

ATTITUDE OF COLLEGE STUDENTS OF DIFFERENT NON-PROFESSIONAL COURSES TOWARDS RAGGING : AN ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Attitudes are enduring systems of positive or negative evaluations, emotional feelings and action tendencies with respect to an individual's social world (Ajzen, 2001; Krech, Crutchfield, and Ballachey, 1962). The objective of the study was, to know the attitude towards ragging among college students of non-professional courses (Art/Humanities, Social science and Science). Survey method was used in this study. A random sample of 300 students (18-26 years) was drawn from various non-professional courses from Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Agra College, St. John's College, and R.B.S College in Agra city only. Attitude towards Ragging Scale (ATRS) developed by Agarwala, Kumar and Sadhwani (2010) was administered to measure the favorable and unfavorable attitude of the students of various courses. Two - way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was computed to analyze the data and understand the level of significance. The results revealed that the main effect of factor A (gender) is insignificant ($F = .322, p > 0.05$), this indicates there is no significant effect in the attitude towards ragging between male and female. The main effect of factor B (non-professional courses) is insignificant ($F = 2.362, p > 0.05$), this indicates there is no significant effect in the attitude towards ragging among the non-professional courses viz.: humanities/arts, social science, and science. An interaction between gender (male and female) and different non-professional courses (humanities/arts, social science, and science) is insignificant ($F = .793, P > 0.05$), this shows that male and female college students of non-professional courses were not differ significantly with each other with regard to their attitude towards ragging. The recommendations are that Psychological counseling on anti-ragging act should be available in these courses. Issue of ragging should be received as an issue of human rights in education and Human right activists and NGOs should introduce appropriate initiatives in this regard.

Introduction

Attitudes are enduring systems of positive or negative evaluations, emotional feelings and action tendencies with respect to an individual's social world (Ajzen, 2001; Krech, Crutchfield, and Ballachey, 1962). Another definition of an attitude (proposed by Bohner and Wanke, 2002) is as follows: "A summary evaluation of an object of thought. An attitude object can be anything a person discriminates or holds in mind. Attitude objects can be concrete (e.g., pizza) or abstract (e.g., freedom of speech), may be inanimate things (e.g., sport cars), persons (e.g., Slobodan Milosevic, oneself) or groups (e.g., conservative politicians, foreigners)." An attitude to safety could predispose the individual to react in a certain way to hazardous conditions at work. An attitude which can be positive or negative, acts as a filter. A person tends to select information that is consistent with his or her attitudes and to ignore information that is opposed to them. The expression of an opinion amounts to an interpretation of what has been observed after filtering it through the medium of attitudes. In the formation of attitudes, personality and socialization are two important variables. Personality in terms of introversion or extroversion is said to create a disposition favorable or unfavorable to the acceptance of attitudes. Introverts are more susceptible to socializing influences and more prone to accept the values of society than extraverts, who tend to be under socialized (Eysenck, 1970). Socializing influences at work also play a part in the formation of attitude. It is widely acknowledged that, during training, professional people develop attitude towards the practice of their chosen vocation that color their vision and affects their approach to the reality of work situation. This process of socialization, by which members of a profession subscribe to the values and beliefs nurtured by the professional group, is termed professionalization. It involves modification of attitudes during the training phase and conformity to group standards, and it embraces acceptance of specific obligations to colleagues, clients, and the public.

Ragging

In today's global scenario, an important variable which needs immediate attention is ragging. Ragging is a completely purposeless and meaningless activity. Ragging means playing practical jokes on somebody or teaching someone a lesson. Ragging refers to rigorous process of mental or physical abuse on freshers in schools, colleges and other academic institutions around the world. The practice of ragging is prevalent in most of the professional and non-professional colleges and institutes in India. Normally, the senior students are involved in ragging juniors or fresher. Ragging is believed to have been originated from army and police camps. Victims of ragging often suffer from a sense of insecurity and helplessness.

Origin of Ragging

Today, ragging may have become deep rooted in the Indian educational set up, but many would be surprised to know that ragging is originally a western concept. Ragging is supposed to have its creation in certain European Universities whereas seniors played practical jokes at the time of welcoming freshmen to the institutions. Gradually, the practice of ragging became popular throughout the world.

How Ragging Affects the Victim

An unpleasant incident of ragging may leave a permanent scar in the victim's mind that may haunt him for years to come.

- ✍ It demoralizes the victim who joins college life with many hopes and expectations.
- ✍ Though incidents of physical assault and grievous injuries are not new, ragging also simultaneously causes grave psychological stress and trauma to the victim.
- ✍ In extreme cases, incidents of suicide and culpable homicide have also been reported.
- ✍ How Ragging Affects the Educational institution
- ✍ Severe Medias barrage in extreme cases of ragging lowers the character of the educational institution and destroys the respect and faith it commands from society.
- ✍ Those who indulge in ragging bring a bad name to their college thereby hampering its reputation and good will in society.
- ✍ Substantive Laws Prohibiting Ragging
- ✍ Presently, there are only four state legislations in India that prohibit ragging. These are:
- ✍ The Prohibition of Ragging Act, 1996. (Application in the State of Tamil Nadu).
- ✍ The Kerala Prohibition of Ragging Act, 1998.
- ✍ The Maharashtra Prohibition of Ragging Act, 1999.
- ✍ The Prohibition of Ragging in Educational Institutes Act, 2000 (Applicable in the State of West Bengal).

Ragging is an archaic method of interaction with several harmful effects like physical injury through beating, by forcing to perform dangerous tasks, psychological trauma generated because of intense fear, forceful initiation to alcoholism, smoking and drugs, and group violence etc. Mithun Singh of Begusarai reported the second day of college, was ambushed by a group of seniors at Patna College 20 January, (2011). Four plus two students of government higher secondary school at kumarakom were arrested by police in a case of ragging. The students were also suspended from school for 15 days following an enquiry conducted by the Parent Teachers Association of their school. A suspected ragging incident at the Narayana Junior College, Dilsukhnagar, Hyderabad on 22nd October 23, (2008) led to a conflict between two student groups. A second year student supposed beat up a MPC first year student. The first year student had come early to college to attend special classes when he was followed by the senior and beaten up in public.

Harish, who got a seat in civil engineering branch at the Government Polytechnic (Boys) College at Anantapur, drank acid after he had allegedly been tortured by his seniors. Unable to withstand the humiliation, he left for his home town and resorted to the extreme step on august 25. In his suicide note, Harish alleged that he had been harassed by four seniors in his room at Bhairavanagar Colony in Anantapur (2008).

Coalition to Uproot Ragging from Education (CURE, 2010) has once again come out with its statistics to highlight the ragging scenario in higher educational institutions in India. According to CURE's latest analysis of ragging in India, the academic session 2009-10 registered highest number of ragging deaths in recent times.

Table-1
Annual Status Report on Ragging in India

Year	Reported Ragging Incidents	Ragging Deaths	Attempted suicides
2007-08	89	11	5
2008-09	88	12	5
2009-10	164	19	4

In the academic session 2009-10 (July, 2009 – June, 2010) a total of 164 cases of ragging were reported in English media from across the country. The highest incidents were reported from Uttar Pradesh (26), Andhra Pradesh (18), Tamil Nadu (14), Kerela (13) and West Bengal (11).

Need and Significant

In resent scenario, ragging is an important topic which is very serious among the college students and need greater attention to prevent it because every student has a different level of emotional sensitivity, if people come across severity of ragging, the student tried to dropping out from college and suicide also. By this study, college staff more accountable in case of ragging incident. By Promoting alternative methods of interactions as Dramas, community work, adventurous sports, short trips, evening games and gathering in the presence of hostel warden and college staff, act of ragging can prevent easily. The researcher is sure that this study will prove helpful in guiding student to develop the confidence in them.

Objective

To study the attitude towards ragging among college students of non-professional courses (Art/Humanities, Social science and Science).

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the attitude towards ragging among male students of different non-professional courses.
2. There is no significant difference in the attitude towards ragging among female students of different non-professional courses.
3. There is no significant interaction effect in the attitude towards ragging among male and female college students of different non-professional courses.

Methodology

Method

Researchers used descriptive survey method for this study.

Sample

The sample of the study consisted of 300 students (50 male and 50 female from each non-professional course i.e. Art/Humanities, Social science and Science) selected randomly from the various non-professional courses of different colleges of Agra like Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Agra College, Agra, St. John's College, Agra and R.B.S College, Agra.

Design

Factorial Design (2X3) was used for the study.

Tools

Attitudes toward Ragging Scale (ATRS), constructed by Agarwala, Kumar and Sadhwani (2010) was used. The scale is based on five points Likert scale. The scale consists of 30 statements.

Delimitations

- ⚡ The age range of the students was from 18 to 26 years.
- ⚡ The present study is delimited to Agra city only.
- ⚡ In the present study the severity of ragging was not measured.

Analysis

In order to analyze the scores on the attitude towards ragging, the total mean and SD scores of gender and non-professional courses were calculated and the same have been presented in table-2.

Table-2
Total Mean and SD Scores of Gender

Gender	N	Total Mean	SD
Male (a ₁)	150	86.33	8.406
Female (a ₂)	150	85.73	9.918

Table-2 shows that the mean score for male student (86.33) is higher than female student (85.73).

Table-3
Mean Scores of Different Non-Professional Courses (Male)

Non-Professional Courses	N	Mean
Arts/Humanities	50	84.56
Social Science	50	88.16
Science	50	86.26

On the basis of the scores obtained on the attitude towards ragging of different non-professional courses of male, the mean scores have been presented in table-3 shows that the mean scores of male on different non-professional courses for arts/humanities; social-science and science are found to be 84.56, 88.16 and 86.26. On the basis of the result obtained from first hypothesis stating: "There is no significant difference in the attitude towards ragging among male students of different non-professional courses. There is some difference in the attitude towards ragging among non-professional courses, especially in social science students because they are influenced by management students and they think ragging is a part of fun and it necessary for promoting communication in seniors or juniors.

Table-4
Mean Scores of Different Non-Professional Courses (Female)

Non-Professional Courses	N	Mean
Arts/Humanities	50	84.26
Social Science	50	85.80
Science	50	87.12

It can be observed from table-4 that the mean scores of non-professional courses of female students are found to be 84.26, 85.80 and 87.12. It shows that there is no significant difference in the attitude towards ragging among female students of different professional courses. There is little difference in the mean scores of science female students because today, girls are more practical and competitive than boys. Girls are forward to grasp knowledge and their cognitive domains are much stronger, so they do not feel ragging is a bad thing and they enjoy it by some practical jokes.

Table-5
ANOVA Summary of Attitude towards Ragging Scores

Source of variance	SS	df	MS	F	Significance Level
Gender (A)	27.000	1	27.000	.322	p>0.05
Non-Professional Courses (B)	396.247	2	198.123	2.362	p>0.05
Interaction (AB)	132.980	2	66.490	.793	p>0.05
Within Group Error	24655.560	294	83.862		

Table-5 indicates that there is no significant effect in the attitude towards ragging between male and female ($F=.322, p > 0.05$). Table shows, that there is no significant effect in the attitude towards ragging among non-professional courses ($F=2.362, p > 0.05$). It further shows that there is no significant interaction effect in the attitude towards ragging between gender and non-professional courses ($F=.793, p > 0.05$).

Discussion

The results of the present research lead to the acceptance of first and second hypotheses slightly that science and management students are more practical but they think ragging is a part of fun and it necessary for promoting communication. On November 22, 2009 in Coimbatore another ragging incident at the PSG Arts and Science College, the second this year; the police launched a search for five students who allegedly abused a fresher and asked him to wear bathroom slippers to college instead of shoes. Sometimes ragging is too much bad. On July 24, 2011 in New Delhi a Parliamentary panel has expressed dismay at the anti-ragging guidelines at colleges across the country, terming them as inadequate and ineffective in curbing the incidents which are targeted at freshers. In Bokaro, 3 girls along with 1st year student were being ragged by the seniors at the hostel on July 23, (2009). The three girls could not bear the torture and became unconscious. But the school authorities did not take any action despite being informed.

Violence and humiliation are so contrary to education. In Varanasi 28 students were expelled from a college here for ragging their juniors and involved in violence in September. 1st year students were beaten by the senior at their hostels (2010). It is shocking to see educated youngsters involved in something which is irrational and gross.

Conclusion:

Thus on the basis of above findings and discussion it can be concluded that attitude of college students and non-professional courses do not have any significant difference towards ragging. The results showed that science and management students think ragging is a part of fun and necessity for promoting communication.

Recommendations

- ✍ Central Regulatory bodies to take ragging situation as an important factor in accreditation of educational institution.
- ✍ Proctor office, within educational institution, should be primary agency to work for elimination and prevention of ragging. In residential hostels, proactive-monitoring must be done by wardens.
- ✍ Set up anti-ragging cells at central, state and college level.
- ✍ Psychological counseling on anti-ragging act should be available in non-professional courses.
- ✍ Colleges to organize interactive sessions between juniors and seniors in presence of college staff.
- ✍ Issue of ragging should be received as an issue of human rights in education and Human right activists and NGOs should introduce appropriate initiatives in this regard.
- ✍ Complaint registration system within institution must be made very smooth, friendly and safe.

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