

## **FACTORS AFFECTING INVOLVEMENT OF STUDENTS IN THE FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES**

### **ABSTRACT**

This descriptive survey research design aimed to study the factors affecting involvement of students in fraternities and sororities. Using complete enumeration technique, one hundred and forty-eight (148) members of seven (7) registered fraternities and sororities in the Southern Philippines Agri-Business Marine and Aquatic School of Technology (SPAMAST), answered the validated researcher-made survey questionnaire. The results show that the four (4) factors; peer, personal, school and family, had an overall mean 2.6 which was recognized as a moderate description which entails that students sometimes observed these factors in joining activities related to fraternities and sororities. Furthermore, the results showed p-value of 0.0005 which meant that there was a positive significant relationship between the level of factors and the level of involvement of students in fraternities and sororities. Based on the findings, it was recommended for schools administrations to formulate programs or awareness campaigns to disseminate negative effect student's involvement in fraternities and sororities, parents to monitor social and academic activities of children at school.

**Keywords:** Factors, Involvement, Fraternities, Sororities

## INTRODUCTION

Fraternities and sororities are social organizations common in many state and private universities and colleges. These social groups often play a big part in college life because it is one way for students to meet new people, form friendships and go to fun events. In that sense many students are influenced to join these organizations.

In terms of the number of students joining a Greek organization, over 800 campuses in these United States and Canada participate in Greek Life. American experts believed that approximately nine million students across their country join a fraternity or sorority. (<http://www.greatvaluecolleges.net/>).

Today fraternities, sororities and other organizations have become a staple in the Philippines education system. In prestigious universities in the Philippines like UP Diliman, the number of students joining the Greek life today is decreasing compared five years ago due to some quite notorious issues in picking the best and the brightest recruits (<http://diliman-diary.blogspot.com/>).

College students join fraternities and are subjected to extreme hazing rituals which defeat the real essence of brotherhood and camaraderie. In most “unreported” cases, the torment members must go through, blur the lines between initiation and torture. An evidence of this scenario was the death of a college student in Manila because of the injuries he suffered following a fraternity hazing incident.

In the Philippines, hazing is illegal. Republic Act No. 8049 or the anti-hazing law penalizes members of a sorority, fraternity or organization involved in the infliction of harm to neophytes. In effect since 1995, the anti-hazing law sets a life imprisonment sentence if the neophyte dies or is raped or mutilated. It also sets the penalty of prison terms of at least 17 years to a maximum of 20 years if the hazing victim becomes insane, mentally ill, sexually dysfunctional or blind.

Recently, Valenzuela Rep. Sherwin Gatchalian paused the House Bill 4714 which completely banned hazing and violent initiation rites. The new bill also imposes heavier penalties, including the provision of damages to the victims and their family. Until it becomes a law and strictly enforced, fraternities, sororities and other organizations, and their practices in the country will remain under fire (<http://asianjournal.com/editorial/brotherhood/#sthash.Se4lCovs.dpuf>).

In Southern Philippines Agri-Business and Marine and Aquatic School of Technology (SPAMAST) – Digos Campus, Matti, Digos City, Student Organization Discipline Office (SODO) records showed some issues in terms of initiation and involvement. In relation to this, the researchers prompted to study the factors affecting involvement of students in fraternities and sororities. Using a survey questionnaire, researchers can gather information from the respondents.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study was to explore the factors affecting engagement of students in fraternities and sororities. Specifically, it aimed to:

1. Determine the profile of students involved in fraternities and sororities;
2. Identify the level of the factors affecting involvement of students in fraternities and sororities in terms of personal, peer, school and family;
3. Identify the level of involvement of students in fraternities and sororities in terms of recruitment and initiation, organizational activities and indulgence in vices; and
4. Determine the relationship between the level of the factors and the level of involvement of students in fraternities and sororities.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

A descriptive survey design was used in the study. A survey was used to collect original data for describing a population too large to observe directly. A descriptive survey was used because it provided an accurate portrayal or account of the characteristics, for example behaviours, opinions, abilities, beliefs, and knowledge of a particular individual, situation or group.

### Research Locale

This research was conducted in Southern Philippines Agri-Business Marine and Aquatic School of Technology (SPAMAST)– Digos Campus, Mati, Digos City. This was located approximately 1.5 kilometers away from national road. This school was a state college which offered 6 Baccalaureate degree courses and 1 Diploma program.

The courses were BS in Agriculture with Horticulture and Animal Science as major, BS in Agribusiness with Enterprise Management as major, BS in Agro-forestry, BS in Information Technology, BS in Agricultural Engineering, Bachelor of Secondary Education with Science, Mathematics, and Technology and Livelihood Education as major. The Diploma program was Associate in Computer Technology. This also had seven (7) registered fraternities with 148 students engaged as members of fraternities and sororities during SY 2015-2016.

### Sampling Design and Technique

The researchers had used complete enumeration technique. Below was a table showing the number of members in each fraternity and sorority.

**Table 1. Summary Distribution Respondents of the Study, S.Y. 2015 – 2016.**

<b>Name of Registered Fraternities and Sororities</b>	<b>Number of Members</b>
Alpha Kappa Rho	36
Lambda Theta Psi	28
Alpha Psi Epsilon Society	23
Alpha Theta Omega	23
Xi Kappa Sigma	20
Alpha Psi Kappa	17
Alpha Phi Omega	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>148</b>

### Research Instrument

The instrument used was a researcher-made survey questionnaire that determined the profile of students, the level of factors and the level of involvement of students in fraternities and sororities. The survey questionnaires were validated by the experts using content validity. Content validity refers to the extent to which the items on a test are fairly representative of the entire domain the test seeks to measure (Salkind, 2010).

The levels of factors and the involvement of students in fraternities and sororities were being interpreted by the following scale:

<b>Scale</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
4.6 – 5	Very High	This means that the indicator is always observed.
3.6 – 4.5	High	This means that the indicator is often observed.
2.6 – 3.5	Moderate	This means that the indicator is sometimes observed.
1.6 – 2.5	Low	This means that the indicator is rarely observed.
1.0 – 1.5	Very Low	This means that the indicator is never observed.

### **Data Gathering Procedure**

The researchers followed the following procedure in gathering the needed data:

1. A formal letter addressed to the campus director was sent to ask permission to conduct the study.
2. A copy of registered fraternities and sororities with the list of members was generated from the SODO.
3. The researchers personally administered the survey questionnaire to the respondents.
4. The researchers retrieved the questionnaires right after the respondents finished answering the questionnaires.
5. The data collected were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted.

### **Statistical Tools**

The statistical tools that used were the following:

1. Relative frequency was used in getting the profile of respondents in terms of year level, gender, and family's monthly income.
2. Mean was used in getting the level of the factors and the level of involvement of students in fraternities and sororities.
3. Pearson r was used in tracing the relationship between the factors and involvement of students in fraternities and sororities.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **I. Profile of Students Involved in Fraternities and Sororities**

Table 2 showed the profile of the respondents of the study. In terms of gender, 68.92% were males and 31.08% were females. The result indicated that most of the respondents were males.

In terms of year level, 52.70% belonged to the 2<sup>nd</sup> year students; 21.62% belonged to 3<sup>rd</sup> year students; 23.65% belonged to 4<sup>th</sup> year students; and only 2.03% belonged to 5<sup>th</sup> year students. The result implied that majority of the students who were engaged in fraternities and sororities were new recruits since students in first year level were not allowed to join fraternity and sorority.

In terms of monthly's family income; 51.35% of the total population had claimed to have a monthly income that ranged to ₱5,000 and below; 33.78% claimed to have a monthly income that ranged to ₱6,000 to ₱10,000; 10.13% claimed to have a monthly income that range to ₱11,000 to ₱15,000; and only 4.72% claimed to have a monthly income that ranged from ₱16,000 ₱20,000.

**Table 2. Profile of Students Involved in Fraternities and Sororities in Terms of Year Level, Gender and Family's Monthly Income, SY 2015-2016.**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Relative Frequency</b>
Gender (sex):		
Male	102	68.92
Female	46	31.08
Year level:		
2 <sup>nd</sup> year	78	52.70
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	32	21.62
4 <sup>th</sup> year	35	23.65
5 <sup>th</sup> year	3	2.03
Monthly's Family Income		
₱500 – ₱5,000	76	51.35
₱6,000 – ₱10,000	50	33.78
₱11,000 – ₱15,000	15	10.13
₱16,000 – ₱20,000	7	4.72

## **II. Level of the Factors Affecting the Involvement of Students in Fraternities and Sororities**

### **Personal Beliefs**

Table 3 showed the level of the personal beliefs affecting involvement of students in fraternities and sororities in terms of personal beliefs. Result indicated that items 1, 4, 7, 8, 10 had obtained a high level description which implied that students were engaged in fraternities and sororities to have more opportunities of involvement in campus life and to gain more friends. The rest of the items shared a common description which was an average level which implied that academic and extra-curricular activities were just secondary reasons a fraternity and sorority contributed in their college life.

**Table 3. Level of the Personal Beliefs as Factor Affecting Involvement of Students in Fraternities and Sororities, SY 2015-2016.**

<b>I believe that joining fraternity helps me...</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
1. to have more opportunities for involvement in campus life.	3.65	High
2. to have scholastic opportunities.	3.06	Moderate
3. to render service and/or philanthropic opportunities.	3.42	Moderate
4. to have opportunities for leadership development.		
5. to have social opportunities (e.g. parties)	3.59	High
6. to perform well in my studies.	3.28	Moderate
7. to participate in athletics.	3.17	Moderate
8. to win more friends.	3.99	High
9. in my future career.	3.89	High
10. to build self-confidence.	3.30	Moderate
	3.55	High
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>3.49</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

The total mean in personal factor was 3.39 which obtained a moderate level description which meant that the level of the personal factor was moderate. In joining fraternity and sorority, students sometimes observed and rely on their own decisions. Joining a fraternity is a personal decision that only an individual can make. Many people join a fraternity for the social aspects (Pikes, 2015).

### **Peer**

Table 4 showed the level of the peer factor affecting involvement of students in fraternities and sororities. The result indicated that only item number 5 obtained a high description. This means that statement is often observed.

**Table 4. Level of the Peer Factor Affecting Involvement of Students in Fraternities and Sororities, SY 2015-2016.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
1. I spend my spare time with my peers.	3.09	Moderate
2. I feel guilty when I refuse to go to fun events with my friends.	2.86	Moderate
3. I can't refuse when my friends ask favor from me.	2.90	Moderate
4. I feel regret any time I stay away with my peers.	2.79	Moderate
5. I love being with my friends.	3.74	High
<b>Total Mean</b>	3.08	Moderate

The rest of the items obtained a moderate description. The peer factor obtained a total mean of 3.08 which was described as moderate. This implied that students often observed peer as a factor influencing their involvement to fraternities or sororities and that peers moderately influenced them in joining the greek organization. By modelling students adapt behaviors from their peers (Jensen et. al, 2011).

### **Family Factor**

Table 5 showed the level of the family factor affecting the involvement of students in fraternities and sororities. The result indicated that all items were described as low.

**Table 5. Level of the Family Factor Affecting Involvement of Students in Fraternities and Sororities, SY 2015-2016.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
1. My parents are members of fraternity/sorority in their college life.	1.55	Low
2. I am told by my parents to join in fraternity/sorority.	1.86	Low
3. My family encourage me to participate in all the related fraternity/sorority activities.	1.64	Low
4. My engagement in fraternity/sorority contributes a lot to uplift the status of my family in the society.	2.08	Low
5. My parents preferred me to be part of fraternity/sorority rather than any other organizations in the campus.	1.73	Low
<b>Total Mean</b>	1.77	Low

This means that the parents of the students did not encourage their children to join fraternity and sorority and preferred their children to be engaged in other organizations in the campus. The total mean was 1.77 which was described as low. Thus, family had low influence because they rarely allowed their children to get involved in any activity related to fraternity and sorority. Parents have voiced concern about college student joining a fraternity due to harsh issues happening in college life of their children (<http://goo.gl/EwxZos>).

### School Factor

Table 6 showed the level of school factor affecting involvement of students in fraternities and sororities.

**Table 6. Level of the School Factor Affecting the Involvement of Students in Fraternities and Sororities, SY 2015-2016.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
1. Campus administration encourages students to join fraternity/sorority.	1.66	Low
2. Campus administration offers programs to encourage involvement of students in campus activities.	2.44	Low
3. Supreme Student government includes fraternity/sorority in outreach program.	2.72	Moderate
4. Campus administrations entertain projects proposed by fraternity/sorority.	2.90	Moderate
5. Campus administration awards best fraternity/sorority.	2.42	Low
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>2.43</b>	<b>Low</b>

Items 1, 2 and 5 held a low description which implied that the school administration rarely encouraged, entertained and awarded best fraternities and sororities. The total mean was 2.43, which was described as low. Thus, the school factor had low influence because the school administration rarely encouraged students to be involved in fraternity and sorority. School administration assists organization in college yet does not encourage students join fraternity (<http://www.minnesotapikes.org/joining-pike/why-join-pike/>).

### III. Overall Level of the Factors Affecting Involvement

Table 7 showed the overall factors affecting involvement of students in fraternities in terms of personal, peer, family and school.

**Table 7. Overall Factors Affecting Involvement of Students in Fraternities and Sororities, SY 2015-2016.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
1. Personal	3.49	Moderate
2. Peer	3.08	Moderate
3. Family	1.77	Low
4. School	2.43	Low
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>2.69</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

The result indicated that personal and peer factors obtained a moderate description which were being interpreted that student sometimes observed these factors in their decisions of joining fraternity and sorority. On the other hand, the school and family factors obtained a low description which were being interpreted that students rarely observed these factors in their decisions of joining fraternity and sorority. The overall mean of the factors was 2.59 which were moderate. This means that students sometimes observed the factors in joining fraternity and sorority.

### IV. The Level of Involvement of Students in Fraternities and Sororities

#### Recruitment and Initiation

Table 8 showed the level of involvement of students in fraternities and sororities in terms of recruitment and initiation.

**Table 8. Level of Involvement of Students in Fraternities and Sororities in Terms of Recruitment and Initiation, SY 2015-2016.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
1. I participate in recruiting new members.	3.04	Moderate
2. I participate in giving tasks to pledgee during initiation.	3.15	Moderate
3. I participate in hazing (if any) during initiation.	3.05	Moderate
4. I participate in performing initiation rituals.		
5. I am active in inviting other students to join my organization.	3.24	Moderate
	3.11	Moderate
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>3.12</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

The result indicated that item 1 obtained a mean of 3.04, item 2 had 3.15, item 3 had 3.05, item 4 had 3.24, and item 5 had 3.11. All the items were described as moderate. The total mean was 3.12 which also described as moderate. Result implied that respondents sometimes participated in the activities in relation to recruitment and initiation. It was because only the officers were given authority to give task during initiation.

### **Organizational Activities**

Table 9 showed the level of involvement of students in fraternities and sororities in terms of organizational activities.

**Table 9. Level of Involvement of Students in Fraternities and Sororities in Terms of Organizational Activities, SY 2015-2016.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
1. I participate in the regular meetings and conferences conducted by the organization.	3.93	High
2. I attend every activity hosted by the organization.	3.74	High
3. I attend community service initiated by the organization.	3.77	High
4. I contribute my talent and skill in every activity hosted by the organization.	3.41	Moderate
5. I join every activity in the college with collaboration by the organization.	3.59	High
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>3.69</b>	<b>High</b>

Result revealed that items obtained high description with means 3.93 (item 1), 3.74 (item 2), 3.77 (item 3), 3.59 (item 5) except for item 4 which had moderate description with mean of 3.41. Respondents had often participated in organizational activities and they only sometimes showcased their talents and skills. In overall, the mean was 3.69 or high. Respondents were often involved in the activities conducted by the organization. Hence, the students were encouraged to join the activities organized by their organization and help them became more knowledgeable on what was the purpose of their organization.

### Indulgence in Vices

Table 10 showed the level of involvement of students in fraternities and sororities in terms of indulgence in vices. As revealed, 1, 3, 4, and 5 obtained a description of very low with means 1.33, 1.28, 1.34, and 1.58 respectively. Only in item 2 that obtained a description of low with a mean of 1.71. The overall was 1.45 which had a description of very low. This implied that respondents were never indulged in vices. They rarely drink alcohol during social gatherings/parties sponsored by the organization. Based from the profile of students, majority of them were new recruits who have not yet exposed a lot in attending social gatherings hosted by the organization. They were not yet influenced by their brotherhood.

**Table 10. Level of Involvement of Students in Fraternities and Sororities in Terms of Indulgence in Vices, SY 2015-2016.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
1. I learn to cut classes since I became a member of the organization.	1.33	Very Low
2. I drink alcohol during social gathering or party sponsored by the organization.	1.71	Low
3. I smoke cigarettes after I became a member of the organization.	1.28	Very Low
4. I smoke cigarettes during social gathering sponsored by the organization.	1.34	Very Low
5. I enjoy drinking and smoking together with my co members in the organization.	1.58	Very Low
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>1.45</b>	<b>Very Low</b>

### V. Overall Level of Involvement of Students in Fraternities

Table 11 showed the entire level of involvement of students in fraternities and sororities. The result indicated that the level of involvement of students in recruitment and initiation was described as moderate with a mean of 3.12. The level of involvement in organizational activities was described as high with a mean of 3.69. The level of involvement in indulgence in vices was described as very low with a mean of 1.45. Among the factors, respondents were highly and often involved in the activities hosted by the organization. The overall level of involvement of students in fraternities and sororities was moderate with a mean of 2.75. Students were often involved in the activities of fraternity and sorority which they belonged. Surveys described that students were active in joining social gatherings such as anniversary and reunion (ANITA, 2011).

**Table 11. Overall Level of Involvement of Students in Fraternities and Sororities, SY 2015-2016.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
1. Recruitment and Initiation	3.12	Moderate
2. Organizational Activities	3.69	High
3. Indulgence in Vices	1.45	Very Low
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>2.75</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

## **VI. Relationship Between the Level of Factors and Level of Involvement of Students in Fraternities and Sororities**

Table 12 showed the relationship between the independent variables like personal, peer, family, and school with the dependent variables like recruitment and initiation, organizational activities, and indulgence in vices. Personal factor correlated with recruitment and initiation, organizational activities and indulgence in vices obtained a p-value of 0.013, 0.001, and 0.167 respectively. Personal factor had a positive significant relationship to the involvement of students in recruitment and initiation ( $p=0.013$ ) and organizational activities ( $p=0.001$ ). But the personal factor showed no significant relationship to the involvement of students in indulgence in vices ( $p=0.167$ ).

The peer factor when correlated to recruitment and initiation, organizational activities and indulgence in vices obtained p-value of 0.008, 0.037, and -0.356 respectively. Peer factor had a positive significant relationship to the involvement of students in recruitment and initiation ( $p=0.008$ ) and organizational activities ( $p=0.037$ ). Peer factor showed no negative significant relationship to the involvement of students in indulgence in vices ( $p=-0.356$ ).

The family factor correlated to recruitment and initiation, organizational activities and indulgence in vices obtained p-value of 0.585, 0.157, and 0.003 respectively. Family factor had no significant positive relationship to the recruitment and initiation ( $p=0.585$ ) and organizational activities ( $p=0.157$ ). The family factor showed a positive significant relationship to the involvement of students in indulgence in vices ( $p=0.003$ ).

The school factor correlated to recruitment and initiation, organizational activities and indulgence in vices obtained a p-value of 0.279, 0.078, and 0.070 respectively. School factor had no significant positive relationship to the involvement of students in recruitment and initiation ( $p=0.279$ ), organizational activities ( $p=0.078$ ) and indulgence in vices ( $p=0.070$ ).

The overall relationship between the level of the factors and the level of involvement of students in fraternities and sororities was significant with a p-value of 0.0005 which was lesser than the 0.05 level of significance.

**Table 12. Shows the Relationship of the Level of the Factors and Involvement of Students in Fraternities and Sororities, SY 2015-2016.**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Recruitment And Initiation</b>	<b>Organizational Activities</b>	<b>Indulgence In Vices</b>	<b>Overall</b>
	P – Value	P – Value	P - Value	
<b>Personal</b>	0.013*	0.001*	0.167	
<b>Peer</b>	0.008*	0.037*	- 0.356	
<b>Family</b>	0.585	0.157	0.003*	
<b>School</b>	0.279	0.078	0.070	
<b>Overall</b>				0.0005*

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Majority of the students who were involved in fraternities and sororities were male, belonged to second year level and had family's monthly income of ₱500-₱5,000.
2. The level of the personal and peer factors on students' involvement in fraternities and sororities was moderate while the family and school factors was low.
3. Students' involvement in the organizational activities was high, moderate in recruitment and initiation and very low in indulgence of vices. In general, students were moderately engaged in the activities of fraternities and sororities.
4. Personal and peer factors were significantly correlated to students' involvement in recruitment and initiation and organizational activities, while family factor was significantly correlated to indulgence of students in vices. In overall, personal, peer and family were factors affecting students' involvement in fraternities and sororities.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following were recommended:

1. School administration may formulate programs or awareness campaigns for all fraternity and sorority members on the negative effects of hazing activities and indulgence in vices to their academic life.
2. Guidance and Counselling office may develop developmental programs for students that would help cultivate both their intrapersonal and interpersonal skills. Responsible parenting for may also be given to the parents since they comprise a vital function in the emotional, psychological and emotional development of the students.
3. School Discipline Office may strictly implement the school policies most especially with regards to the recruitment and initiation activities which inflict psychological and physical harm to the students.
4. Parents may have frequent monitoring on the academic and social activities of their children in school.
5. Students may be more cautious in joining fraternity and sorority if this really good in their college life.
6. Another study on factors affecting students' engagement in Greek organizations exploring other antecedents may be conducted.

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