BIG FIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS OF COLLEGIATE SOCIAL FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES

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This study examined differences in personality between fraternity- and sorority-affiliated college students and unaffiliated college students. A 20-item online survey was completed by 613 undergraduates (51% fraternity- and sorority-affiliated) measuring the Big Five personality factors. Analyses were conducted using independent samples t-tests to compare personalities of fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students to unaffiliated students. Fraternity and sorority members scored higher on measures of extraversion, measures of conscientiousness, and lower on measurers of neuroticism than nonmembers.

Research on undergraduate, collegiate, social fraternities and sororities focuses on the negative aspects of Greek life (see Caudill et al., 2006; DeBard, Lake, & Binder, 2006; DeSimone, 2009; Drout & Corsoro, 2003; Park, Sher, Wood, & Krull, 2009). The bulk of scholarly literature on fraternities and sororities focuses on alcohol abuse, legal issues, and academics. This study was intended to contribute to the growing literature on the positive aspects of the fraternity and sorority community (see Ahren, Bureau, Ryan, & Torres, 2014; Mathiasen, 2005; Porter, 2012; Reuter, Baker, Hernandez, & Bureau, 2012; Sasso, 2012). Personality has been shown to be a valuable predictor in the field of industrial and organizational psychology. Specifically, the Five Factor Model of personality (McCrae & John, 1992) can account for variance within several job performance criteria across many occupational groups (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Murphy (1996) suggests that personality is divided into behavioral consistencies and affective responses (i.e., consisting of values/interests and dispositions/temperaments, respectively). Although dispositions are relatively stable (Costa & McCrae, 1986), behavior can be shaped (Skinner, 1958). In fraternity and sorority recruitment, member personalities are possibly due to two non-exclusive processes: first, potential members are attracted to organizational members with similar dispositional as themselves (Judge & Cable, 1997; Schneider, 1987) and second, member personalities (i.e., behavioral consistencies) are changed over time by forces within the organization. For example, a college student open to new experiences might be attracted to a particular fraternal organization because he perceives the members of that organization to also be open to new experiences, thus reinforcing his disposition. On the other hand, a college student with a behavioral pattern of consistent aggression might join an organization of less aggressive behaving members because of his status as a legacy. Over time, the organization as a whole may influence the student to behave less aggressively, because the members do not value aggressive behavior, thus eventually shaping the behavioral consistencies of the student. The authors believe that by demonstrating the positive effects of fraternity and sororities upon member personality, an argument can be made to justify the merit of joining of such organizations. In order to examine the effect of fraternity and sorority organizational forces upon member personality, fraternity/sorority member personality must first be distinguished among different organizations. Before distinguishing among different organizations, fraternity and sorority member personality must be distinguished from the personality traits of unaffiliated students, the purpose of the present study.

Review of Literature

Research on the Merits of Fraternities and Sororities

Literature on fraternities and sororities is dominated by research on alcohol use and abuse (Borsari & Carey, 1999). Members are often stereotyped such that all fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students have parties and binge drink (Wechsler, Kuh, & Davenport, 1996). Wechsler, Dowdall, Davenport, and Castillo (1995) define "binge drinking" as "having consumed five or more drinks in a row for men and four or more drinks in a row for women" within a two-week period (p. 922). They found that 75% of the fraternity members of their sample engaged in binge drinking, while Caudill et al. (2006) found that 86% of their fraternity sample engaged in binge drinking. Studies on the frequency of college and fraternity/sorority binge drinking have led researchers to examine the secondary effects and contexts of fraternity and sorority member drinking behaviors (Borsari & Carey, 1999; Meilman, Leichliter, & Presley, 1999; Wechsler et al., 1996; Workman, 2001), as well as the possible demographic characteristics associated with the behavior (Caudill et al., 2006; DeSimone, 2009; Park et al., 2009; Wechsler et al., 1996). According to Wechsler et al. (1996) and Meilman et al. (1999), fraternity and sorority members are more likely than unaffiliated students to have a hangover, do something they later regretted, miss a class, experience memory loss, get into an argument, and drive under the influence of alcohol, among other risky behaviors.

At first glance of the literature on fraternities and sororities, alcohol is the most readily available subject; however, more research is beginning to appear for the merit of joining these organizations from the perspective of academic success. DeBard et al. (2006) compared fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students to unaffiliated students in their first year of college in regards to grades, credit hours earned, and retention rates. They found that affiliated students of both genders have lower overall grade point averages (GPAs) in their first year of college on average when compared to unaffiliated students. Nonmembers displayed higher GPAs each semester of college, higher cumulative GPAs, and earned more credit hours than fraternity and sorority members on average in the first year, although fraternity and sorority members had significantly higher retention rates than nonmembers (84% vs. 74% for women, 83% vs. 71% for men). Furthermore, Asel, Seifert, and Pascarella (2009) observed that fraternity and sorority affiliation did not correlate with academic performance, development of general or liberal arts competencies, or development of career and professional preparation.

Pascarella, Flowers, and Whitt (2001) observed a continued negative effect in fraternity- and sorority-affiliated student academics, but a less pronounced effect in years two and three of college. These findings suggest that any major detriments to learning resulting from joining a fraternity or sorority occur during the first year of college when transitioning to the work load and lifestyle of college is coupled with the new member process of joining a fraternity or sorority.

Contrary to DeBard et al. (2006), DeBard and Sacks (2010) found positive results for fraternity and sorority academics. They found that students joining fraternities or sororities during their first year of college earned significantly higher GPAs than unaffiliated students. DeBard and Sacks also found that fraternity- and sorority-affiliated first year students had significantly higher retention rates compared to their sophomore year. The contradiction in these two findings indicates that the academic success and retention of students might vary from institution to institution. DeBard and Sacks (2010) believe that institutions with lower academic standards will have more academic problems with fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students than institutions with higher selectivity and academic standards.

Even though evidence is mixed for fraternity

and sorority members' academic performance, Whipple and Sullivan (1998) give reason for optimism about fraternities and sororities, claiming that the organizations have potential as learning communities. Whipple and Sullivan explain that fraternities and sororities are primed for student learning in that there is potential for a living-learning community with member housing. In member housing, strong connections are formed between members, leadership development abounds with the self-governing nature of fraternities and sororities, and in many organizations, the expectation of community service.

Pike (2000) found that fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students differed from unaffiliated students in average levels of social involvement and gains in general abilities, with affiliated students reporting higher levels of both while not reporting lower levels in other measured constructs. After observing college experiences and cognitive development of students, Pike found that the differences observed between fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students and unaffiliated students were more pronounced for college experiences. Affiliated members were significantly more involved with campus clubs, showed greater gains in communication skills, greater gains in interpersonal skills, and greater gains in critical thinking than unaffiliated students.

In regards to the literature, there appear to be both benefits and detriments to individuals joining fraternities and sororities. In exploring the differences between fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students from unaffiliated students, personality has been absent as a topic of research. By exploring the effects of fraternity/sorority membership on personality, more clarity might be brought to the merits of such organizations.

Fraternities/Sororities and Personality

The Five Factor Model of personality (also known as the "Big Five" personality factors; McCrae & John, 1992) integrates a variety of personality constructs (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience) in such a way as to give a global description of personality, while tapping in to both dispositions (e.g. being open to new experiences as in "openness") and behavior (e.g. assertive actions as in "extraversion") in as few as five scores. The Big Five personality factors have been able to predict academic success (Cole, Field, & Giles, 2003a; Furnham, 2012; Kurtz, Puher, & Cross, 2012; Schnuck & Handal, 2011), health-promoting behaviors (Raynor & Levine, 2009), self-esteem and self-concept (Worrell & Cross, 2004), political opinions (Cooper, McCord, & Socha, 2011), and social adjustment (Kurtz et al., 2012; Schnuck & Handal, 2011).

The personality factor of extraversion is described as a form of positive emotionality, manifested as dominance, talkativeness, sociability, warmth, affiliation, and energy (McCrae & John, 1992). Meta-analysis has demonstrated that extraversion is a valid predictor of different types of performance across multiple occupations (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students have been found to differ from unaffiliated students in terms of social involvement (Pike, 2000), which tends to involve extraversion to a large extent. Park et al. (2009) found extraversion positively correlated with fraternity/sorority affiliation. Additionally, Cole, Field, and Giles (2003b) correlated job applicant personality traits with résumé items and found that membership in college clubs and social fraternities/sororities positively associated with extraversion. For these reasons, it is hypothesized that fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students will score higher than unaffiliated students on measures of extraversion.

McCrae and John (1992) describe neuroticism as chronic negative affect, the tendency to experience distress, and the cognitive and behavioral repercussions of those characteristics. Neuroticism has been found to correlate positively with social activities (Cole et al., 2003a). This emotional instability might be due to individuals' lack of time stemming from involvement with too many activities. The demands of joining

a fraternity or sorority indicate that the collegiate extracurricular activity would lead to poor academic performance and adjustment (Asel et al., 2009; DeBard et al., 2006), and thus, lead to higher measures of neuroticism among fraternity and sorority members. Furthermore, Park and colleagues (2009) found neuroticism to be positively correlated with fraternity and sorority affiliation. However, Cole and colleagues (2003b) later found that membership in college clubs and social fraternities/sororities negatively correlated with neuroticism, explaining that the close quarters living arrangements and other aspects of communal living may be unappealing for individuals high in neuroticism. For this reason, it is hypothesized that fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students will score lower than unaffiliated students on measures of neuroticism.

The personality factor openness is commonly observed as aspects of intellect, but broader in scope (McCrae & John, 1992). This scope encompasses intelligence, imagination, and perception, while also serving as "sensitivity to art and beauty" (McCrae & John, 1992, p. 197). Barrick and Mount (1991) found openness to be a valid predictor of training proficiency across multiple occupations. This is presumably due to individuals scoring high on openness measures also having positive attitudes toward learning experiences. In regards to fraternities and sororities, De Los Reyes and Rich (2003) explained that the college fraternity was inspired by the ancient Greeks of Europe, demonstrating openness, but now has digressed away from their original, scholarly focus into the purely social organizations that they are today. Pascarella et al. (2001) found that among undergraduate students participating in diversity programming, fraternity and sorority members chose to attend fewer sessions and, consequently, declined in openness to diversity during their first year of college. Asel and colleagues (2009) maintain that although fraternities and sororities facilitate members' social involvement, the involvement lacks relationship diversity and heterogeneity. This leads to the hypothesis that fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students will score lower than unaffiliated students on measures of openness to experience.

Conscientiousness is characterized by thoroughness, neatness, organization, diligence, and an orientation towards achievement (McCrae & John, 1992). It is the Big Five factor most associated with academic achievement (Cole et al., 2003a; Furnham, 2012; Kurtz et al., 2012; Schnuck & Handal, 2011), as well as with the promotion of healthy lifestyle choices and behaviors (Raynor & Levine, 2009). Barrick and Mount (1991) found conscientiousness to be the strongest predictor of job performance, consistently correlating positively across several types of performance and a multitude of occupations. According to Raynor and Levine (2009), conscientious individuals are highly socialized to following rules and regulations. Their carefulness may lead them to cost-benefit analyses in decision-making. Fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students have been found to have an increased likelihood to participate in an assortment of risky behaviors, including but not limited to smoking cigarettes, consuming alcohol, binge drinking, and having a large number of sexual partners (Raynor & Levine, 2009). Some literature also points to fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students' lack of academic success (Asel et al., 2009; DeBard et al., 2006), which would indicate a lack of either mental ability or conscientiousness (Cole et al., 2003a). For this reason, it is hypothesized that fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students will score lower than unaffiliated students on measures of conscientiousness.

In regards to the last factor, agreeableness, it is hypothesized that no significant difference will be found between fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students and unaffiliated students. Agreeableness lies along a spectrum of altruism, nurturance, caring, and emotional support on one end, to hostility, indifference to others, self-centeredness, spitefulness, and jealousy at the other (McCrae & John, 1992). Worrell and Cross (2004) found that agreeableness has a moderate

effect on impression management, a measure of how one attempts to present to others. Reasoning follows that, on average, any student would not self-report that he or she were hostile, indifferent to others, self-centered, spiteful, or jealous of others because he or she is attempting to appear agreeable.

Method

Participants and Design

The total sample size of this study consisted of 635 participants. After accounting for missing data, 613 participants were included in the final analysis. All participants were a convenience sample of undergraduate students at a large, east south-central university. At this university, 1,812 students were affiliated with either a fraternity (n = 761) or sorority (n = 1,051) and 16,170 students were unaffiliated. Fraternal organizations had existed at this university for 48 years as of the time of this study. Of the sample, 427 (69.7%) participants were female and 182 (29.7%) participants were male, with four (0.01%) participants not indicating gender. This sample consisted of 313 (51.1%) participants belonging to fraternities or sororities and 300 (48.9%) participants not affiliated with fraternal organizations. Thus, 17.3% of the possible affiliated students and 1.9% of the unaffiliated students participated in this study. There was no significant difference in age between fraternity- and sorority-affiliated (M = 19.71, SD = 1.39) and unaffiliated (M = 19.88, SD = 3.90) participants, $t(605) = 0.72$, $p = .470$. However, there was a significant difference in years of education between fraternity- and sorority-affiliated participants (M = 14.46, SD = 1.12) and unaffiliated participants (M = 13.60, SD = 0.96), $t(610) = 10.73$, $p < .001$. Unaffiliated students were primarily recruited from introductory psychology classes, which accounts for the difference in education level. The design for the study was a two-group, cross-sectional design. The independent variable was fraternity/sorority affiliation and the dependent variables were personality factors.

Measures

Demographics. Participants completed an electronic demographics form including questions on age, gender, race, class year, and affiliation, if applicable.

Personality. The Mini-IPIP, a short form of the International Personality Item Pool (see Appendix A; Donnellan, Oswald, Baird, & Lucas, 2006), was given to participants to measure the Big Five personality traits (Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism). The Mini-IPIP consists of 20 brief statements that participants respond to on a Likert scale (*strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *neutral*, *agree*, *strongly agree*). A sample item from the Mini-IPIP is, "I have a vivid imagination." Another item from the Mini-IPIP measuring a different construct is, "I get chores done the right way." Short- and long-term test-retest reliability correlations for the Mini-IPIP are acceptable, with correlation coefficients over .60 across five separate studies (Donnellan et al., 2006), and the time necessary to complete the measure is kept at a minimum.

Procedures

Fraternity- and sorority-affiliated participants. Each of the North American Interfraternity Conference, National Panhellenic Conference, and National Pan-Hellenic Council organization presidents were emailed encouraging their chapters to participate in an online survey. The top three highest participating organizations by percentage for both fraternity and sorority were awarded money towards the philanthropy of their chapter's choice. Presidents forwarded the link to the online survey to their chapter members. Chapter members were given an electronic letter of informed consent, six demographic questions and then the 20-item Mini-IPIP. After completing this measure, participants were given an electronic debriefing statement.

Non-affiliated participants. The same link to the online survey given to fraternities and

sororities was also distributed to non-affiliated participants. It was posted to a University application on www.facebook.com once, explaining that participants would be entered in a drawing to win one of five gift cards. In addition to an open online post, the survey was distributed online through the Department of Psychology Study Board website that offered students course credit for participating in psychology studies. The survey was the same for non-affiliated participants as for fraternity- and sorority-affiliated participants except that non-affiliated participants were given five demographic questions and after the Mini-IPIP, participants were given the opportunity to enter the gift card drawing by providing an email address. Students participating for course credit were instructed to email the author in order to be granted credit.

Results

Preliminary Analysis

The data were cleaned and checked for missing data. Participants completely neglecting the personality survey (0 of 20 items answered) were removed from the data set. Participants' answers to the Mini-IPIP were summed and separated by construct. Descriptive statistics for all participants by personality sub-scale and affiliation are presented in Table 1. The lowest possible score on each summative sub-scale was 4.00 and the highest possible score was 20.00. The data were then checked for normality and outliers. Measures of each personality factor were found to be normally distributed via histogram across affiliation. Boxplot graphs were used to determine outlier data in regards to personality factor sum scores (on a scale of 4 to 20). In the data, one fraternity/sorority-affiliated participant was found to be an extreme outlier at the lower end of the openness to experience scale. The data were included in the final analysis because it is impossible to score below 4 out of 20, indicating plausible ranges of personality. This extreme outlier scored a 6 out of 20 on the openness scale, deviating from the rest of the sample, but measured an entirely plausible score.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Participants by Personality Sub-Scale and Affiliation.

Sub-Scale	Affiliation	*M*	*SD*	Min	Max
Extraversion	F/S	14.42	2.75	7.00	20.00
	U	13.40	3.43	4.00	20.00
Agreeableness	F/S	16.08	2.40	6.00	20.00
	U	15.86	2.44	8.00	20.00
Conscientiousness	F/S	15.19	2.64	7.00	20.00
	U	14.62	2.43	8.00	20.00
Neuroticism	F/S	10.33	2.85	4.00	18.00
	U	11.01	2.90	4.00	19.00
Openness	F/S	15.04	2.27	6.00	20.00
	U	15.11	2.51	7.00	20.00

Note: F/S = Fraternity/Sorority-affiliated; U = Unaffiliated.

To compare the homogeneity of personality scores between the fraternity/sorority-affiliated and unaffiliated groups, Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was used. Homogeneity of variance was assumed for agreeableness $F(602) = 0.30$, $p = .862$, conscientiousness $F(592) = 1.53$, $p = .217$, and neuroticism $F(595) = 0.88$, $p = .350$. Homogeneity of variance was violated for extraversion $F(600) = 16.48$, $p < .001$ and openness $F(596) = 3.97$, $p = .047$. Despite these violations, t-tests are robust, yielding adjusted degrees of freedom for variables when equal variances are not assumed. Adjusted degrees of freedom were used for the t-tests of extraversion and openness. Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each sub-scale (Table 2).

Table 2
Cronbach's Alpha for Each Sub-Scale

Sub-Scale	Cronbach's Alpha
Extraversion	.80
Agreeableness	.68
Conscientiousness	.64
Neuroticism	.66
Openness	.64

Hypothesis Testing

It was hypothesized that fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students would differ from unaffiliated students in several of the Big Five personality factors. Fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students were predicted to score higher than unaffiliated students on measures of extraversion, lower on measures of neuroticism, lower on measures of openness to experiences, lower on measures of conscientiousness, and similarly on measures of agreeableness. Independent samples t-tests were conducted in order to determine if fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students differed from unaffiliated students in the Big Five personality factors. Five t-tests were conducted between the groups comparing mean summed scores of each personality sub-scale. Alpha was set to .01.

Fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students (M = 14.42, SD = 2.75) scored significantly higher than unaffiliated students (M = 13.40, SD = 3.43) on measures of extraversion $t(556.22) = 4.02$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.33$. Hypothesis 1 was supported. Fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students (M = 10.33, SD = 2.85) scored significantly lower than unaffiliated students (M = 11.01, SD = 2.90) on measures of neuroticism $t(595) = 2.88$, $p = .004$, $d = 0.24$. Hypothesis 2 was supported. Fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students (M = 15.04, SD = 2.27) did not significantly differ unaffiliated students (M = 15.11, SD = 2.51) in measures of openness to experience $t(581.28) = 0.36$, $p = .716$, $d = 0.02$. Hypothesis 3 was not supported. Contrary to hypothesis 4, fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students (M = 15.19, SD = 2.64) scored significantly higher than unaffiliated students (M = 14.62, SD = 2.43) in measures of conscientiousness $t(592) = 2.71$, $p = .007$, $d = 0.22$. Thus, hypothesis 4 was not supported. In line with hypothesis 5, fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students (M = 16.08, SD = 2.40) did not significantly differ from unaffiliated students (M = 15.86, SD = 2.44) on measures of agreeableness $t(602) = 1.10$, $p = .272$, $d = 0.09$. Hypothesis 5 was supported.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to expand the growing literature on the positive aspects of fraternities and sororities. By distinguishing be-

tween fraternity- and sorority-affiliated member personalities from unaffiliated student personalities, the organizational forces of fraternities/sororities that shape member behavior and personality can begin to be examined. Specific hypotheses of this study included that students affiliated with fraternities and sororities, as compared to unaffiliated students, would score higher in measures of extraversion; would score lower in measures of neuroticism, openness, and conscientiousness; and would not differ in measures of agreeableness.

These hypotheses were partially supported. Fraternity and sorority members scored higher than unaffiliated students on measures of extraversion, confirming previous research (Cole et al., 2003b; Park et al., 2009). Fraternity and sorority members also scored higher than unaffiliated students on measures of emotional stability (the antithesis of neuroticism), which has been disputable in the literature (Cole et al., 2003a; Cole et al., 2003b; Park et al., 2009). Furthermore, it was predicted and observed that fraternity and sorority members did not differ from unaffiliated students on meausres of agreeableness. Contrary to our hypotheses, fraternity and sorority members scored significantly higher on measures of conscientiousness, a valuable finding for the fraternity/sorority literature. However, fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students were projected to score lower on measures of openness to experience compared to unaffiliated students. This hypothesis was not supported by the data, although no fraternity/sorority-related literature specifically speaks to either direction on this construct.

It comes as little surprise that fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students are more likely to be extraverted than the average college student. By self-selection, students determine for themselves whether or not they want to join a fraternal organization. Social fraternities and sororities encourage social involvement (Asel et al., 2009), which nourishes extraverted students' higher social and activity needs (Park et al., 2009). This is not to say that an introverted student would not join a social fraternity or sorority, but, rather, that such a student is less likely to do so than a student high in extraversion. Students low in extraversion might receive their energy from other sources than social interaction. If a student gained energy from solitude and studying in college, perhaps he or she would be more inclined to join an honor society. Such honor societies were once combined with social fraternities, but now are said to foster more intellectual activity than social fraternities (De Los Reyes & Rich, 2003). Within an honor society, an introverted student might find individuals similar to him or her.

There are several perspectives to examine for reasoning why fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students score lower on measures of neuroticism than unaffiliated students. Park et al. (2009) explain that due to the high demands of life in a fraternity or sorority, students who often experience negative emotions stay away from the fraternity and sorority community. On the other hand, the fraternity and sorority community might be deciding for itself whether or not individuals high in neuroticism join. Fraternity and sorority recruitment habits and standards might limit student intake to only those deemed emotionally stable. If a student seems too anxious, stressed, or depressed, fraternities and sororities might reject the request to join by the prospective recruit. Another possible perspective that would explain why fraternity and sorority members score lower on measures of neuroticism could be the contribution of social support by fellow members. Woodward, Rosenfeld, and May (1996) observed sex differences in social support between fraternities and sororities. Even though fraternity members provided each other with less emotional support than sorority members provided each other, fraternity members were able to offer support to each other in areas such as technical challenges or tangible needs. Woodward and colleagues also observed sorority members provided less tangible support to each other, but were stronger at supporting via lis-

tening to one another than fraternity members. Social support in any form has the potential to benefit the target of support emotionally, which could decrease neuroticism within the fraternity and sorority community.

Perhaps the most valuable finding of this study is the unanticipated difference between fraternity/sorority members and unaffiliated students in measures of conscientiousness. Cole et al. (2003b) found a positive correlation between conscientiousness and membership in college clubs and social fraternities/sororities. The authors explain that the duties and responsibilities associated with joining organizations might be attractive to individuals high in conscientiousness, who in addition to being characterized by organization, are also characterized by an orientation toward achievement (McCrae & John, 1992). Because of the strength of conscientiousness as a predictor of job performance (Barrick & Mount, 1991), this finding is incredibly valuable to the fraternity/sorority community. If organizational forces within fraternities and sororities are shaping the personalities of their members, it is possible that fraternities and sororities shape their members to become more conscientious.

Limitations

By far, the largest limitation to this study is the sample. The size of the sample was sufficient for determining significant differences of personality traits between fraternity/sorority members and nonmembers at this institution, but is limited in its generalizability. Because the study was administered online via email, most fraternity/sorority members disregarded the study. The sample also was imbalanced in regards to gender. Approximately 70 percent of the sample was female, which might affect results for both fraternity/sorority members and unaffiliated students. Recent research on differences in Big Five personality factors between men and women found that women report higher levels of agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and neuroticism than men (Vianello, Schnabel, Sriram, & Nosek, 2013). However, in regards to comparing fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students to unaffiliated students, the gender sampling was similar. Of 310 fraternity/sorority members, 199 indicated that they were female (64%). Of 299 unaffiliated students, 228 indicated that they were female (76%). If the groups of interest were biased due to gender imbalance, it would be expected that unaffiliated student group would have had higher levels on most of the measured constructs than the fraternity/sorority sample. This was only the case with measurements of neuroticism, where unaffiliated students scored higher than fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students.

Furthermore, the results from the current sample may not generalize to other samples. All participants were students from the same university in the eastern south-central region of the United States. Not all social organizations are represented on its campus. Other organizations, students from other universities, and universities in other regions of the United States have potential for different results. Surveying individual differences on a multi-institutional basis would provide more accurate portrayal of the between-group differences.

Future Research

This study was intended to be a gateway into studying the organizational forces within fraternities and sororities affecting member behavior and personality. Longitudinal studies can provide support for identifying and understanding the change in fraternity/sorority member personality over time. In order to properly measure fraternity and sorority member personality change over time, members' personality should be assessed upon entering a new organization. This tends to be during the earlier years of college, often in the earliest stages of adulthood. Members' personality could be measured again on a yearly basis, but at the very least should be measured again upon leaving the organization, most often as an alumnus. It is uncertain as to what extent personality could change in young adults

within a few years.

Additionally, fraternities and sororities stand to be studied in other areas outside of higher education. Research has yet to be conducted on fraternities and sororities' relationship to workplace organizations. Fraternities and sororities teach members human resource management processes such as recruitment, selection, and training. Members learn about organizational structure and organizational development firsthand. The modern fraternity or sorority is an excellent setting for researching leadership, as well as group/team processes. Researching fraternity and sorority members' friendships and social networks might provide useful insight for structuring other organizations to promote more social involvement. Fraternity and sorority community service, philanthropy, and the motivations behind such service also could serve as another topic of study.

Conclusion

The notion that fraternities and sororities shape their members' behavior patterns, and thus, their personalities, is far from confirmed. However, the results of the present study indicate that differences between fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students and unaffiliated students do exist, with some advantages for fraternity/sorority members. Although extraversion is not necessarily a good or bad trait to have, it does prove useful in jobs requiring enthusiasm, energy, and human interaction (e.g. sales, management; Barrick & Mount, 1991). Additionally, fraternity/sorority members display higher levels of emotional stability and conscientiousness, positive traits for most jobs (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Replication at a national level could confirm personality differences between fraternity- and sorority-affiliated students and unaffiliated students. Beyond these differences, different fraternities and sororities may affect personality development in different ways and to different extents. In order to fully understand the phenomena at hand, research on fraternities and sororities should continue, focusing on the positive potential of these organizations.

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Appendix A
Mini-International Personality Item Pool (Mini-IPIP)

Personality Sub-Scale	Item Text
Extraversion	I am the life of the party
	I don't talk a lot*
	I talk to a lot of different people at parties
	I keep in the background*
Agreeableness	I sympathize with others' feelings
	I am not interested in other people's problems*
	I feel others' emotions
	I am not really interested in others*
Conscientiousness	I get chores done the right way
	I often forget to put things in their proper place*
	I like order
	I make a mess of things*
Neuroticism	I have frequent mood swings
	I am relaxed most of the time*
	I get upset easily
	I seldom feel blue*
Openness	I have a vivid imagination
	I am not interested in abstract ideas*
	I have difficulty understanding abstract ideas*
	I do not have a good imagination*

Note: Responses were coded as *strongly disagree* (1), *disagree* (2), *feel neutral* (3), *agree* (4), *strongly agree* (5). Items marked with a (*) were reverse-coded.

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