Hazing, Bullying, and Cyberbullying: Elucidating the Differences

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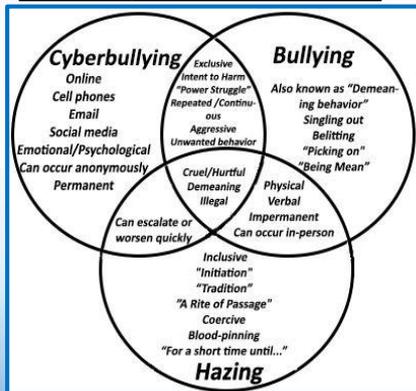
INTRODUCTION

• The identification and differentiation between hazing and bullying can be problematic for U.S. Military Service Members, despite Department of Defense (DoD) efforts to prevent bullying and hazing.[8]

• In recent years with the advent of technology, a relatively new form of bullying has emerged called cyberbullying.[9]

• The resultant effects of these three behaviors, individually and collectively, can lead to severe health problems or even death for those who fall victim to them.[2]

  o Additionally, these behaviors do not contribute to advancing the mission or to total force readiness of Service Members.

  o New ways to correctly identify, prevent, and stop these behaviors must be provided to commanders and all military personnel.

FIGURE 1. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES AMONG HAZING, BULLYING, AND CYBERBULLYING

PURPOSES AND HYPOTHESES

1. To create and update fact sheets for these behaviors
2. To create an activity booklet detailing ways to prevent these behaviors
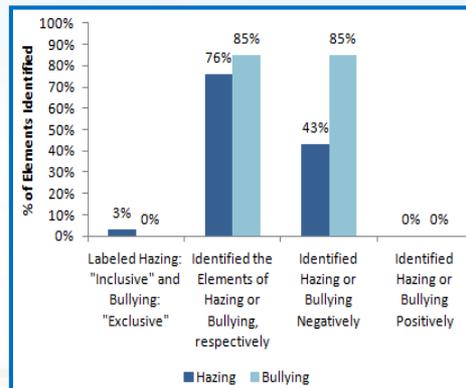3. To score comments related to hazing and bullying from a human relations population

H1: Participants will identify hazing as "inclusive" more so than bullying being "exclusive".

H2: More definition elements in the comments will be included for hazing than for bullying.

H3: Participants will indicate that bullying is more negative than hazing.

H4: No participants will indicate that bullying is more positive than hazing.

TABLE 1. METHODS

Three Fact Sheets	• A literature search was conducted and an annotated bibliography was created for hazing, bullying, and cyberbullying. • One reference was used for the hazing fact sheet, 3 references were used for the bullying fact sheet, and 4 references were used for the cyberbullying fact sheet. • Fact sheets were updated with newer information for hazing and bullying, including the new 2015 DoD Directive policy pertaining to hazing and bullying. • Additionally, a third fact sheet was created for cyberbullying.
Activity Booklet	• The same literature review and annotated bibliography that was conducted for these three behaviors informed the content for the activity booklet. • The activity booklet details the differences between hazing, bullying, and cyberbullying, including identifying warning signs and combative factors, and gives resources to adults who may experience such behaviors.

Qualitative Comment Scoring	• Design: Cross-sectional survey
	• Sample size: 81 participants from a human relations population; 7 participants were removed so 74 responses were evaluated and analyzed.
	• Measure of interest: Describe the difference between bullying and hazing in one sentence; the focus was on attitudes or key words related to these behaviors.
	• There were a total of 8 variables that were analyzed.
	  o 1st variable: The word "inclusion" associated with hazing
	  o 2nd variable: The word "exclusion" associated with bullying
	• Elements of hazing and bullying were analyzed through qualitative scoring.
	  o 3rd variable: Analysis of key words like: acceptance, initiation, rites of passage, tradition, and one time in relation to hazing
	  o 4th variable: Analysis of key words like: left-out, belittling, cyberbullying, continuous, and "power trip" in relation to bullying
	• Attitudes towards hazing and bullying were also examined.
	  o 5th variable: Negative attitudes towards hazing
	  o 6th variable: Negative attitudes towards bullying
	  o 7th variable: Positive attitudes towards hazing
	  o 8th variable: Positive attitudes towards bullying
	• Data were collected via SurveyMonkey and analyzed in Microsoft Excel.
	• A scoring system was created through a ranking system of either 0 or 1. A "1" corresponded to answers that did fit to the variable criteria and a "0" corresponded to answers that did not correspond to the presence of the indicated variable. For the attitude variables, H (for hazing) or B (for bullying) was denoted to indicate whether the attitude was towards hazing or bullying. Therefore, a code of 1H would denote that the attitude variable was present and was directed towards hazing.

FIGURE 2. QUALITATIVE COMMENT SCORING ANALYSIS

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

H1: *Supported* — Few participants identified hazing as an inclusive act and no participants identified bullying as an exclusive act.

H2: *Not Supported* — 76% of participants identified elements of hazing in comparison to 85% of participants who identified elements of bullying.

H3: *Supported* — 85% of participants identified bullying as a negative act while only 43% of participants identified hazing as a negative act.

H4: *Supported* — No participants identified either hazing or bullying as a positive act.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

BEST PRACTICES

Overall
• Show the consequences of hazing, bullying, and cyberbullying.
• Distribute the activity booklet to younger adults in schools and to new military Service Members.

Hazing and Bullying
• Teach the detailed differences between hazing and bullying.
• Distinguish that hazing and bullying are equally harmful.
• Model behaviors that do not promote hazing and bullying activities.

Cyberbullying
• Distribute fact sheets to promote cyber safety, online literacy training, and environments free from hazing and bullying.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

• The DoD should establish a formal definition of cyberbullying.
• Develop questions about cyberbullying to be incorporated into the DEOMI Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS) and other products.
• Analyze relationships for more vulnerable subgroups in regards to hazing, bullying, and cyberbullying.
• Compare all three behaviors on an individual level versus a unit level.
• Sample other populations of Active Duty Service Members across the Armed Services to yield insights to further understand the perpetuation of hazing, bullying, and cyberbullying.

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