media have been suggested to simply reinforce the existing confusion as they fail to present a consisted message in the response to hazing events (Crow & MacIntosh, 2009). Thus, as research has expressed the misconceptions held in relation to the perpetrators of hazing (e.g. Crow & MacIntosh, 2009), the current findings highlight a worrying indication that a lack of knowledge may be prevalent among not only student-

athletes but also the general public whom have been influenced through media portrayals of hazing.

While attempts have been made to educate individuals (e.g. Nuwer, 2004), a level of confusion has been shown to persist among those involved in hazing (Crow, 2008). As earlier noted, central to this confusion is what Crow and MacIntosh (2009) suggest to be a clear definition of hazing. Through their research, Crow and MacIntosh (2009) discovered that participants held extremely varied perspectives of hazing. Such variation was also evident in the present findings. While a limited number of participants were able to note the potential harmful nature of the events, others held the perception the events were necessary and important. In an attempt to reduce the evident confusion and provide a clearer understanding of hazing, Crow and MacIntosh (2009) proposed a new definition. They recommended that hazing events should be defined as follows:

Any potentially humiliating, degrading, abusive, or dangerous activity expected of a junior-ranking athlete by a more senior team-mate, which does not contribute to either athlete's positive development, but is required to be accepted as part of a team, regardless of the junior-ranking athlete's willingness to participate. This includes, but is not limited to, any activity, no matter how traditional or seemingly benign, that sets apart or alienates any team-mate based on class, number of years on the team, or athletic ability (Crow & MacIntosh, 2009, pp. 449).

Although the new definition may go some way to provide those who lack sufficient knowledge regarding hazing a clearer understanding it lacks fundamental features. Crow and MacIntosh (2009) fail to acknowledge the significant aspect of psychological harm that may be caused as a result of hazing events (e.g. Hamilton et al., 2016). Existing research (e.g. Massey & Massey, 2017) and the present findings have expressed that central to this gap is the aspect of psychological harm caused by

hazing. Thus, in terms of enhancing the understanding of hazing, Crow and MacIntosh's (2009) definition may have a limited influence. Therefore, it is crucial for future research to focus on the formulation of a definition that is able to enhance the awareness of potential psychological harm associated with hazing events, not only for student-athletes and coaches understanding, but also members of the general public who have demonstrated this awareness is absent.

Team Cohesion

Coupled with the gaps in knowledge regarding the potential psychological harm caused following hazing events, literature has similarly identified misconceptions held concerning team cohesion (Van Raatle et al., 2007; Lafferty et al., 2016). Existing literature has reported that hazing has been shown to have no positive impact on team cohesion (e.g. Van Raatle et al., 2007; Lafferty et al., 2016). Indeed, Lafferty et al. (2016) concluded that the commonly held perception that hazing initiations facilitate team cohesion and develop group bonds is simply false. However, the current findings indicated that when asked to describe why participants believed the events in each of the videos were carried out, the theme of team cohesion was dominant thus, harmonising with student-athletes response to hazing (e.g. Van Raatle et al., 2007). These findings suggest that the misconception held by student athletes may also exist within a general public population who expressed perceptions that suggesting hazing occurred in order to enhance team cohesion.

Research has argued that the fixation of individuals on the facilitation of team cohesion is due to the over-conformity of dissonance (Festinger, 1957). Indeed, Lafferty et al. (2016) proposed that while conflicting opinions are present, in order to reduce the potential dissonance student-athletes rationalise the events in the belief they hold significant value, such as enhancing team cohesion. Interestingly, two-thirds of participants in the current study expressed that they regularly participated in sporting

pursuits. As time spent within a team structure increases, research suggests that this causes individuals to embrace the sport ethic where beliefs regarding facets such as team cohesion are cemented (Coakley, 2004). Simultaneously, the impact of groupthink causes a suspension in thinking and causes individuals to rationalise risky behaviours and involve themselves in events, such as hazing (Massey & Massey, 2017).

Although the present research did not ascertain the length of time participants had participated in each sporting pursuit, it may be suggested that as a result of their current involvement, participants may have adopted the sport ethic themselves. As a consequence, their own beliefs of hazing and opinions of its effect on team cohesion levels may have been previously cemented and therefore, explain the responses provided in the present study (e.g. Coakley, 2004). However, this notion fails to ascertain why participants not involved in sporting pursuits expressed comparable beliefs regarding team cohesion. This may be an aspect that future research aims to examine further.

Hierarchy

Although thus far, focus has been placed on ascertaining an understanding of participant's acceptance of hazing, it is important to express the general public's negative responses regarding hazing. For many, exposure to hazing related material produced a range of negative responses. As expressed in tables 4, 5 & 6, participant's responses to the videos, predominantly videos 2 and 3 incited negative reactions. Central to these responses were perceptions of hierarchy. Jones and Wallace (2005) expressed that when individuals join a new team they enter an environment with a distinct hierarchical structure. Fundamental in participant's negative responses were the notions of the perpetrators abuse of power. Specifically, responses focused on the perceptions that the primary purpose of the events was to create a hierarchical power differential between new and existing group members. Research has previously cited

the aspect of power and indicated how dominance of others is exerted through the power and performance model of sport (Coakley, 2004).

The adoption of the power and performance model and utilisation through events such as hazing, simply reinforces Mooreland and Levine's (as cited in Hogg & Vaughan, 2013) model of group socialisation, ensuring that new members have lower social standing to veterans of the team. Similarly, Waldron (2015) suggested that this causes rookies to accept their social position and due to the existing power differential are forced to participate in dangerous behaviours, such as hazing. Moreover, research has also proposed how this system is maintained, with coaches, parents and fans upholding the values of the power and performance model and therefore, accepting hazing events (Holman, 2004). However, the current findings challenge this view, as members of the general public perceived this hierarchical system as a simple abuse of power whereby veterans aim to cause rookies harm rather than the event being necessary for positive purposes. Therefore, the current findings suggest that a difference exists within the public in regards to their responses to hazing, particularly surrounding the adoption of the power and performance model of sport.

Limitations

Although the present research has been the first to explore and shed light on the British general public's perceptions of hazing, it is not without limitation. While the sample size was able to provide initial indications of the general public's perceptions, previous research of hazing in student-athlete populations has involved significantly larger samples (e.g. Massey & Massey, 2017). Future research should endeavour to increase the sample size in order to provide an enhanced representation of the general public and importantly, increase the understanding of their perceptions of hazing.

Future research may also endeavour to attain a wider range of age populations in order for the sample to be more representative of the general population. In addition, research may compare age brackets to identify if any differences are prevalent in their perceptions of hazing. Furthermore, in terms of the general population, the present sample was unrepresentative with a large portion of participants being male. However, in terms of sports participation figures (Sport England, 2017) and previous hazing research (e.g. Lafferty et al., 2016) this sample falls in line with these figures. Future research may aim to increase the number of female participants and provide a gender comparison for perceptions of hazing and identify any potential differences.

The quantitative measures utilised in the present study were of a self-report nature and therefore, were susceptible to the problems associated with this method of collecting data, such as social desirability. Social desirability bias, particularly within a taboo topic such as hazing can often generate inaccurate responses of socially undesirable events (Krumpal, 2013). Alternatively, future research may use interview techniques where follow-up questions could be asked to explore additional detail (Massey & Massey, 2017). Furthermore, there remains as with all hazing related research the concern that participants may not respond honestly through fear of consequences to themselves or their team (Waldron et al., 2011). In particular, Waldron et al. (2011) expressed the code of silence that surrounds hazing activities whereby, even those who find the events uncomfortable remain silent. However, as the present

study focused on responses to videos not personal involvement, this concern should have been eliminated.

While the present research suggested that participants were influenced by their own involvement of sporting participation, it may have been of worth to ascertain participants time spent participating in sport. This would provide greater understanding in regards to the influence of the sport ethic and how this may have influenced participant's responses (Coakley, 2004).

Conclusion

The principle objective of the present research was to undertake the first exploration of the British general public and their perceptions of modern day hazing activities. The study has been able to provide evidence to suggest that the viewing of hazing material has a significant impact on participant's self-reported arousal and I-PANAS-SF scores. Moreover, changes in emotion were identified to align with increased levels of hazing severity. While existing literature has reported an increase in group attraction following an escalation in the severity of hazing from a student-athletes perspective (e.g. Anderson et al., 2012), findings from the general public suggest this increase is associated with negative emotions. Such contrasting attitudes towards hazing may be as research has suggested, subject to individuals involvement in the events (e.g. Finnbogardóttir & Bernsten, 2014). Indeed, while groupthink theory can explain behaviour during initiations, it cannot explain the reactions of those watching hazing events (Janis, 2015). However, groupthink may still impact those who have previously participated in hazing events as they become conditioned to the events, thus affecting their responses to watching (Janis, 2015).

It would also appear that within the general public population, contrasting perceptions of hazing are present. Indeed, a number of participants articulated that hazing events were acceptable due to the absence of physical harm. While these perceptions were largely expected, this reinforces the need to enhance understanding of negative hazing events such as singing, which are current deemed acceptable due to a lack of individual's knowledge (Crow & MacIntosh, 2009). Alternatively, participants expressed concern with the hierarchical nature of hazing events, suggesting the utilisation of power was unacceptable. Such variation may reflect participants own sporting background thus, future research should aim to directly compare members of the general public who are currently and have previously competed in sporting pursuits, compared with those who have not. This would provide clarity regarding the impact of sporting involvement on perceptions of hazing.

The variation in responses may also be attributed to participant's lack of knowledge and understanding of hazing, which has already been demonstrated to exist in student-athlete populations (Allan & Madden, 2008). While research thus far, has endeavoured to provide clarity (e.g. Crow & MacIntosh, 2009) it remains clear that a suitable definition of hazing is absent. Of critical importance to this, is the notion of psychological harm. It was of concern that participants in general, neglected the aspect of psychological harm aligning with student-athletes perceptions (e.g. Massey & Massey, 2017). It is crucial for future research to provide a clear definition of hazing, inclusive of the potential psychological harm. Furthermore, it is also important for the media to be aware of the effect that reporting hazing can have on those viewing the information (e.g. Crow & MacIntosh, 2009). Indeed, media outlets must prioritise the importance of a clear, consistent message regarding hazing events in order for student-athletes, coaches and the wider general public to understand the potential effects.

In conclusion, the present research has provided an interesting introduction to the general public's perception of hazing events. Evidence has been provided to suggest that the general public have conflicting perceptions of hazing initiations. It would appear that while hazing has been shown to affect individuals emotionally, a degree of acceptance exists regarding some events. Future qualitative and quantitative research is required to examine this further and provide a clearer definition as to what constitutes hazing. This will allow members of the general public to realise the effects that hazing events, regardless of severity can have.

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