

Effects of Risk Management Training on Sorority and Fraternity’s Adherence to Alcohol Use Policies

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Introduction

Abstract: Fraternity and sorority leaders ($N = 301$) at UT Austin attended the Ladder of Risk training program and completed a survey to measure their awareness of and adherence to Fraternal Information and Programming Group (FIPG) policies prior to and after training. The researchers also collected qualitative data through five open ended response questions. Findings and recommendations are presented.

Introduction: Recently, college administrators have attempted to combat alcohol-related issues on campus with educational programs. With conflicting findings on program efficacy, there exists a need for more research on risk management training programs. To date, no research has been performed on the Fraternal Information and Programming Group’s (FIPG) “Ladder of Risk” training.

Research Questions

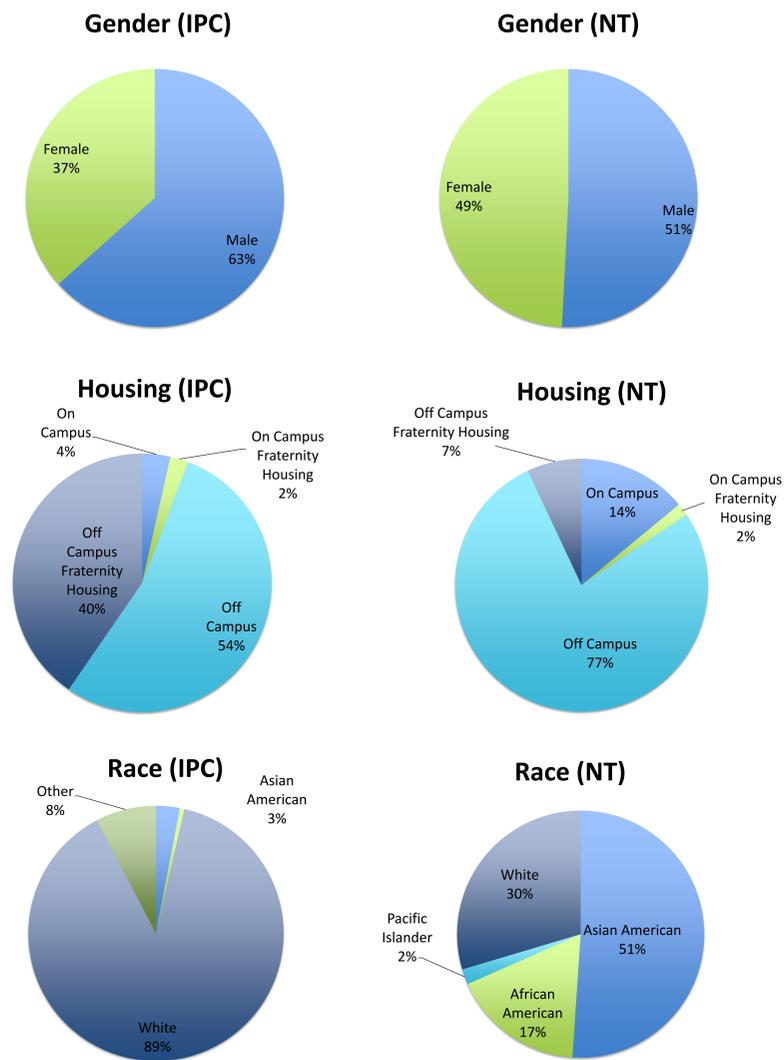
1. Does the “Ladder of Risk” risk management training increase sorority and fraternity members’ understanding of and adherence to FIPG policies related to social events and alcohol?
2. Do differences exist in the understanding and adherence of students in IFC/Panhellenic (I/P) groups and Non-Traditional (NT) groups?

Methodology

Upon attending the “Ladder of Risk” training, students completed a pre/post formatted survey assessing their understanding of FIPG event policies.

Quantitative Methods	Qualitative Methods
Pre- and post-test awareness and adherence was analyzed using SPSS.	Researchers conducted a content analyses of qualitative data based on responses to five open ended questions on the pre/post test.

Demographics



Preliminary Findings

- More NT students responded they had no understanding of multiple FIPG policies, while more I/P students reported they had full understanding of these policies prior to the training. Overall, I/P students had more awareness of these policies than NT students.
- Over 95% of I/P and a full 100% of NT students responded the training increased their understanding of FIPG risk management policies. After the training, there was no statistically significant difference in understanding of policies between the groups.
- Most respondents indicated they would be “Likely” or “Very Likely” to adhere to the policies after the training. However, about 4% of I/P respondents said they would be “Very Unlikely” to adhere to policies related to the presence of alcohol during rush, compared to 0% of NT respondents. For policies prohibiting drinking games, 7% of I/P respondents said they were “Very Unlikely” to adhere compared to under 1% of NT students.
- Over 90% of both groups responded that the training would increase their chapter’s adherence to FIPG policies, but there was a statistically significant difference in the response distribution between NT and I/P students.
- Almost twice as many NT students responded that they wanted a follow-up training (75%) compared to only 45% of I/P students.

Limitations

1. **Convenience sample:** Student population was not randomly selected. The training was mandatory for all fraternity and sorority leaders on campus.
2. **Intent vs. Adherence:** The study focused on students’ intent to adhere to policies but is not reflective of students’ actual adherence.
3. **Survey design:** Pre/post survey design format does not assess long term impact of training on student behavior
4. **Incomplete survey responses:** A small number of students did not complete all items on the survey.

Practical Implications

Survey results indicate the Ladder of Risk training is effective at increasing overall policy awareness and adherence. However, differences existed between NT and I/P groups, particularly in the likelihood of the presence of alcohol at rush and recruitment events and drinking games. The researchers suggest that the university continue to offer educational programming related to FIPG risk management policies, as well as targeted training and support around the policies students indicated they were not likely to adhere to. Finally, researchers will conduct a focus group and follow up survey to assess the long-term impact of Ladder of Risk training on behaviors and organizational change.

Question	Chi-square results
Policies governing the possession, sale, use or consumption of alcoholic beverages, while on chapter premises or during a fraternity or sorority event	$X^2 (2, N=296) = 22.935, p<.000$
Policies prohibiting the use of chapter funds to purchase alcoholic beverages	$X^2 (2, N=295) = 18.291, p<.000$
Policies prohibiting open parties	$X^2 (2, N=297) = 16.538, p<.000$
Policies prohibiting providing minors with alcohol	$X^2 (2, N=297) = 17.151, p<.000$
Policies prohibiting the possession, sale or use of any illegal drugs or controlled substances	$X^2 (2, N=294) = 16.344, p<.000$
Policies prohibiting drinking games	$X^2 (2, N=298) = 6.898, p=.032$