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Crime and Education: College Students and Their Relationship with the Clery Act

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CRIME AND EDUCATION: COLLEGE STUDENTS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP
WITH THE CLERY ACT

By

Matthew Robert Bush

Thesis

Submitted to
Northern Michigan University
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2011

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ABSTRACT

CRIME AND EDUCATION: COLLEGE STUDENTS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CLERY ACT

By

Matthew Robert Bush

The Clery Act Report is published every October 1st and contains crime statistics for crimes that occur on college campuses. This study examined how acclimated students are to the Clery Act Report. There is no research currently available regarding the Clery Act Report and its relationship with students at Northern Michigan University. Do the students who attend Northern Michigan University utilize the Clery Act Report? This study consisted of data collected from a survey of students at Northern Michigan University. The survey was administered to investigate student's relationship with the Clery Act Report and crime. This study found that only twenty-five percent of the respondents knew about the Clery Act. Also, only four percent of the respondents used the Clery Act in their decision to attend college, and only seven percent of respondents knew someone that had used the Clery Act as a tool for making their decision of which college to attend. Thus, this study clearly shows that the students at Northern Michigan University are not utilizing the Clery Act for its intended purpose.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my wife Tricia and my son Kane, I thank them both for their patience. Also I would like to thank Dr. Dale Kapla for his guidance.

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Northern Michigan University	NMU
Federal Bureau of Investigation	FBI
Uniform Crime Report	UCR
United States Department of Education	USDE
Higher Education Opportunity Act	HEOA

INTRODUCTION

The Clery Act Report is published October 1st of every year and gives students, staff and the public knowledge of crime occurring on campuses in the United States. One purpose of the act is to assist potential university students in making an informed choice, so it follows that students would utilize the Clery Act at high rates. Yet, this is not necessarily true. For instance, according to Janosik (2003), only twenty-seven percent of students surveyed are familiar with the act. In another study, Widdison found that about one percent of the students at Brigham Young University were familiar with the Clery Act Report (Widdison, 2005).

When students examine a prospective institution, they scrutinize a wide range of criteria, including crime rates, academic offerings and travel distance from their home (Schroeder, 2007; Janosik, 2004). Furthermore, in Janosik's study, he observed that only eight percent of students used crime statistics in their choice of institution to attend (Janosik, 2004). Thus, it appears that the Clery Act Report is not being utilized for its intended purpose. Clearly, there is a dearth of research associated with this act, and this study seeks to add to the existing knowledge base by surveying students at Northern Michigan University to not only determine student's familiarity with the act, but also the reasons behind their familiarity – or lack of it.

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND

The Act's Inception

There have been many amendments to the original Higher Education Act of 1965. All amendments have greatly improved the resources that students can use. The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics was originally Part II of the Student Right to Know Act. It was signed into law in November of 1990 and did not take effect until September 1st, 1991. The new amendment added the provision that postsecondary institutions disclose crime statistics and their reporting requirements. In it, institutions need to provide their security policy and post their previous three school years crime statistics. The U.S. Department of Education would enforce this act. (USDE, 2005).

In 1991 it was amended under the Higher Education Technical Amendment from providing statistics from school years to calendar years. It was again amended in 1992 with the Campus Sexual Assault Victim's Bill of Rights, which gave victims of sexual assault basic rights, including an institutional requirement to develop and distribute policy about sexual assault programs. The Amendment informs the institution that policy needs to be in place following an incident of sex offense (USDE, 2005).

The law went through another amendment in 1998 to change the title to the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act. This change was made in memory of Jeanne Clery, who was murdered on the Lehigh University campus in April of 1986. The perpetrator, a Lehigh University student, entered her dorm through propped open doors. This individual had a history of drug and

alcohol abuse, raped and murdered Jeanne after entering her room while she was asleep. Subsequent information obtained by Jeanne's parents found that there were other violent crimes that occurred on campus in the three years prior to the death of their daughter, that were not made public. Her parents, as well as other campus crime victims, took their complaint to Congress. With that, Congress changed the reporting requirements for institutions (Security on Campus, 2009).

In 2000, the Clery Act was amended with the Campus Sex Crimes Prevention Act and took effect in October 2002. This informed institutions that they must notify the campus community where information can be found concerning registered sex offenders who are on campus (Security on Campus, 2009).

On August 14th of 2008, the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) was created and was effective immediately. The HEOA expands the hate crime statistics to include larceny-theft, simple assault, intimidation and vandalism. In addition, it must provide emergency response and evacuation procedures and must notify the campus community of significant situations that pose a threat.

The new amendment was enacted with the efforts of Security on Campus, INC. and the Virginia Tech Victims Family group. The Virginia Tech Victims Family group was formed in response to the shooting that happened on the Virginia Tech campus in 2007 (Security on Campus, 2008 Amendment). This is important to have in the event that anything like the Virginia Tech shooting happens again, the number one thing is the safety of the campus, and this amendment was greatly needed.

Northern Michigan University experienced a threat first hand on February 2nd, 2011. NMU received a tip before the university opened that day about an individual who

wrote on a blog that he was going to harm the campus in some way. Northern Michigan University and the authorities found that this threat was serious enough to take action. Northern Michigan University used their emergency policy with a timely warning and closed the campus. The individual did not go through with his actions, but the way that Northern Michigan University authorities handled things was impeccable.

Clery Act Specifics

All public and private institutions receiving federal student aid are subject to the act. All institutions must provide a report by October 1st of every year which must include the previous three calendar years crime statistics and policies. All current students and employees must have access to the report. Institutions can use the Internet to provide a copy, but also notify students and employees of the exact web address of the report on the Internet.

All institutions must provide current policies for students and staff to report crimes or emergencies that occur on campus, within this, institutions must provide how they will respond to the reports. Institutions must have a statement of current policies about security and access to campus facilities.

According to the Clery Act, policies referring to campus law enforcement are required to include law enforcement's authority of security personnel on campus, their relationships with other local law enforcement agencies, and the accuracy of reporting crimes to the campus police and other local law enforcement agencies.

Institutions are obliged to provide programs that focus on informing students and staff about security procedures and the practicing of being responsible for their own safety as well as the safety of others. In addition, institutions have a duty to provide

students and staff with programs meant to inform students and staff on how to prevent crimes from occurring.

All institutions are required to provide statistics on crimes that occur on campus, in off campus buildings and property for the three previous calendar years by October 1st. There are eleven crimes that must be covered within the statistics for the report including: murder, manslaughter, aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, motor vehicle theft, arson, sex offenses, liquor law violations, drug-related violations and weapon possession. Also within each crime, if the person reporting the crime feels that the crime was motivated because of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity or a disability, this will be logged by the law enforcement agency as a hate crime (Jeanne Clery Act, 2008).

Institutions are required to have a policy stating how they monitor criminal activity at off-campus student organizations (fraternities and sororities) that are recognized by the institution in which the students are enrolled in the institution. Also in the policy are requisite statements about the possession, use and sale of alcoholic beverages along with the state's underage drinking laws and enforcement. In addition, the community should be made aware regarding the location of registered sex offender's information. For an example, it could be the law enforcement at the institution, the local law enforcement agency or posted on the Internet.

The following are the definitions used by the act for campus or on-campus, off-campus and public property:

Campus or on-campus: any building or property owned or in control by the institution, and must be in contiguous area of the institution. This would include residence halls and other property owned by the institution but is in control of another

person, like a food or retail vender. Off-campus: any building or property owned or controlled by a student organization recognized by the institution. This property must be used by students and may not be within the same contiguous area as the institution.

Public property: any area that is contiguous to an institution owned property. This could be a sidewalk, a street, a park or a parking lot (Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics, 2008).

A policy stating the institution's response to emergency situations on campus, their evacuation procedures, and the use of electronic communication and dissemination is essential. This information should be reviewed annually and there should be a policy in place to distribute the procedures to all members of the campus community. In that, institutions must test these procedures on an annual basis.

The institution must provide timely reports of crime to the campus community that is considered a threat to students and staff. These reports need to be given in such a manner that it will aid in the prevention of a similar occurrence. Institutions shall make, keep and maintain a daily log of crimes that are reported to them. The crimes log needs to be written in a way that it could be easily understood.

The important facts that need to be on the report for the crime are: the nature of the crime, the date, the time, the general location of each crime and the deposition of the complaint. All entries shall be open to the public within two business days of the initial complaint to campus law enforcement. At no time can the report name the victim of the crime, as this could interfere with the confidentiality of the victim. If at any time new information comes forward, it needs to be logged in the police or security department no later than two business days from when it came forward. However, if the new

information may jeopardize the criminal investigation, the release of the new information does not need to be made public.

Institutions must also provide a policy relating to sexual assaults. The institution needs to provide sexual assault programs to the students, which must be aimed toward the prevention of sex offenses. There must be procedures to follow if a sex offense has occurred. Institutions must have educational programs to promote the awareness of rape and other sexual offenses. Institutions must provide what type of sanctions could be enforced for a sex offense that happen on-campus. If a sex offense occurs, policy needs to show what steps a student can take. The policy needs to inform the student who they should contact; and how and why to preserve evidence to show proof that a sexual assault has occurred. Institutions need to have procedures for all alleged sexual offenses that take place on-campus. The procedure needs to state that the accused and the accuser have the same right to have the other present during the disciplinary meeting. Both parties involved shall be informed of the outcome of the disciplinary meeting.

Institutions must provide a notification of counseling programs, mental health or student services for the victims of sexual assault. This needs to be both for on-campus and off- campus. If an alleged sexual assault has occurred, the institution needs to have policy in place that allows changes in academic or housing for the victim. Changes can only occur if they are available.

If an institution misrepresents the number, location or nature of any crime in their statistics, a civil penalty shall be imposed. Also, the institution or any person affiliated with the institution cannot discriminate against an individual when it comes to the implementation of the Clery Act.

There is a lack of research involving students and their relationship with the Clery Act. There are many provisions within the Clery Act that students need to be aware of. These provisions are changing all the time and they are changing for the better. The lack of research between students and the provisions is only creating a gap of knowledge that students are not filling. This gap can only be a negative issue, but if we can understand how and why students are using the Clery Act, we can shorten the gap and someday make it nonexistent.

This study investigates two sources of data; the Clery Act Report for Northern Michigan University and a survey sent out to random students at Northern Michigan University. This study is going to see how well the students at NMU are acclimated with the Clery Act and find out vital information related to the students experience with crime.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Research

The sparse literature on this topic clearly illustrates a lack of use of the Clery Act. For instance, Widdison found that around one percent of the students at Brigham Young University were familiar with the Clery Act (Widdison, 2005), while Janosik and Gehring (2003) found that twenty-seven percent knew the Clery Act existed. Widdison also found that eighty five percent of students had no previous knowledge of the Clery Act (Widdison, 2005).

Interestingly, in another study, authors Janosik and Gehring (2003) had several questions they wanted answered that are particularly germane to the present study. For instance, one question dealt with whether students were aware of the Clery Campus Act. Another question examined if the information in the act was used in the student's decision of which institution to attend. For the first question, Janosik and Gehring (2003) found that only twenty-seven percent knew the Clery Act existed.

Still, in another question, Janosik and Gehring explored potential student attitudes and personal preference considerations to determine whether such students used Clery Act information when choosing which institution to attend. As a result – and surprisingly - only eight percent affirmed that the act was important to them when choosing an institution to attend. When further breaking down the findings of the above study, Janosik and Gehring (2003) also found that men were more likely to be aware of the act than females. Reasons for this are not clear, however, the present study investigates gender difference in relation to knowledge of the Clery Act.

Janosik and Gehring (2003) also looked at crime rates on campus. One question they investigated is if students felt safe both on and off-campus. Eighty-nine percent of the respondents reported that they felt safe on-campus, and seventy-five percent of respondents said they felt safe off-campus. Again, reasons for this are unclear; however, the present study investigates the fear of crime variable and whether NMU students report a similar level of concern.

Undoubtedly, the majority of parents play an important role in where their student will attend college, and as such, it follows that a parent's relationship with the Clery Act may influence their students' choice. In their study, Janosik and Gehring (2003) also found that about forty percent of parents remember receiving a crime summary in the admissions packet sent from a potential college university. This number is interestingly higher than the students receiving a similar packet of information, as only about twenty-five of them reported knew or even heard of the crime summary. What is interesting about this is that an admissions packet is sent to the household (probably in the student's name), but the students themselves were less aware of it than their parents. This could indicate that potential students are not necessarily interested in the crime rates on their potential college and university campuses. Although parents are not the focus of this study, it is interesting to know where the parents stand with the Clery Act, as their influence may impact where their son or daughter attends college. Interestingly, in the Janosik and Gehring study, parents were asked whether they believe the crime summary influenced their child's choice in choosing a college, and only about eleven percent of parents thought that it did. Since only about eight percent of students report using the

Clery Act, the parents' responses provide some confirmation that students do not utilize it when making their college choice.

Violations of the Clery Act

Penalties can and will be enforced for violating the Clery Act. Eastern Michigan University was given the largest penalty for violation of the Clery Act, 375,000 dollars. The penalty was imposed on EMU when they failed to warn their campus that a body of a female student was found in her dorm room in 2006 (Lipka, 2008). Under the Clery Act, institutions are supposed to disclose all information of crimes on campus. Eastern Michigan University said that it was foul play; however, the student was a victim of a violent crime (Lipka, 2008). According to the Act, regardless of whether the crime was foul play or a robbery, it needs to be disclosed to the campus. During the investigation, the USDE found that Eastern Michigan University was in violation by not keeping a proper crime log (Lipka, 2008). Eastern Michigan University was still working on their new policy when they were sanctioned, and if it were not for the tragic death, they would have still been in violation of the Clery Act.

Furthermore, under the Clery Act, all colleges and universities are required to ensure a timely warning in relation to crimes that occur on campus. This is the issue at hand with the case of Christopher Havlik vs. Johnson and Wales University. In this case, Johnson and Wales University named Mr. Havlik and his fraternity as the assailant in an incident that occurred near campus. This incident revolved around fraternity business – a university function – and therefore, part of the university. During this altercation, one person in this fraternity displayed a knife and Mr. Havlik subsequently hit a person on the head, resulting in a fractured skull (Lipka, 2007).

Mr. Havlik was summarily expelled from Johnson and Wales University, criminally charged, and found guilty. He was eventually acquitted in appellate court, but subsequently sued Johnson and Wales University for defamation, as the university published a crime alert that mentioned Mr. Havlik. The federal court ruled in favor of Johnson and Wales University, noting that the University has a legal duty to publish the crime alert (Lipka, 2007). According to the Clery Act, the University must publish the alert within two business days after the incident – and the university was in compliance.

One interesting part of the Act is that colleges and universities are rarely sued, as the Clery Act specifically provides immunity from litigation in most cases. Mr. Havlik said that Johnson and Wales University acted with malice, but the ruling stated that the information in the alert would be useful to the safety of the campus (Lipka, 2007). The security of the campus overrides everything in this case; no matter if the defendant thinks it is hurtful to his reputation.

This case sets a very important precedent, as it permits colleges and universities to publish the names and organizations involved in campus crime incidents while not having to be concerned with consequences such as litigation. Essentially, a student's right to be informed and study in a safe environment, trumps the privacy of the people involved with crime incidents in and close to campus property.

Finally, in a highly publicized incident in 2007, a person shook the campus of Virginia Tech one early morning on a shooting spree. The result of this incident is widely known; however, what is not widely known is the violation the campus committed during the incident. According to the United States Department of Education investigation into the events, it discovered that Virginia Tech was in violation of the Clery Act. The USDE

investigation revealed that the university failed to provide a timely warning to the campus. Specifically, the investigation found that after the first two students were shot, officials at the university did not distribute the campus warning system until two hours later – a clear violation of the Act (Security on Campus, 2011). As of the time of this writing, there has not been financial punishment levied against the university.

Steps to report a violation of the Clery Act

If any person – student or otherwise - feels that a violation of the Act has occurred, they have a right to report it to the USDE. Should a person file a complaint, that individual has the right to retain an attorney, however, since any violation is an administrative issue and not a legal one, most complainants do not seek advice of counsel. Persons filing a complaint must adhere to a five step process:

The first step is to obtain a copy of the institution's crime disclosures. As noted earlier, a copy of this report is published October 1st of every year and must be made available in paper form once requested. The second step is a bit more complicated, as the person filing the complaint must ensure that all crimes actually occurring on campus have been disclosed, in addition to ensuring that all procedures related to reporting crime on campus were followed consistent with the Act. Should the complainant find any discrepancy with reporting and procedure, they must document the omission as an addendum to their complaint. Third, which is similar to the second step, if the complainant has personal knowledge of a crime that occurred on or near campus but the incident is missing from the institution's report; they must document the specific crime details, including the time and location. Step four requires the complainant to compile all the violations they deem omitted and send it certified mail to the regional USDE. This

ensures the complainant that the USDE received the complaint. Finally, step five is the response from United States Department of Education, although there is no specific period in which the USDE must respond to the complaint.

This process of filing a complaint when one is suspected is available to the public to ensure that public institutions are following all requirements mandated by the Clery Act. Should the USDE find that an institution violated a provision of the Act, but the violation is deemed an accident, the institution must correct the violation, but is not assessed a penalty. However, should an institution be found to be in clear violation of the Act, the violation must be corrected and penalties will be enforced?

Conclusion

The Clery Act is an important tool that students, staff and future students can use to learn about crime on campus. Overall, the little research in this area illustrates that this tool is not utilized at high rates. With eighty five percent of students unaware of the Clery Act (Widdison, 2005), and only eight percent utilizing it as a critical tool in their decision to attend a particular university (Janosik, 2003), such a tool is clearly underutilized. These statistics indicate that students are not necessarily worried about crime that is occurring on campuses. However, given the little research in this area, the purpose of this study was to add to our knowledge of this topic through the results of a survey of students at Northern Michigan University.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

To accomplish this, the author used two sources of data; the Clery Act Report for Northern Michigan University and a self-administered survey to a random sample of Northern Michigan University students during the fall 2010 semester.

Population and Response Rate

Approximately 9,300 students attend Northern Michigan University (NMU Common Data Set, 2009/2010), and the survey was administered to 1,000 full-time students. To be full-time, a student must be registered with at least twelve credits as an undergraduate and at least eight credits of a post-graduate student. The sample was chosen at random from an email list of active full-time students supplied by the office of Institution Research at NMU. Institutional research staff requested limiting the administration of the surveys to 1,000 students, as other research/survey endeavors at the university could compromise response rates of this and other concurrent surveys.

Survey Administration & Methodology

The survey was administered using Qualtrics, which is a survey web based program that distributes surveys via email. It was expected that administering the survey through email would yield a higher response rate from the students, as Northern Michigan University distributes laptop computers with wireless capability to all students, which includes the new WiMax wireless system that allows Internet access within a 20 mile radius of the NMU campus.

The WiMax system, which is 4G, allows students to use wireless internet off campus. The signal that it produces is much broader and stronger than WiFi. Again this was thought to increase the response rate by giving students the opportunity to complete the survey while not being on-campus.

After the initial surveys were sent, two follow up messages were sent to the students to assist in the response rate. The second follow-up email was sent out three days after the initial email, with a reminder to the students who have yet to complete it. Three days after the second follow-up email, a third and final follow-up email was sent. The third follow-up email reinforced the second follow-up email and set a date for which no more surveys will be accepted.

The survey consists of nineteen questions, which included mostly closed-ended and one open-ended question (See Appendix A). The researcher used closed-ended questions because parameters can be set for the answers received. Maxfield and Babbie (2005) state that using closed-ended questions can provide more uniformed responses and that are easily processed and analyzed. The open-ended question asked of the respondents was simply their opinion about the Clery Act. The open-ended question was designed to gain vital information about how respondents feel about the Clery Act. The list of questions used in the survey is found in Appendix A.

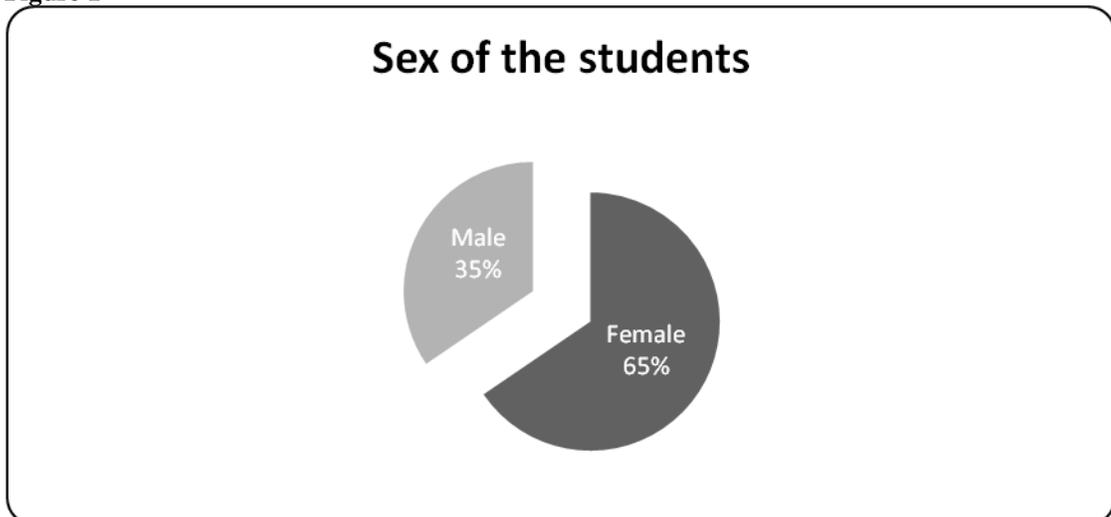
CHAPTER FOUR: CLERY ACT SURVEY FINDINGS

To reiterate, the survey was sent to one thousand randomly selected students and consisted of nineteen questions (Appendix A). Again, one hundred forty students responded to the survey, which is a 14% response rate. This low response rate is a limitation of this study.

Findings- Demographics of Respondents

The average age of the students responding was 22 years of age, with a minimum age of 17 and maximum age of 46. Additionally, 35% of respondents were male and 65% were female (Figure 1). This is not consistent with previous research as Janosik and Gehring (2003) found that men were more likely to be aware of the Clery Act. Additionally, it should be noted that NMU's gender demographic is consistently half females and half males.

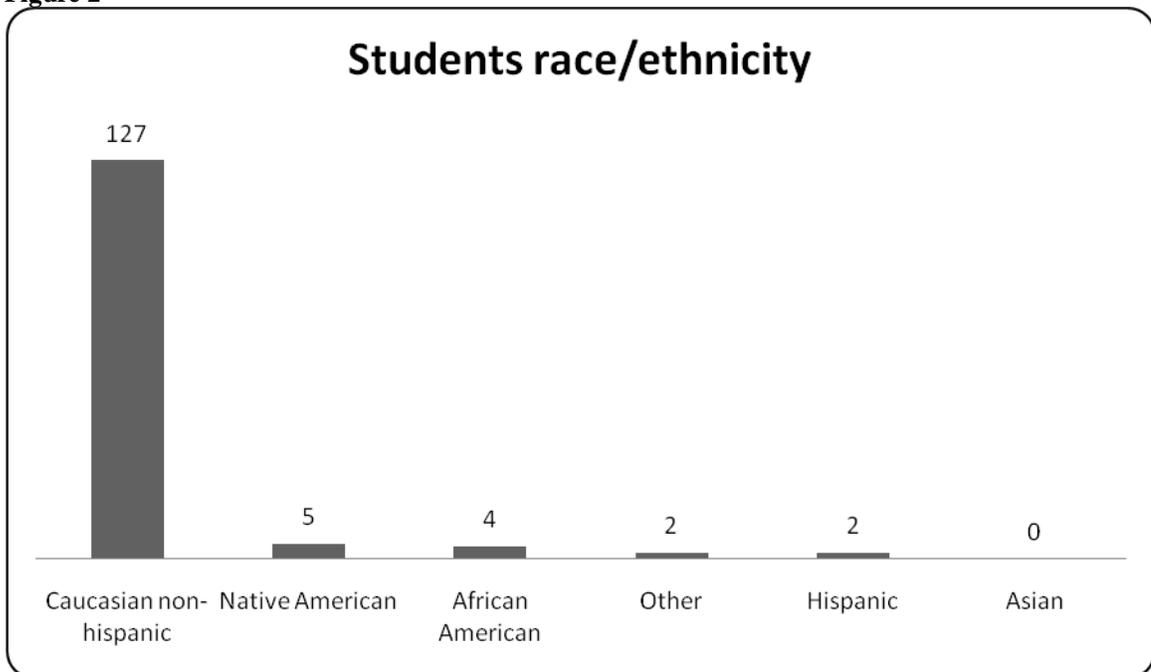
Figure 1



The race demographic of the students responding shows 91% of respondents are Caucasian- non Hispanic. This is somewhat consistent with the demographics of NMU,

where Caucasian- non Hispanic students comprise 88.4 % of the student population. Native Americans were the next most ‘frequent’ race responding to the survey at 4%. This is slightly higher than the 2.7% Native American population at NMU. African Americans were the next most frequent race responding, with a 3% response rate. The total student population for African American at NMU is 1.6% - again, similar to Native American students, African American students responded at proportionally higher rates than their university populations. Hispanic student respondents did complete the survey, but only comprised of 1%. The total Hispanic student population at NMU is 1% - reflecting consistency with the student population at NMU. Also the category of ‘Other’ was selected two times and compromised 1% of the study. No Asian students responded, however, the Asian population at NMU .7% (Figure 2). All university race information is from NMU’s Common Data Set (Northern Michigan University, 2011).

Figure 2

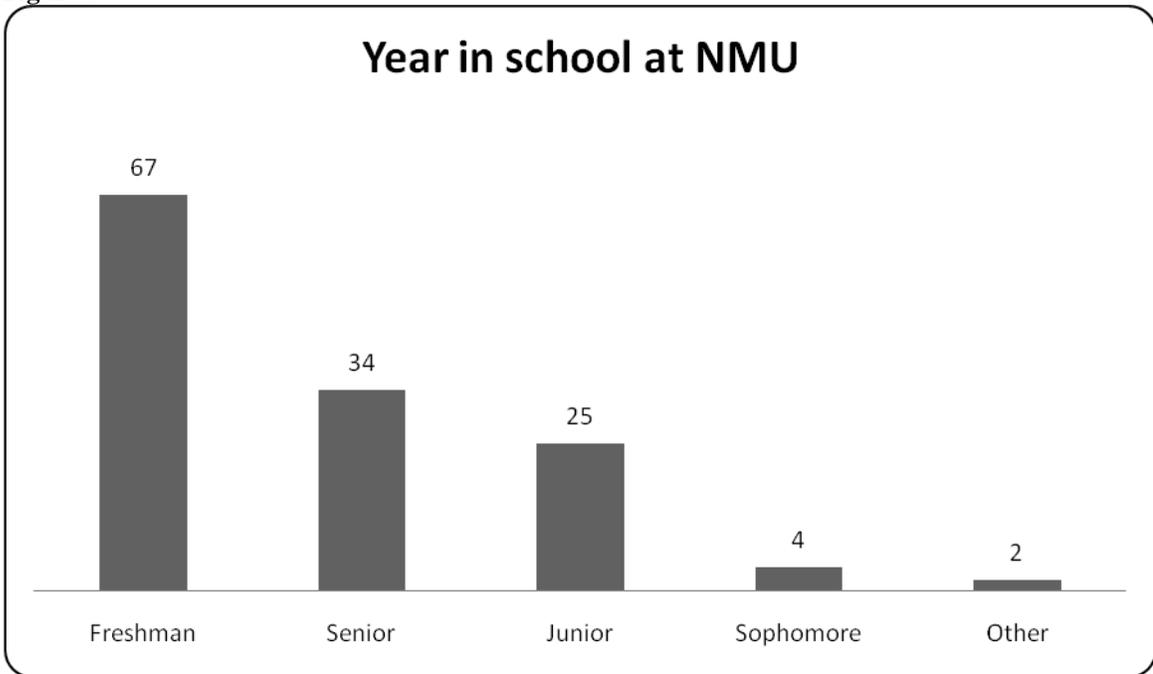


Academic Major and Class Standing

Respondents were asked their field of study (major) and the most frequent field reported was the Biological Sciences – 21%. Next came the category of ‘Other’, it was selected 25 times or 17.5%. There were two options that were chosen 22 times or 16%, those were Undeclared and Social Sciences. Education was selected 21 times or 15%. The category of Arts was selected 12 times or 8.5%. Humanities was selected the least amount of times, it was selected 9 times or 6%. Looking back at this question, it should have been left as an open question for the student to respond to. This way the answers could be sorted easier and more frequently.

The respondents were asked about their current level of schooling. There were six options for the students to select. Those options were; freshmen, sophomore, junior, senior, graduate and other. Sixty-seven or 48% of the responses were freshmen. Next was seniors, 34 selected this which is 24%. Juniors comprised 18% which is 25 students. Sophomore was selected four times which is 3%. The category of other only had two responses, which is 1% of the responses (Figure 3).

Figure 3



Student Experience with Clery Act

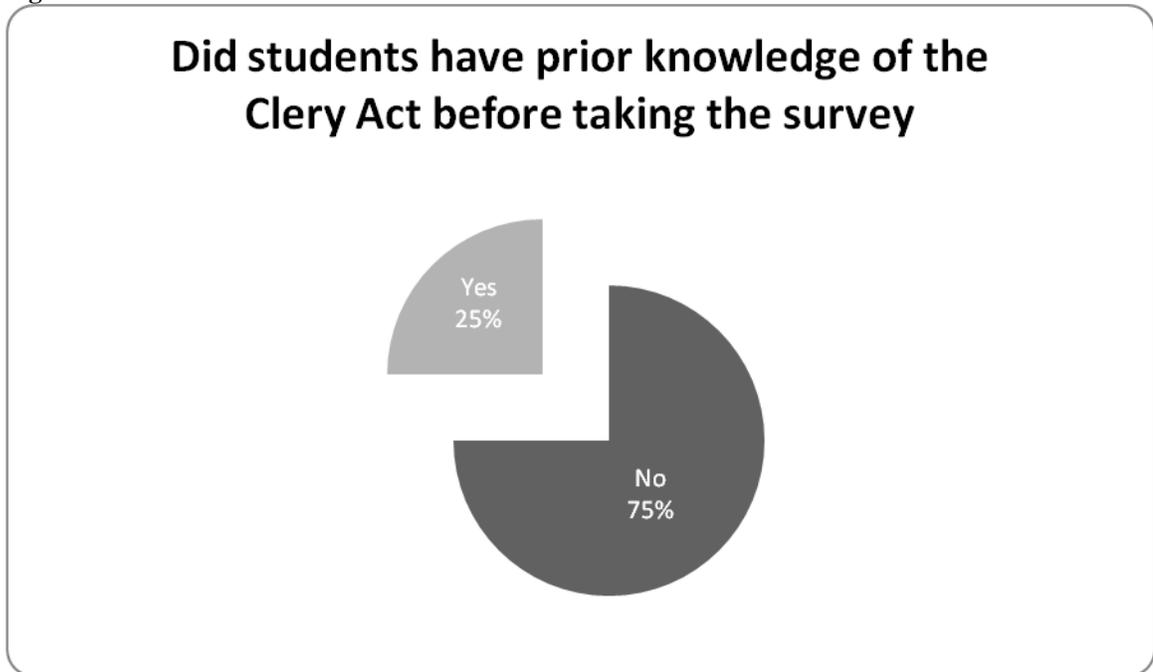
The next three questions of the survey asked students about their experience with the Clery Act. One of the most interesting and informative questions simply asked the student whether or not they have heard of the Clery Act prior to taking the survey.

Seventy-five percent of the respondents indicated that they had never heard of the Clery Act, with the remaining 25% indicating they have (Figure 4). These responses are close to what Widdison (2005) found in her study of students at Brigham Young University. She found that 85% of the students in her study did not know about the Clery Act.

Widdison responses are also similar to what Janosik and Gehring (2003) found in their study. They found that only 27% of their study knew that the act existed, while 73% did not know of the Clery Act. This is interesting, because the Clery Act exists to assist students in their choice of institution, however, according to previous research, parents are more aware of the Clery Act than the students. Although the present study does not

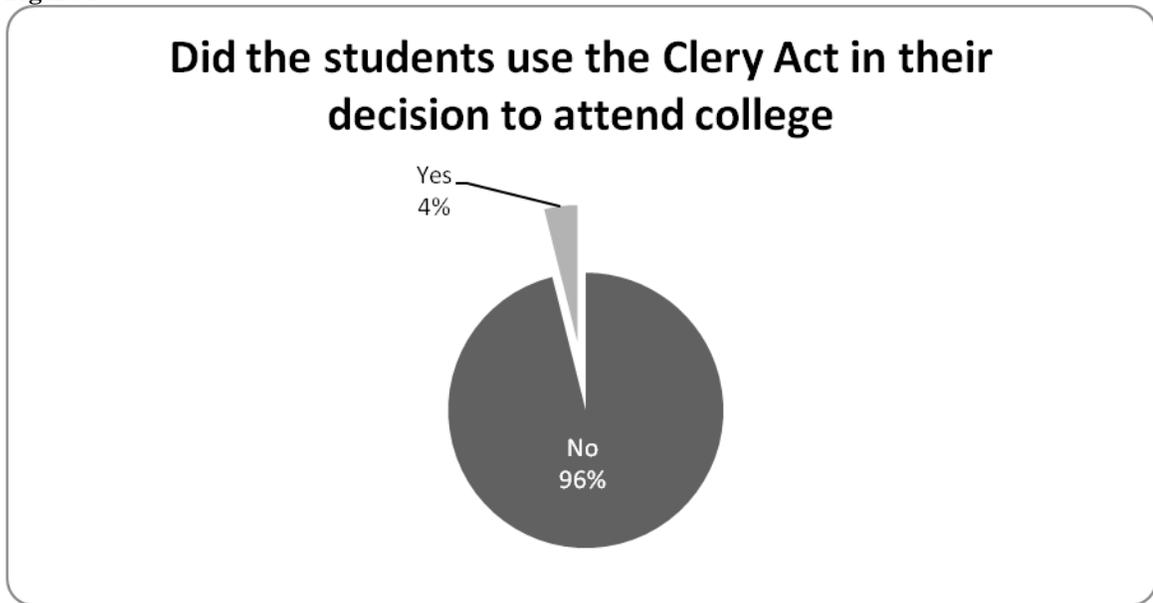
include parents, previous research findings – and the finding from this study – may assist policymakers associated with the Act in better methods to target the student population.

Figure 4



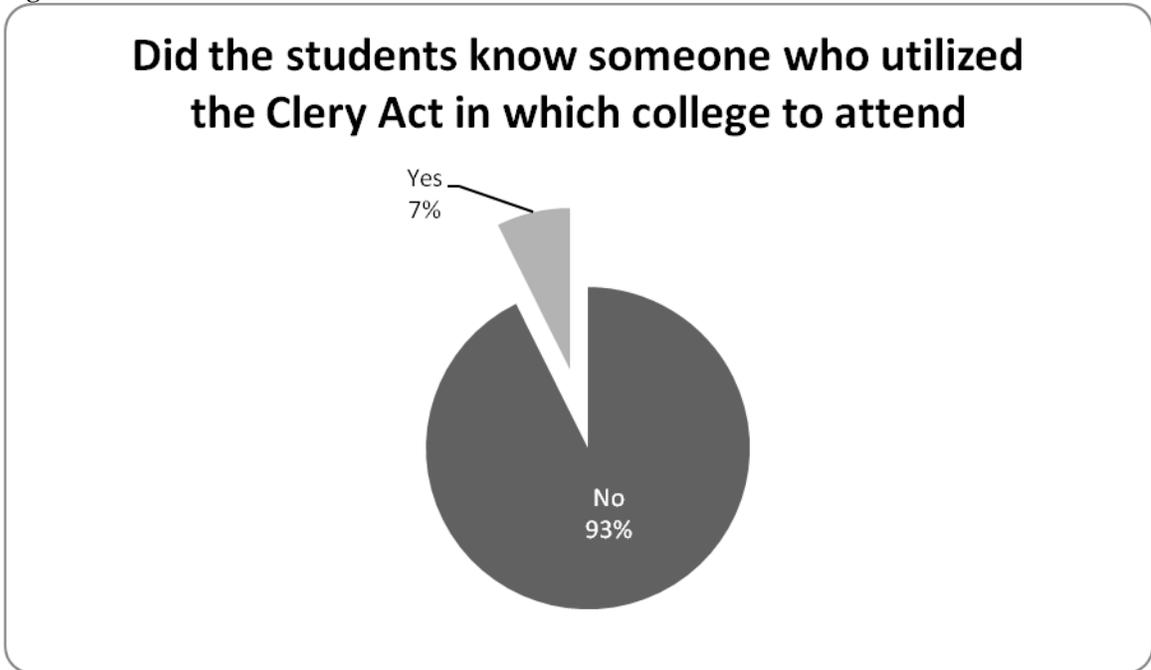
The next question was related to the previous question, in that if a respondent indicated they had knowledge of the Act, did they utilize it in their decision to attend a certain institution. Interestingly, out of the 25% of respondents indicating knowledge of the Act, an astonishing 4% of them indicated they used it, meaning that 96% of them did not. Thus, although students have knowledge of the Act, they do not utilize it (Figure 5). These findings are also very close to what Janosik and Gerhing (2003) found in their study. They found that only 8% of their study used the Clery Act as a factor in their decision to attend college. In this study only 4% used the Clery Act as a tool in their college decision.

Figure 5



The next question asked respondents if they knew someone who utilized the Clery Act in their decision to attend college. An overwhelming amount of respondents – 93% - indicated they did not know of someone who has ever utilized the Act in their decision to attend an institution. And a mere 7% of the students indicated they knew of someone who used the Act in their decision-making process (Figure 6).

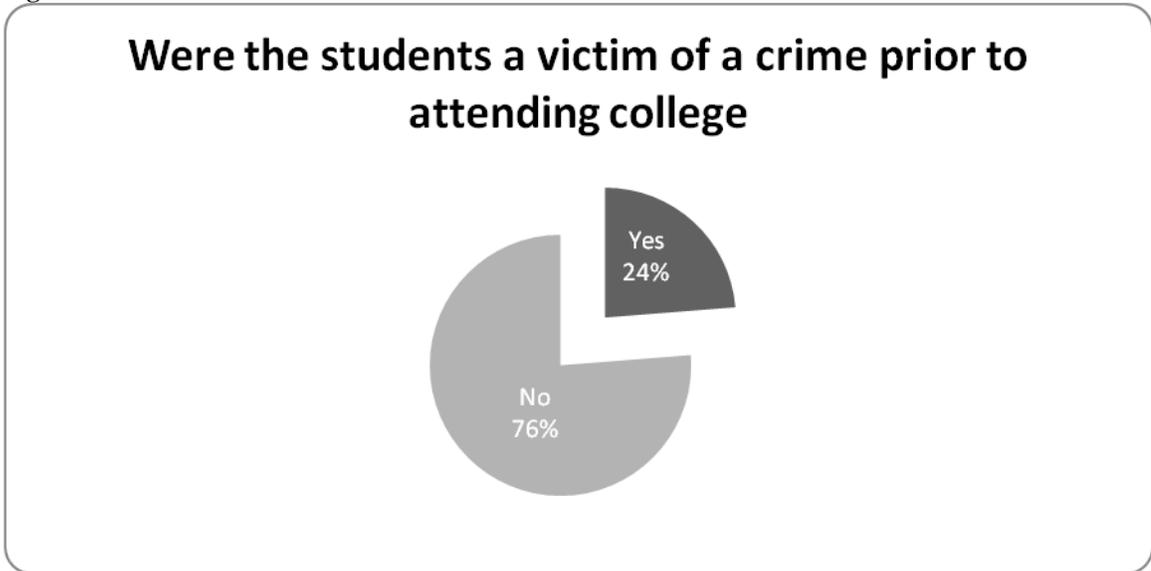
Figure 6



Students and Crime Experience

The next two questions are similar and ask respondents about any crimes they may have been a victim of prior to attending college, and if so, which type of crime. This was an important variable for this study, as it follows that a person who experienced crime may be more aware of crime statistics than those who were not victims. Seventy-six of the respondents indicated that they were not a victim of a crime prior to attending college; while 24% said that they were a victim of a crime prior to attending college (Figure 7). This is interesting, as it may mean that being a victim does not necessarily prompt someone to have a heightened interest in crime rates in the area they choose to live. Table one shows that the students who were victims of crimes had little knowledge of the Clery Act (Table 1).

Figure 7



Before taking this survey, Have you heard of the Clery Act?	If so, what type of crime?		
	Property	Personal	Total
Yes	1	1	2
No	3	4	7
Total	4	5	9

Table 1

The next question asked respondents who were a victim of a crime prior to attending college what type of crime they experienced – specifically, personal or property crime. Again, this is an important variable in this study as it follows that a person who was a victim of a personal crime would most likely utilize the Act at higher rates than those experiencing a property crime. Sixty-five percent of the respondents indicated that they were a victim of a personal crime, while 35% indicated being a victim of a property crime (Figure 8).

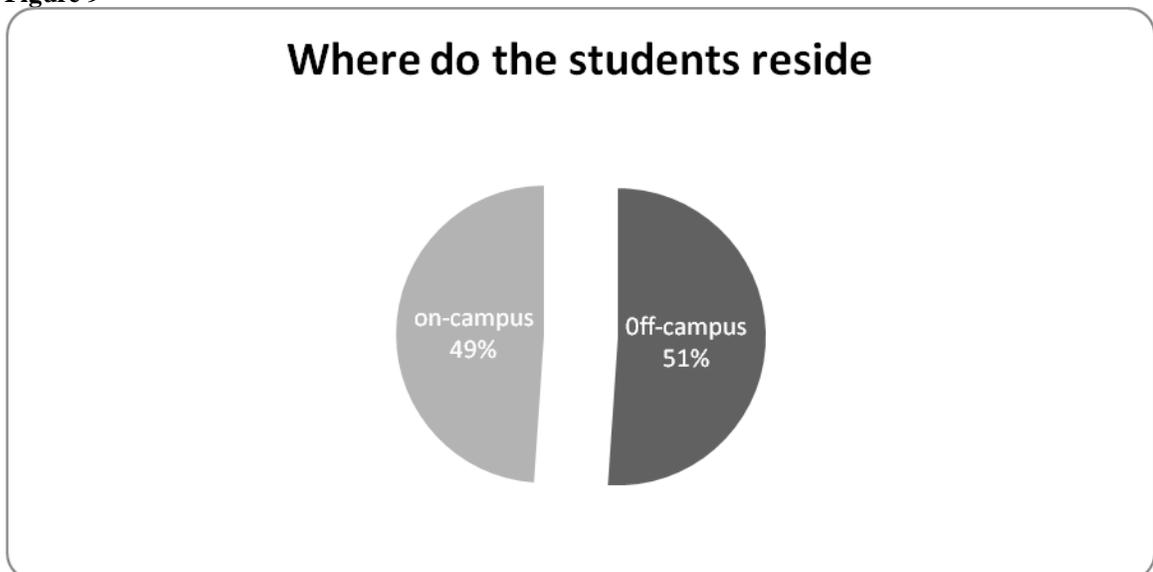
Figure 8



Students and their perception of crime where they reside

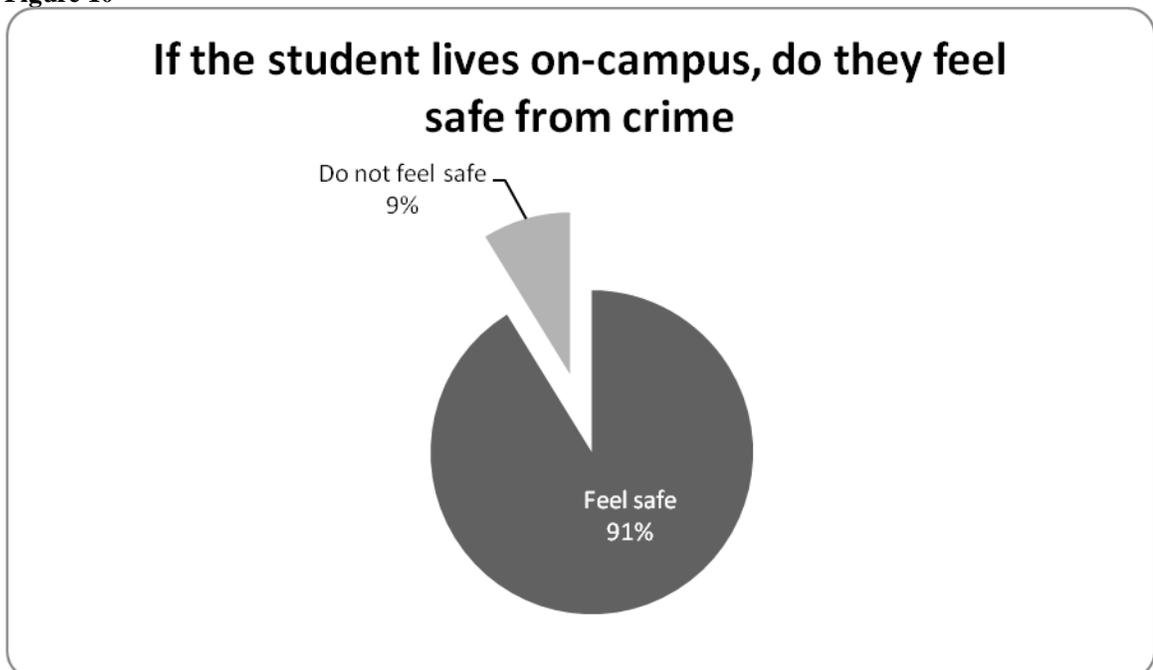
The next three questions asked the respondent where they reside and how safe they feel from crime. Sixty-eight or 49% of the students said they lived on-campus, while 71 or 51% said that they lived off-campus (Figure 9).

Figure 9



The next question asked the respondents if they live on-campus and do they feel safe from crime. Ninety-one students responded to question twelve, while in question eleven when asked if they lived on-campus, 68 students said they lived on-campus. Of the 91 students, 83 or 91% said they feel safe on-campus, and only 8 or 9% said they do not feel safe from crime (Figure 10). This is very close to what Janosik and Gehring found in their study. They found that 89% of the students in their study felt safe on-campus.

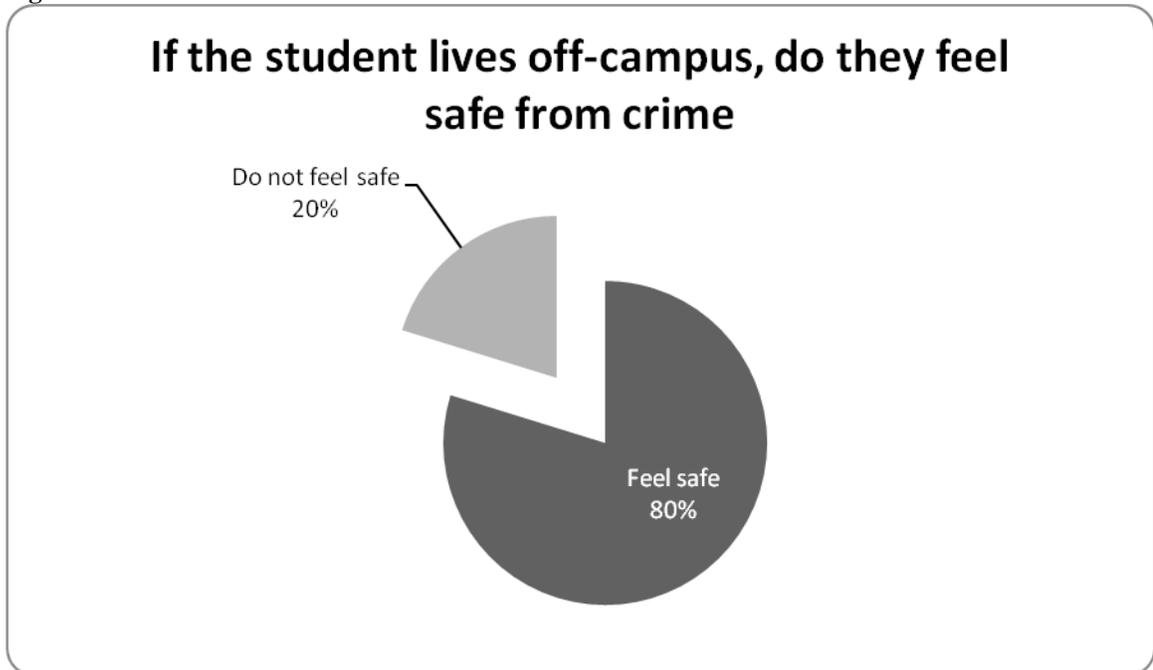
Figure 10



The next question asked if the student lives off-campus, do they feel safe from crime. Eighty-nine people responded to this question, while in question eleven which asked if they live off-campus, 71 responded by saying they lived off-campus. Of the 89 students, 71 or 80% said that they feel safe from crime living off-campus, while 18 or 20% said they did not feel safe from crime living off-campus (Figure 11). Janosik and Gehring found that 75% of students in their study felt safe from crime off-campus. This is

once again an example where Janosik and Gerhing's results are similar to the results in this study.

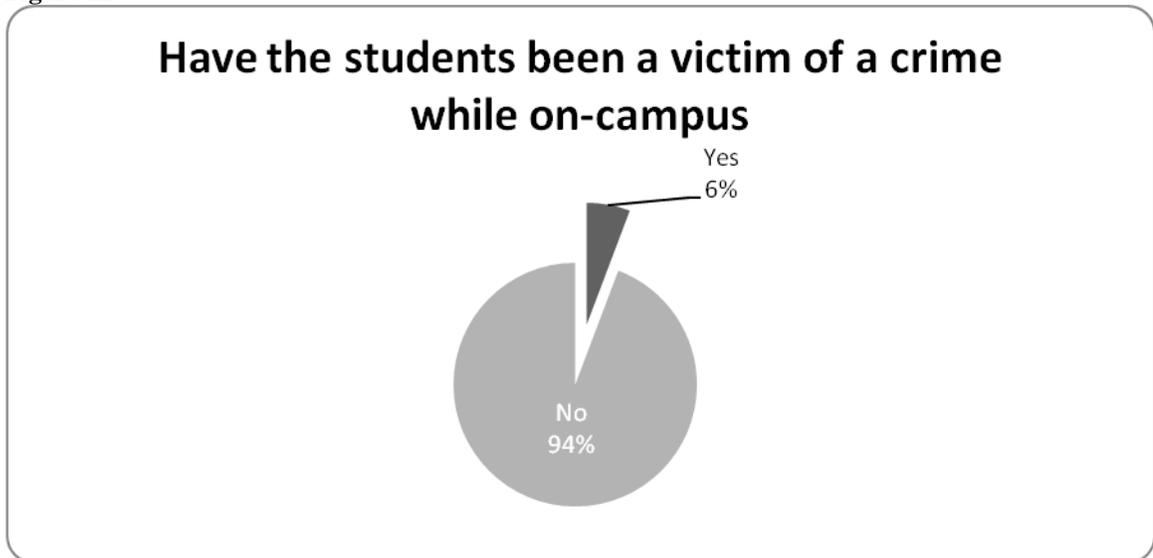
Figure 11



Students' personal experience with crime on campus

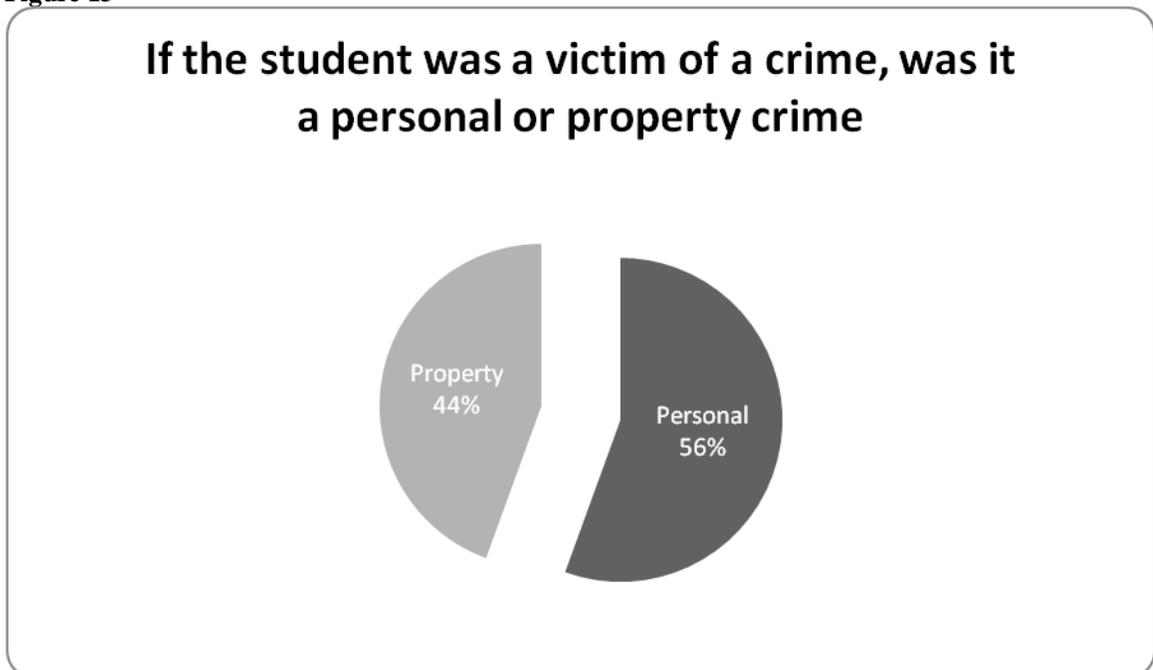
The next two questions asked the respondent if they have been a victim of a crime on campus, and what type of crime it was. One hundred thirty-nine students responded to question fourteen. One hundred and thirty-one students or 94% said that they have not been a victim of a crime while on campus. Only 8 students or 6% said that they have been a victim of a crime while on campus (Figure 12).

Figure 12



Nine students responded to the next question which asked if the crime committed against them was a property or a personal crime. Four or 44% of the students said that the crime they experienced was a property crime, while five or 56% of the students said that the crime they experienced was a personal crime (Figure 13).

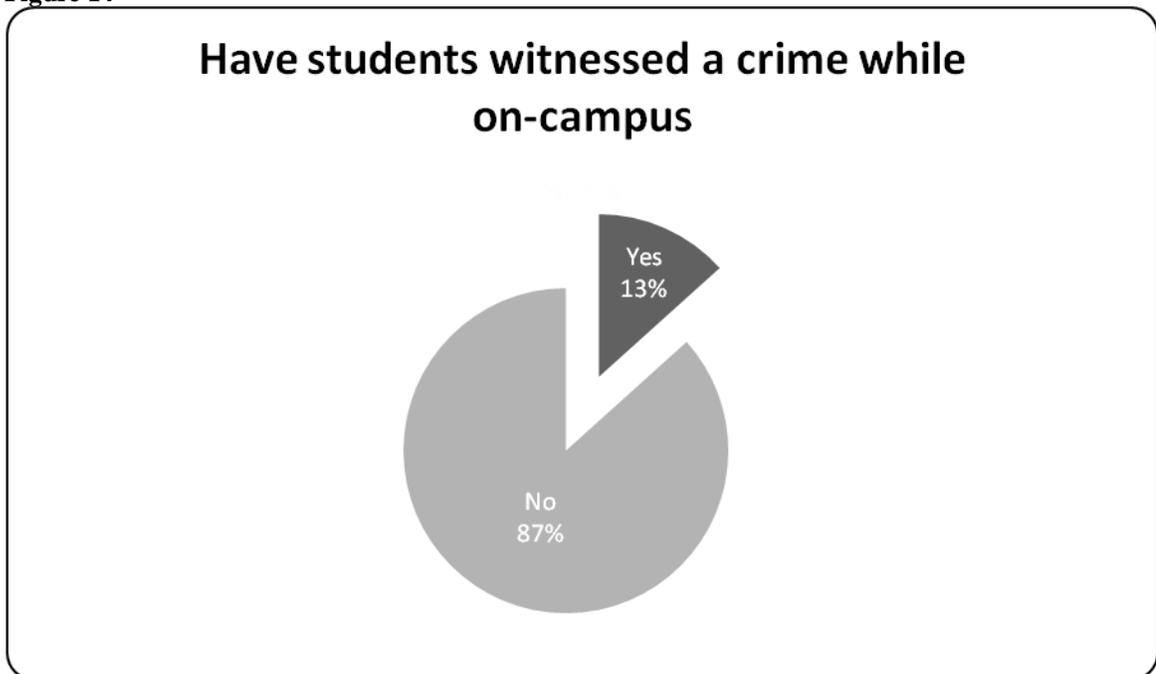
Figure 13



Student's observation of crime on campus

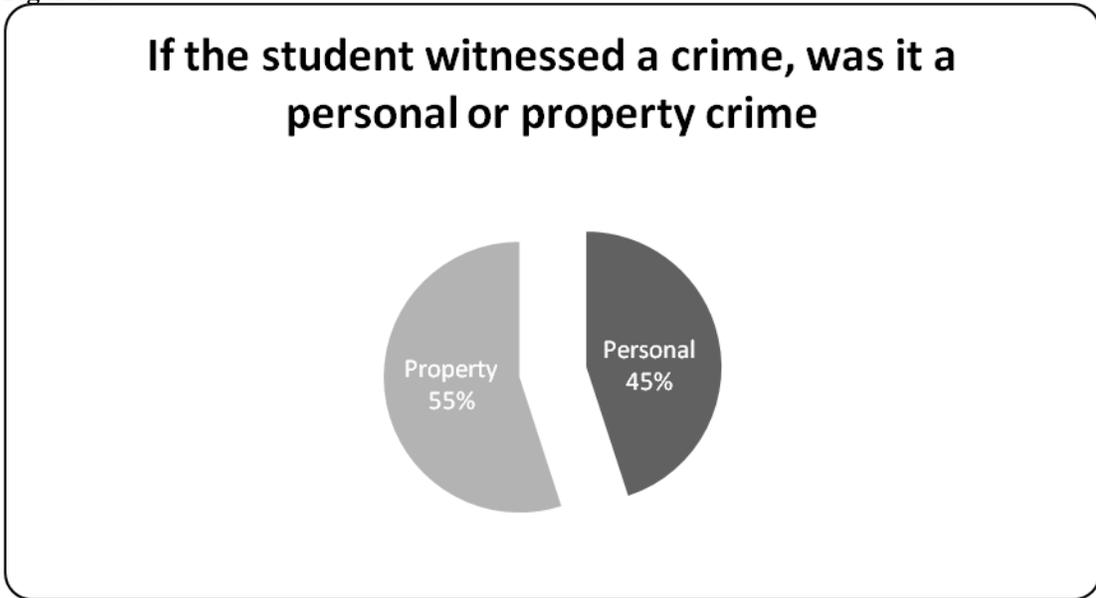
The following two questions asked the respondents if they witnessed a crime while being on-campus and which type of crime it was. One hundred thirty-four students responded to question sixteen asking if the student witnessed a crime while on campus. Eighteen or 13% said that they witnessed a crime on campus, while 117 or 87% said that they did not witness a crime while on campus (Figure 14).

Figure 14



The next question asked if the crime they witnessed was a property or personal crime. Eleven or 55% of the students said that they witnessed a property crime. Nine or 45% of the students said they witnessed personal crime (Figure 15).

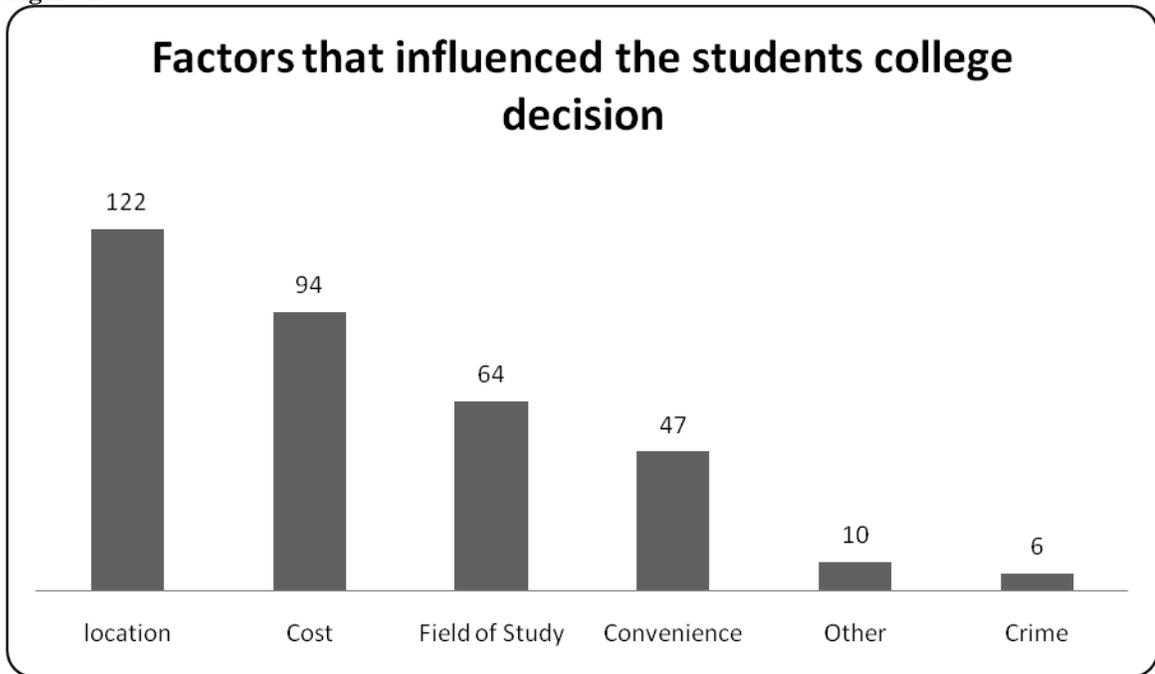
Figure 15



Students and choice of institution

The next question asked the respondents which factors influenced their decision to come to Northern Michigan University. The students were given six choices to choose from, they were: cost, location, field of study, convenience, crime, and other. This question allowed the respondent to select more than one answer. Location had the most responses at 122 or 87%. Cost was the next choice and it was chosen as a response 94 times or 67%. Field of study was selected next at 64 times or 46%. Convenience was next with 47 responses or 34%. While the category of Other was selected 10 times or 7%. Here is what the students wrote in as responses: TLC Program, Senior citizen program, pregnancy, size, faculty staff tuition waiver and brother. The last in the available responses was crime, it was chosen only 6 times for 4% (Figure 16).

Figure 16



Student comments of the Clery Act

The final question of the study asked the respondents if they had any comments regarding the Clery Act. Seventeen students responded to this question. Four students wrote that they had no comment about the Clery Act. An astounding five students said they had no idea what the Clery Act was. These five students had the information given to them about the Clery Act, be it from the Admission's Department or the yearly update given to them. One student described a personal crime that was committed against them. One student responded by saying that they did not feel good not knowing about the Clery Act, and that this information should be available to students and parents. Clearly, student responses suggest that the Clery Act is not being utilized properly. So either this student did not receive any information about the Clery Act, or they did and did not know it.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

The campus of Northern Michigan University is a small, well-connected community. The Clery Act can play an important role on keeping the campus community safe. The information on crime statistics can assist students, staff and the public in understanding what types of crime(s) are occurring on the campus of Northern Michigan University. For the Clery Act to be successful, the students need to be more aware of what the Clery Act can provide for them.

The results of the survey that was sent to the students of Northern Michigan University clearly showed that the Clery Act was not that important to them. The responses to question six in the survey confirmed what the researcher thought, that students really do not know what the Clery Act is about. Seventy-five percent of the students had never heard of the Clery Act, while 25% of the students have heard of it. Students are not using the Clery Act for one of its intended uses, to inform students about crime statistics that can help protect the campus community.

Janosik and Gehring found in their study that 73% never heard of the Clery Act (Janosik, 83). This is close to the finding in this study that 75% of the students never heard of the Clery Act. Also Janosik and Gehring found that only 8% of their study used the Clery Act in their decision to attend college (Janosik, 83). In this study the finding proved to be close, only 4% of the students used the Clery Act in their decision to attend college. The results is not only lower than Janosik and Gehring's study, it is lower than what it should be. A question that needs to be looked at in a future survey is to ask why they did not use the Clery Act as a tool in their decision to attend an institution.

The Clery Act is a tool students can use in their decision of which institution to attend. If they are looking at institutions in certain areas of the country and they want to know how the crime is, this is an important tool to use. Four percent of the respondents of the survey said that they used the Clery Act in their decision to attend college, while 96% said they did not use the Clery Act for the same purpose. The Clery Act is a critical tool, and the numbers have confirmed that the Clery Act is not important to students at Northern Michigan University. The survey responses are very close to what has been found in other studies.

Current students are notified annually through an email that gives them a link which takes them to the Northern Michigan University public safety website. There, they can click on the Clery Act compliance link and receive all information relating to the Clery Act. Every student has access to this information but most students are not aware it is there.

All potential new students have the Clery Act information available through the admissions department. If the students are going to fill out the application online, there is a link on the admissions webpage for the Clery Act statistics. Also, if the potential student is filling out an application in paper form, there is information pertaining to the Clery Act on the form. It is obvious that the students are given many avenues to receive information on the Clery Act, so why are so many students unaware of the Clery Act? Maybe the way the information is given to the students needs to change so that the Clery Act is used and looked at by the students. This is one question that needs to be answered in future studies. The question needs to ask the student what would help them retain information on the Clery Act.

This study had its limitations with the response rate for the survey. Emails were sent out to one thousand randomly selected Northern Michigan University students. This researcher believed if 1,000 emails were sent out that a response rate of 40 % could be feasible. Out of 1,000 surveys sent out, 140 were returned. So a limitation of this study is that the response rate was lower than expected. But even with the lower response rate, the findings are consistent with other studies.

Also, the information returned with the survey seemed to be incomplete. Some questions were filled out by all the students and some questions were not. There were a few questions that asked the student specific information linked to a previous question. Many students filled out the information for the previous questions and some did not, so that threw off some of the data. Students were informed that no personal information would be asked and the confidentiality was important for the study. One area that needs to be looked at in a future survey is to see what would make a student fill out the whole survey and not pick and choose what they want to fill out.

An area that needs to be answered in future research is looking at multiple institutions of the same student population size and compares them to see if they are similar in regards to Clery Act knowledge. We as a Criminal Justice field need to find out why students are not aware of the Clery Act and what can be done to change that.

With the information gathered from the study, it shows that students are not looking at the Clery Act but students do feel safe on campus. Ninety-one percent of the students that responded to the survey said they feel safe while on-campus. Why do 91% of the students feel safe while on campus, but only 25% even know about the Clery Act and the crime statistics? This could be because crime is really not prevalent on the

campus of Northern Michigan University. Why is so much time and money spent on producing this valuable information and the students choosing not to read it? If universities are not in compliance they can be fined for it, but is that the only reason why the Clery Act statistics are produced every year. It seems like if we cannot get the students to look at the statistics or know that the statistics are out there, something needs to change for the better.

If the students were interested or worried about crime they would be using all the resources available to understand what crimes are occurring on the campus Northern Michigan University. The biggest resource they could use is the Clery Act and it seems to be ignored by the student body.

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Appendix A

Clery Act Survey

1. What is your age? (This question will use a slide for the student to pick their age)
2. Are you male or female?
3. What is your race?
 - a. Caucasian, Non-Hispanic
 - b. African American
 - c. Native American
 - d. Asian
 - e. Hispanic
 - f. Other
4. What is your year in college?
 - a. Freshman
 - b. Sophomore
 - c. Junior
 - d. Senior
 - e. Graduate
 - f. Other
5. What is your major?
 - a. Undeclared
 - b. Social Sciences
 - c. Biological/Natural Sciences
 - d. Humanities
 - e. Arts
 - f. Education
 - g. Other
6. Before taking this survey, have you heard of the Clery Act?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
7. If you have heard of the Clery Act, did you utilize it as a decision to attend college?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
8. Do you know others who have utilized the Clery Act in their decision to attend college?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
9. Have you been a victim of a crime prior to attending college?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

10. If so, what type of crime were you a victim of?
 - a. Property
 - b. Personal
11. Where do you reside?
 - a. On-Campus
 - b. Off-Campus
12. If on-campus, do you feel safe from crime?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
13. If off-campus, do you feel safe from crime?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
14. Have you been a victim of a crime on your campus?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
15. If so what type of crime?
 - a. Property
 - b. Personal
16. Have you witnessed a crime while on campus?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
17. If so, what type of crime?
 - a. Property
 - b. Personal
18. What factors influenced your decision to attend this University?
 - a. Cost
 - b. Location
 - c. Fields of Study
 - d. Convenience
 - e. Crime
 - f. Other

(This question allows the survey taker to pick more than one answer)
19. Do you have any comments regarding the Clery Act?

This is an open-ended question