

## RESEARCH

# To ascertain the reasons, circumstances and psychological impact of ragging in Haryana

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## Abstract

Ragging has been in considerable debate over a period of time. Its nature, type and prevention have become a matter of greater concern. Many organisations came forward with certain issues, remedies and procedures for handling with these situations but still the reported cases of ragging challenge the government and local authorities. Current study has been administered on 1823 of both senior and junior students of various institutions in Haryana. The present study was aimed to ascertain the reasons, circumstances and psychological impact of ragging. The study was designed in two phases: in the first phase, the information was sought from the various educational institutes, e.g., schools, colleges and professional colleges of Haryana regarding steps taken by the educational institutions to prohibit and prevent the menace of ragging. The questionnaire also tapped the level of awareness and sensitivity amongst the senior and junior students regarding the issue of ragging and the impact of the University Grant Commission (UGC) regulations.

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## Introduction

The word “ragging” brings visions of horror in the hearts of a number of new comers in various educational institutions. In some institutions of India, ragging is a worse form of interaction between the seniors and fresher. It encompasses with verbal, physical and sexual abuse that might lead to unexplained mental torture to the new comers. Over the years, ragging has come out to be a fully fledged phenomenon that has drastically affected the juniors and their families. Ragging has become a menace, cause of fear and shock not only for the fresher but to the parents too, who are sending the loved ones for pursuing higher education by investing a lot of their hard earned money. Several intelligent students have become victims of ragging: some have suffered a nervous breakdown, some left the institution and some even committed suicide.

Ragging should have no place in the contemporary society. Many academicians, administrators and above all the judiciary have been continuously denouncing it through various legislations. The biggest impediment in building up consensus against this heinous act is the denial and ignorance among the general public about its existence. Some regard it as a harmless fun and others think this as menace. Apart from those who have their own bitter personal experiences, the general public opinion doesn't realise the gravity of situation. If

unchecked it may carry its legacy forever in the form of a continuous chain from one batch of students to another.[1]

Recent incidents turned ragging from social issue to criminal activity which needs to be curbed through mass awareness programmes, police intervention, anti-ragging laws and total condemnation from the society. The Hon'ble Supreme Court[2] took a serious view in curbing ragging and on the basis of judgement Raghvan Committee recommended fifty steps starting from schools to higher educational institutions, district administrations, universities, state authorities and central authorities. They recommended that at all levels intervention is required not only to make aware of the human rights but also sensitise the schools, colleges and higher education so that in the long run we can check such impulsive acts which are heinous in nature. The committee also recommended that students at the time of admission in higher institutions should be asked to produce a character certificate which includes the report of their behaviour pattern so that the institution can keep intense watch upon such students. In their recommendation no. 19 which needs to be focused was to make mentors (seniors) amongst students in orders to protect by their own peer groups. The faculty should also be involved in providing the good academic and fearless atmosphere. The present project was planned to make a systematic enquiry in to this area.

### Ragging: definition and meaning

The term ragging carries different meaning to different people. To some it may be fun or a way to get acquainted with others through various modes of communication and for others it is the way to settle their scores. This behaviour is usually restarted to few people who indulge in such activities. Due to the laxity of definition many students do not consider it as a wrong thing, however while doing such acts they fail to control themselves in hurting other students in one way or the other.

The University Grant Commission (UGC) in its regulation on curbing the menace of ragging in higher educational institutes constitutes ragging as: “any conduct by any student or students whether by words spoken or written or by an act which has the effect of teasing, treating or handling with rudeness a fresher or any other student; indulging in rowdy or undisciplined activities by any student or students which causes or is likely to cause annoyance, hardship, physical or psychological harm or to raise fear or apprehension thereof in any fresher or any other student; asking any student to do any act which such student will not in the ordinary course do and which has the effect of causing or generating a sense of shame, or torment or embarrassment so as to adversely affect the physique or psyche of such fresher or any other student; any act by a senior student that prevents, disrupts or disturbs the regular academic activity of any other student or a fresher; exploiting the services of a fresher or any other student for completing the academic tasks assigned to an individual or a group of students; any act of financial extortion or forceful expenditure burden put on a fresher or any other student by students; any act of physical abuse including all variants of it: sexual abuse, homosexual assaults, stripping, forcing obscene and lewd acts, gestures, causing bodily harm or any other danger to health or person; any act or abuse by spoken words, emails, post, public insults which would also include deriving perverted pleasure, vicarious or sadistic thrill from actively or passively participating in the discomfiture to fresher or any other student; act that affects the mental health and self-confidence of a fresher or any other student with or without an intent to derive a sadistic pleasure or showing off power, authority or superiority by a student over any fresher or any other student”.[3]

### Methodology

#### Objectives

1. To examine the anti-ragging rules and regulations in educational institutions in the state of Haryana.
2. To ascertain reasons and circumstances under which senior students resort to ragging.

3. Assess and quantify the impact of ragging and indiscipline on the standard of education in an institution and relate it to the existing procedures used by Medical Council of India (MCI), UGC and other regulatory bodies to assess the suitability of an institution for recognition.

4. Recommend urgent and mandatory mental health measures to be implemented in, and practiced by schools, colleges, and all educational and vocational institutions, so as to aid the prevention of ragging.

The study was conducted in various educational institutions of Haryana and for this purpose only the fresher and seniors (second year students) were included. It was planned to cover all the important educational institutions of Haryana. The team members were assigned to cover various educational institutions. The coverage of educational institutions and the actual data collected is given in Table 1.1

**Table 1.1. Data collection**

Districts	Students target/contacted	Incomplete data	Complete data
Panchkula	1000/500	232	268
Panipat	1000/750	316	434
Hisar	1000/400	279	121
Rohtak	2000/1500	500	1000
Total	5000/3150	1327	1823

Institutions in and around Panchukula, Panipat, Hisar, Rohtak: The target was to cover 5000 students of various educational institutions from January, 2011 to August, 2012 during admission period covering the fresher and immediate seniors. But despite our best efforts, only 3150 students could be contacted up to August, 2012. The data collection was terminated as investigators felt it is of no use waiting for next session and the completed data was sufficient for analysis. The reason for not reaching the target was partly due to busy of schedule of members and partly due to difficulty in access to many educational institutions.

The students were given instructions properly indicating the purpose of study and the consent was also taken from the students. All the students were given set of questionnaires and scales comprising of sociodemographic variables, consent form, questionnaire regarding their views and knowledge about ragging. To assess their impulsivity, self-esteem and peer pressure, following scales were given:

**1. Barratt Impulsiveness Scale (BIS-11):**[4] The BIS-11 is a thirty-item self-report questionnaire that measures impulsivity. It consists of three subscales, viz., Motor Impulsivity, Intentional Impulsiveness and Non-planning Impulsiveness.

**2. Peer Pressure Scale (PPS):**[5] The PPS is a 24-item self-report scale that assesses peer influences in everyday life situations. It is a five-point Lickert scale with one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). The scale consists of five subscales and high score on each subscale indicates higher peer pressure in that form.

**3. Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES):**[6] The RSES is a widely used measure, which measures participants' global self-esteem. It is a ten-item self-report measure.

The ethical issue of this project was duly approved by the University of Health Sciences and was carried over on the directions of the Government of Haryana.

### Analysis and results

All the data were screened by the experts. Surprisingly a large number of collected data was invalid. Out of 3150, 1327 subjects have to be rejected. Reasons for rejection were given in Table 1.2. This might be due to poor instructions by the members, lack of seriousness of the subjects and immaturity on the part of subjects and lack of psychological orientation. The remaining data of 1823 which was complete in all aspects were subjected to final analysis.

**Table 1.2. Reason of rejection**

Reason	Incomplete questionnaire
Annexure one for fresher and two for seniors which is related to ragging was incomplete	982
One questionnaire not filled i.e. self-esteem	245
One questionnaire not filled i.e. peer pressure	105
One questionnaire not filled i.e. impulsivity	195
Total	1327

Forty two per cent of the data has to be rejected for one reason or the other (incomplete information on the various parameters). Only the data complete in all respects was used for final analysis (Table 1.2). Low contact rate may be due to the fact that two of the team members work in private practice and could not actively engage in the project. The other reason is difficulty to access the institutions. Due to oversight, the team did not scrutinise the proforma for completion at the site. This leads to lot of rejection.

**Demographical distribution of the sample** (Tables 2.1 to 2.4)

Nine hundred and twenty two students of fresher with 641 (69.5%) men and 281 (30.5%) women with a mean age of 19.1 years represented the sample. Out of which 54% of the students were from urban background whereas, 46% belongs to rural background. Amongst

seniors a total number of 901 students participated in the study with a mean age of 19.8 years, men represented 51.6% (558) and women were 48.4% (343) in this group. 52.9% of the students were from urban background and 47.1% belonged to rural background.

**Table 2.1. Demographical distribution of the sample: age**

Age	Frequency		Percentage	
	Juniors	Seniors	Juniors	Seniors
17.00	129	47	14.0	5.2
18.00	298	179	32.3	19.9
19.00	166	173	18.0	19.2
20.00	144	207	15.6	23.0
21.00	114	162	12.4	18.0
22.00	39	88	4.2	9.8
23.00	14	24	1.5	2.7
24.00	4	8	.4	.9
25.00	5	4	.5	.4
26.00	5	4	.5	.4
28.00	2	2	.2	.2
30.00	2	3	.2	.3
Total (N)	922	901	100.0	100.0

**Table 2.2. Mean age of the sample**

	Juniors (N 922)	Seniors (N 901)
Age (mean)	19.1	19.8

**Table 2.3. Residence wise distribution of the sample**

Residence	Frequency		Per cent	
	Junior	Senior	Junior	Senior
Urban	498	477	54.0	52.9
Rural	424	424	46.0	47.1
Total (N)	922	901	100.0	100.0

**Table 2.4. Sex wise distribution of the sample**

Gender	Frequency		Per cent	
	Junior	Senior	Junior	Senior
Men	641	558	69.5	51.6
Women	281	343	30.5	48.4
Total (N)	922	901	100.0	100.0

### Understanding ragging by senior students

Following aspects were studied using structured proforma which was prepared for the senior students in order to study their level of awareness regarding the laws against ragging and if their take on ragging had changed since the issue of these regulations-

**Perception about ragging:** In the sample of senior, almost equal number (40%) were neutral or felt ragging

was cheap whereas one fifth of the sample considered ragging to be good (Table 3.1).

**Forms of ragging:** Regarding the awareness about the forms of ragging, 43.1% reported it as physical, 39.7% as mental and six per cent as sexual; 10.8% attributed to any other form (Table 3.2).

**Forms of ragging in the institutions:** 62.5% of the students reported no ragging in their institute and 27.0% responded positively (Table 3.3).

**Personal experience of ragging:** Only 11.3% had experience of ragging and 82.8% reported no experience of ragging (Table 3.4).

**Potential places of ragging:** Hostel was found as the most vulnerable place of ragging as it was reported by 65.8% of the students followed by academic block of the institute (12.3%), canteen (8.9%) and outside the campus (6.4%) (Table 3.5).

**Reason of ragging:** Majority (44.7%) of the students quoted ragging as fun which was one of the main reasons whereas 14.0% considered it as to prove their seniority, and 31.3% of the students did not respond to this question (Table 3.6).

**Justification of ragging:** 68.8% of the seniors did not justify ragging whereas 31.2% justified ragging (Table 3.7).

**Awareness about UGC guidelines against ragging:** Out of 901 students more than half i.e. 51.5% of the students were aware of the UGC guidelines whereas 48.4% were having no knowledge about these guidelines (Table 3.8).

**Awareness about punishment against ragging:** 71.5% were aware of the punishment once they found guilty for ragging where as 28.5% showed their ignorance in this regard (Table 3.9).

**Support of certain form of ragging:** In response to the question that do they support ragging and in which form, 77.8% were of the opinion that introductions must always be allowed and it is reasonable, whereas only 4.9% were of this view that at least mild ragging should be allowed. However, 14.3% of the students responded negatively (Table 3.10).

#### ***Understanding ragging by fresher***

Following aspects were studied using structured proforma: Most of the juniors were aware of the laws against ragging. In their responses to the questionnaire, freshmen admitted that they knew certain laws against ragging (51.6%) at the time of admission and rest (48.4%) came to know after the admission (Table 4.1) through prospectus/brochures (40.9%) and notice board (13.4%) of the institute (Table 4.2).

**Table 3.1. Perception about ragging**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
Don't know	358	39.7
Cheap	362	40.2
Good	181	20.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3.2. Forms of ragging**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
No response	4	.4
Physical	388	43.1
Mental	358	39.7
Sexual	54	6.0
Any other	97	10.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3.3. Forms of ragging in the institutions**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
No response	95	10.5
Physical	243	27.0
Emotional	563	62.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3.4. Personal experience of ragging**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
No response	53	5.9
Yes	102	11.3
No	746	82.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3.5. Potential places of ragging**

Places	Frequency	Per cent
No response	6	.7
Academic block	111	12.3
Hostel	593	65.8
Canteen	80	8.9
Library	12	1.3
Outside campus	58	6.4
Any other	41	4.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3.6. Reason of ragging**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
Not respond	282	31.3
For fun	403	44.7
No interaction between junior and senior	90	10.0
To show seniority	126	14.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3.7. Justification of ragging**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	281	31.2
No	620	68.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3.8. Awareness about UGC guidelines against ragging**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
No response	1	.1
Yes	464	51.5
No	436	48.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3.9. Awareness about punishment against ragging**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	644	71.5
No	257	28.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3.10. Support of certain form of ragging**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
Don't like	129	14.3
Introduction	701	77.8
Mild ragging	44	4.9
Any other	27	3.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 4.1. Law against ragging**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
Time of admission	476	51.6
After admission	446	48.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 4.2. Presence of law against ragging**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
Orientation programme	312	33.8
Prospectus	377	40.9
Leaflets/posters	68	7.4
Notice board	124	13.4
Any other	41	4.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 4.3. Interaction programme organised in your institute**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
No response	28	3.0
Yes	239	25.9
No	655	71.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Interaction programme organised in your institute: Majority of the students (71%) denied of having any facility in the institute where they could interact with their seniors (25.9%) (Table 4.3).

**Awareness if one is victim of ragging:** Regarding the rights once they become victim of ragging, 64.4% had no knowledge, only 33.3% reported positively and rest (2.3%) did not comment on this issue (Table 4.4).

**Outlook toward ragging:** The outlook of ragging has

been reported as criminal/punishing act by 47.3% of the students and 40.2% considered it as fun seeking/interaction with the seniors (Table 4.5).

**Whether ragging should be tolerated:** Regarding the tolerance of ragging, 32.3% of the freshman disagreed to this and about 40.9% commented in favour (Table 4.6).

**Help line provided by institute in case of ragging:** Helpline numbers were provided by some of the institutes as it was reported by 56.6% of the students but still 43.4% showed ignorance in this regard (Table 4.7).

**Undertaking at time of admission:** 43.4% of the students have not signed any undertaking at the time of admission in the institute (Table 4.8).

**Report of incident to the authorities in case of ragging:** Almost all the students (75.7%) had the courage to report the authorities in case of being ragged. However, only 24.3% preferred to remain silent after the occurrence of such events (Table 4.9).

**Reporting of the incident to authorities in case of others being ragged:** Almost all the students (73.6%) showed the courage to report the authorities in case they see others being ragged. However, only 26.4% preferred to remain silent after the occurrence of such events with others (Table 4.10)

**Table 4.4. Awareness if one is victim of ragging**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
No response	21	2.3
Yes	307	33.3
No	594	64.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 4.5. Outlook toward ragging**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
No response	115	12.5
Crime/punishment	436	47.3
Fun/interaction	371	40.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 4.6. Tolerance of ragging**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
Agreed	377	40.9
Criticised	298	32.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### *Findings on the fresher students*

The juniors' group admitted that they knew certain laws against ragging (51.6%) at the time of admission and the rest (48.4%) came to know after admission; 40.9% through prospectus/brochures, 33.8% through orientation programme, 13.4% through notice board and 7.4% through the posters planted in the institute. Due to Supreme Court's strict intervention, every educational



institution is strictly compliant and adding the statutory guidelines regarding ragging and affidavit from parents, so the fresh students are found to be reasonably sensitised about various aspects of ragging. And the majority of the students (71.0%) denied having any facility in the institute where their interaction with seniors was possible. On the other side, 25.9% reported having provisions for interactive sessions with the seniors.

In case of being victimised of ragging, only 33.3% of the fresher were aware of their rights. 47.3% reported ragging as undesirable act and did not favour it. However 40.2% favoured ragging as a source of fun and entertainment. 12.5% of the students remained silent probably because of ignorance or fear about this issue. Regarding tolerance towards ragging amongst fresher, 40.9% agreed on this issue whereas, 32.3% showed their sensitivity by criticising it as a heinous act. 43.4% of the fresher did not sign the undertaking at the time of admission. The study also revealed that majority (56.6%) of the institutes have helpline numbers in the event of any help required in case of ragging (table 4.7). The study further showed that almost all the students (75.7%) had courage to report the authorities in case they get ragged. However, 24.3% preferred to remain silent after the occurrence of such events, which needs further exploration.

Amongst the fresher group, there was significant difference in peer pressure and impulsivity in both the sexes because students are very sensitive to peers' opinion. Impulsivity is a core symptom of a broad spectrum of psychiatric disorders, including disorders of impulse control. In the present study, the fresher were showing lot of impulsivity which may be responsible for risk taking behaviour (Table 5.1).

**Table 4.7. Help line**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	522	56.6
No	400	43.4
Total	922	100.0

**Table 4.8. Undertaking**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	522	56.6
No	400	43.4
Total	922	100.0

**Table 4.9. Report of incidence to the authorities in case of ragging**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	698	75.7
No	224	24.3
Total	922	100.0

**Table 4.10. Reporting of the incident in case of others being ragged**

Response	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	679	73.6
No	243	26.4
Total	922	100.0

**Table 5.1. Sex difference in three clinical domains for junior**

	Sex	N	Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
<b>Self-esteem</b>	Men	641	27.2278	.046
	Women	281	26.7260	
<b>Peer pressure</b>	Men	641	59.8206	.000*
	Women	281	51.8149	
<b>Impulsivity</b>	Men	641	47.0842	.000*
	Women	281	41.6726	

**Table 5.2. Sex difference in three clinical domains for senior**

	Sex	N	Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
<b>Self-esteem</b>	Men	558	27.2491	.947
	Women	343	27.2332	
<b>Peer pressure</b>	Men	558	61.0771	.017
	Women	343	58.5802	
<b>Impulsivity</b>	Men	558	46.7312	.000*
	Women	343	44.0816	

\*P<.001

Amongst the senior group, there was significant difference in impulsivity in both the sexes and this may be attributed that individuals with high impulsivity display lower accuracy and faster time estimation than individuals with low impulsivity (Table 5.2). Researchers also argued that this provides the basis for impulsive behaviours such as making quick decisions and acting without thinking. However, on the dimension of self-esteem, both the seniors and fresher did not show any significant difference in both the sexes.

## Discussion

The present study was aimed to ascertain the reasons, circumstances and psychological impact of ragging. The study was designed in two phases: in the first phase the information was sought from the various educational institutes, e.g., schools, colleges and the professional colleges of Haryana regarding steps taken by the educational institutions to prohibit and prevent the menace of ragging. The questionnaire also tapped the level of awareness and sensitivity amongst the senior and junior students regarding the issue of ragging and the impact of UGC regulations. In that phase we tried to find out role of psychological factors in such activities. We also studied impulsivity, self-esteem and peer pressure in both seniors and fresher group.

Ragging, as we know, is detrimental to the victim in many ways. It may range from mild to severe i.e. it may be limited to some innocent and harmless remarks to severe physical and mental assault. Thus, it has become a matter of great concern. We have to convince ourselves that definition and meaning of ragging is not glorified in terms of "need for good social bond", as that would keep it alive in the system in dormant state. There is existing mindset in the society that with ragging the students come close to each other and have good relationship. We have

to first erase such myths and misconception about ragging, as it crosses all the limits of civility and humanity and many lives are disturbed with it. At times, it may go to any extent to satiate the sadistic pleasure of the perpetrators. They drive pleasure when they find their victims totally helpless and at their mercy. It not only gives pleasure to the raggers but also gratifies the onlookers. Ragging often leaves an unpleasant mark on one's life. The victim is not only affected physically but also gets shattered psychologically leading to a complete loss of their mental equilibrium.

Though the laws are strict but that alone are not sufficient. We need a comprehensive multipronged attack to dispel all the misconceptions about ragging, break the belief system which supports ragging. The youngsters need to be sensitised and require a sense of respect for themselves as well as for others.

The present study was conducted on 1823 students (922 fresher and 901 seniors). A questionnaire containing the sociodemographic variables along with consent form was prepared for the senior students and fresher in order to study their level of awareness regarding the laws against ragging. Out of 901 students of senior group, equal number (almost 40% in each group) were neutral or considered ragging is undesirable and only the one fifth considered it as good and healthy, as it helped the student to develop social bond. Regarding the awareness about the form of ragging, 43.1% reported it as physical, 39.7% as mental, six per cent as sexual and 10.8% attributed to any other form.

Majority of the senior students in the study (i.e. 62%) reported emotional ragging of the juniors as compared to other forms of ragging. Though they reported no ragging in their institute but the figures (82.8%) have to be cautiously interpreted as it might be due to influence of peer group and higher authorities to hush up these incidents, as observed in other surveys. About the venue of ragging, the hostel (65.8%) was found as most vulnerable place for ragging. Unfortunately, 44.7% of the senior students reported ragging as a fun seeking event, clearly showing their mental set which they have acquired from the society. Psychologists studied such behaviour and termed this phenomenon as "Stockholm syndrome", where it has been believed that child abuse, battered spouse relationship and ragging also work on the same psychology as "societal Stockholm syndrome". In our study 31.2% justified ragging, which indicate their acceptance towards ragging due to their mindset.

Out of 922 of students of fresher group, half (51.5%) of the students were fully aware of the UGC guidelines against ragging whereas, rest half (48.4%) were having no knowledge about these guidelines. The students might be diverting themselves from such acts as majority (71.5%) of them knows the consequences of ragging.

In order to assess and quantify the impact of ragging and indiscipline on the standard of education in an institution related to its existing procedure used by the regulatory bodies, we found that about 50% did not have any knowledge of the guidelines but at the same time equal number admitted that they were aware of guidelines through banners, posters and hoardings installed by the institute. The students advocated for ragging as an essential component for introducing themselves with juniors. However, the limit of ragging cannot be ascertained, as introduction may go to any extent and further lead to severe form of ragging as explained earlier.

The uncontrolled ragging in the campus reflects on the poor discipline and poor structure of the academic framework. High standard institutes should have very low threshold for indiscipline and so there should be no place for ragging. The regulatory bodies, while inspecting educational institutes, generally focus on the infrastructure facilities, teaching material etc., but they hardly look in to matter of indiscipline or ragging or measures taken by the institutes to install proper anti-ragging measures. These parameters should be equally important in evaluating the institutes by the regulatory bodies.

### *Self-esteem, peer pressure and impulsivity*

Peer pressures among students encourage them to be involved in ragging behaviour. When youth believe that their peers think that ragging others is not bad and unethical, they are more likely to get involved in such acts. On the other hand impulsivity is a multidimensional concept that involves the tendency to act quickly and without reflection, having something to do with restraining one's behaviour, handling of different emotions, and rapid processing of information, novelty seeking, and inability to delay gratification. It does not seem to depend on an impaired critical judgement, but on the loss of control over one's cravings, and has been described as a process over and above particular drives. It is a measurable feature of behaviour, manifested as impatience (including the inability to wait for rewards), carelessness, risk-taking, and pleasure-seeking, an underestimated sense of harm, and extroversion. Impulsivity is a core symptom of a broad spectrum of psychiatric disorders, including disorders of impulse control.

Comparison of the scores on self-esteem, peer pressure and impulsivity dimensions revealed statistically significant difference across sex in impulsivity and peer pressure dimension in the fresher group. However, statistically significant difference was found only in the dimension of impulsivity in senior group. But there was no significant difference revealed in the domain of self-esteem amongst both the groups across sex.

In addition to the regulations lay down by the regulatory bodies (e.g. MCI, Rehabilitation Council of

India [RCI], UGC), there is a need to emphasise and focus on following recommendations:

- The policies and procedures related to ragging should be well-defined.
- Strict action should be taken against individuals who involve in such type of acts in the academic institutions. There should be corrective and remedial measure for these issues.
- The institutions should be educated, informed and encouraged to abide and follow all the guidelines laid down by the UGC in implementing anti-ragging programmes.
- Recommend urgent and mandatory mental health measures to be implemented in, and practiced by schools, colleges, and all educational and vocational institutions.
- To provide informative literature in the form of leaflets, posters etc. to every fresher and senior, explaining the anti-ragging regulation at the time of admission.
- An anti-ragging squad should be constituted in every institution, to avoid such events.
- Conducting orientation programmes for the students and sensitising students with the impact and ills of ragging.
- Creating a positive and healthy environment in the institute, for both the fresher and the seniors.
- Creating senior students as mentors who look after the juniors.
- Provision for accepting the genuine complaints (anonymous) of the students and work towards their redress.
- Involving parents, institutions, teachers, media and the senior students in the effort and endeavour to curb the menace of ragging.
- And to carry out such other ancillary activities that might be necessary for the awareness and implementation of the anti-ragging regulation.
- Introducing anger management workshops and other communication skill training programmes during the academic sessions.
- Focus on victims and perpetrators. Proper care for victims of ragging should be there. However, care should be taken that even the perpetrators are not neglected and are examined and provided support and treatment if required. Penalising and criminalising perpetrators would create more problems and mainstreaming them is important, as ragging by and large is time limited and temporary phenomena.
- The institutes must review their policy and make it practical and applicable in addition to meeting the

statutory requirements. The institutes should carry out such studies from time to time to rationalise their policies.

### Conclusion

Institutions are doing good to cover legal aspects of ragging by publishing anti-ragging measures in prospectus and taking compulsory undertakings from parents as well as students but still most of the things are on papers only. The enforcement of law in this area requires lot of social commitment, infrastructure and trained professionals in various areas. There is no point in having good legal provisions unless there is matching financial, professional and infrastructural resources on ground. There is a gross mismatch and in reality we find law is bypassed by all stakeholders including Government. We need to make all stakeholders aware of this fact. It is the responsibility of all to wake up and fight the menace of ragging. We need to screen and provide support to both the victim and the perpetrators of ragging as both groups are the resource of future in India. It is a more of a biopsychosocial problem and only legal focus will not be able to eradicate the problem.

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