

# Anti-ragging Sensitization

R K Gorea

Executive Director, Medico-legal Institute cum Registrar, Baba Farid university of Health Sciences Punjab

Adjunct Professor, Eternal University, HP

Professor Emeritus, SJJT University, Rajasthan

Faculty member, NFSU, Gujarat

## ABSTRACT

Ragging has been banned in all educational institutes all over India. Still, there is confusion in the minds of senior students about what is covered and what is not covered under ragging. Incidences of ragging do occur in some form or another due to this confusion. There is a strong need to make all the students and faculty members aware of the nuisance of ragging and the unwelcome fallout of ragging. Effects of ragging may be minor to major, affecting the mental and physical well-being of the freshers and sometimes even resulting in suicides due to unbearable mental trauma. Unwanted side effects of ragging result in disciplinary and legal action against senior students, which may ultimately affect their academic careers. Not only senior students but all the faculty members, fresher students and other employees of the institutes should also be sensitized to report the incidences if it comes to their knowledge. Therefore, sensitization of all students and employees about ragging should always be carried out every year by the members of the anti-ragging committee of every educational institute to prevent ragging in all the institutes.

**Keywords:** Ragging, Sensitization, Consequences of ragging, Injuries, Psychological impact.

*Int J Eth Trauma Victimology* (2024). DOI: 10.18099/ijetv.v10i01.01

## INTRODUCTION

### Definition

The definition of ragging by the University Grants Commission is “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.”<sup>1</sup>

### Epidemiology of ragging

It is prevalent not only in India but is also observed in Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Malaysia. Hazing in the USA and Bizutage in France are forms of ragging and were also prevalent there.

Cases of Pon Navarasu/John David Ragging case 1996, Aman Kachru 2009, Ajmal PM 2012, Akash Aggarwal 2014 and the Delhi Public School Noida Ragging Case became very famous because of the brutality and murder involved in ragging.<sup>2</sup>

In 2018, there were 1016 cases. In 2019, there were 1076 cases; in 2020, there were 219 complaints of ragging. The decrease in 2019 was due to the COVID-19 era. Cases are not decreasing in India and in 2021, there were 511 complaints of ragging received. And a large number of complaints were from medical colleges.<sup>3</sup>

### Causes of ragging

Ragging used to be very common in India and some other countries when freshers in colleges were ragged by their seniors on the pretext of generating a feeling of comradeship and was considered a tool of communication between the seniors and fresher students to develop a capacity to work in

**Corresponding Author:** R K Gorea, Executive Director, Medico-legal Institute cum Registrar, Baba Farid university of Health Sciences Punjab, e-mail: rakeshgorea@gmail.com

**How to cite this article:** Gorea RK. Anti-ragging Sensitization. *Int J Eth Trauma Victimology*. 2024;10(1):1-3.

**Source of support:** Nil

**Conflict of interest:** None

**Received:** 10/01/2024;

**Received in revised form:** 15/06/2024;

**Accepted:** 25/06/2024;

**Published:** 30/07/2024;

the team. An excuse is also not to let juniors feel alone and help them adjust to the new circumstances or to know the juniors. It was also a considered method to teach juniors how to respect their seniors.

As seniors were also ragged when they were freshers, they considered their right to rag the juniors and considered it as just enjoyment.

Consumption of alcohol increased the number and severity of the incidences.

### Types of ragging

Ragging can be in the form of verbal, physical, or psychological abuse. Physical abuse constitutes both infliction of injuries and sexual abuse. It may vary from teasing to humiliation, wrongfully restraining to assault, causing injuries to death. This psychological torture, in some circumstances, may result in the commission of suicides and then it is considered an abetment to suicides. Aman Kachru's death occurred in 2009 due to a beating by senior students and an intracranial hemorrhage occurred and he died. 6 deaths occurred in 2010 due to the effects of ragging and they committed suicide.<sup>4</sup>

Online harassment was added in the COVID-19 era to the other modes of ragging. Students are not allowed to sleep properly and they are deprived of sleep.<sup>3</sup>

### Preferred places of ragging

Usually, it occurred in the hostels after teaching hours. Most commonly, it was in the common areas, e.g., mess, especially dinner time but when the messes closed, it also occurred in the rooms of hostels. During day time, it occurred in the college canteens, especially during lunch hours & playgrounds and it used to be mass ragging when ragging was done in batches, especially on the holidays. Before the start of the classes, it also occurred in the Anatomy halls in the medical colleges. Usually, before the fresher's party incidences increased as it was considered the last opportunity by the senior students for ragging.

### Effects of ragging

Ragging lowers the morale of the freshers because of its dehumanizing effect. Some of the students feel isolated and become depressed. Some of the students who cannot cope with the ragging may consider suicide as an option to escape the humiliation of ragging. Suicides had occurred earlier and it is still going on. An incidence of suicide was reported in Odisha by a young girl who committed suicide by hanging in 2022<sup>5</sup> and in Feb 2023, a Telangana medical student committed suicide.<sup>6</sup>

### The legal position of ragging

Students have been charged with Section 323 IPC and Section 341 IPC (wrongfully restrained) after the FIR in some cases but usually colleges cover up the case to avoid loss of reputation.<sup>3</sup>

Some states have made anti-ragging laws. In 1997, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu made laws against ragging. Maharashtra made the law in 1999 against ragging<sup>4</sup>, and Jammu & Kashmir made the law in 2011.<sup>7</sup> Dr R K Raghawan headed the committee formed by MHRD on the orders of SC and it submitted its report to SC for the guidelines in cases of ragging.<sup>4</sup> In the laws by states there is provision of imprisonment from 6 months to 2 years and a provision of fine up to Rs 10,000.

There is an anti-ragging monitoring committee in the Ministry of Education, Govt of India. UGC has an anti-ragging cell, Inter Council Committee, and Monitoring Agency. All the educational councils All educational commissions and educational regulatory bodies are collaborating with UGC to curb the menace of ragging and adopting a zero-tolerance policy towards ragging. Now, colleges and universities must have anti-ragging committees and anti-ragging Squads.<sup>8</sup>

There has to be a transparent process to deal with the complaints and cases of ragging. Ragging is now banned in all educational institutions by the guidelines of the University Grants Commission [UGC], National Medical Commission [NMC], National Dental Commission [NDC], and National Nursing and Midwifery Commission [NNMC].

SC has given verdicts against ragging in 2001 in WRIT PETITION (CIVIL) NO 656 OF 1998 Vishwa Jagriti Mission Through President ... Petitioner 506559 Versus Central Govt. Through Cabinet Secy. & Ors. In the order, it is mentioned

that ragging is a sadistic pleasure and it is a show of power of superiority. If the institute fails to prevent ragging it will be considered negligence on the part of management of the institute.<sup>9</sup>

### Disadvantages to senior students indulging in ragging

Disciplinary action against the students involved in ragging may result in fines, withdrawal of scholarship, expulsion from the mess or hostel, debarred from sitting in the examination, and expulsion from the college. The students are suspended immediately, pending the completion of the inquiry. If considered necessary, such cases will be reported to the police and police will take action according to the gravity of the situation and injuries. Institutions may have to file FIRs against the erring students or those students who are abetting ragging.

### Prevention of ragging

Ragging should be prevented by making all stakeholders aware that ragging is against the law and can lead to unpleasant situations both for the juniors and seniors.

No one should be a mute spectator to the incidences of ragging and if ragging is taking place anywhere, it should be reported. Action should be taken against the seniors as per the provisions of the rules and the laws.

Each institute must have an anti-ragging committee and anti-ragging squads and the names of these must be displayed with their mobile numbers at the prominent places in the institution. They should sensitize all the students and employees of the institution and motivate them to report incidences of ragging and not resort to ragging. Suitable action should be taken against the erring students after due inquiry of the incident.

It should also be displayed that ragging is banned in the institute and it is totally against the law and resorting to ragging may lead to punishments and all those punishments should be displayed at the prominent places.

There were landmark judgments by the Supreme Court in 2001 and 2009 against ragging and then UGC made guidelines for anti-ragging measures.

Upon receipt of the complaint anti-ragging Committee should immediately take action and enquire into the matter. They should inform the parents of the students. After an inquiry, they should take disciplinary action and if considered necessary, should file an FIR with the police. If the individual cannot be identified, then the collective punishment should be awarded if ragging has happened.<sup>9</sup>

Complaints can be submitted online on the website, on a toll-free number,<sup>8</sup> or using an app specially made for this purpose.

To prevent ragging, students in every educational institute have to give an affidavit that they will never indulge in ragging and if found ragging, they will accept the punishment. Similarly, their parents have to give an affidavit that their ward will not indulge in ragging and if found ragging, they will have no objection to the punishment awarded to their wards.

Educational Institutes have to display warnings about ragging and surprise visits to hostels, in addition to having



CC TV cameras. There is a need to sensitize all the faculty members, senior students, and all the employees of the institute regarding ragging and zero tolerance policy about ragging and to report ragging incidents if they come to their notice.<sup>8</sup>

The educational institutions should also carry out awareness programs and it should be in the brochure of the admission. Fresher students should be given a leaflet about their rights and where to report cases of ragging. Anonymous surveys can be done to see the actual condition of ragging and the effectiveness of anti-ragging measures.

Leaders in the institutions, both at the student level as well as at the level of employees and faculty must be made aware of the ill effects of ragging upon the fresher students. They must also be made aware of the fallout upon the senior students if they indulge in ragging. This is important as the behaviour of the leaders affects the behavior of others as they tend to follow the leaders for their satisfaction.<sup>10</sup>

## MATERIAL & METHODS

Google Scholar and Google search engines were used to find the articles using keywords and relevant articles were selected and used for writing this article.

## DISCUSSION

Freshers should not be afraid and they should know their rights that they cannot be ragged. They can and they should raise a voice against ragging. They should have unity and raise their voice collectively to be more effective. Everyone should know that ragging is a criminal offense and indulging students can be jailed for this offense. Other measures can be taken which can have far-reaching consequences in the academic career and he may be rusticated from the college. No other educational institution will give admission to such a student.

When all the employees and faculty of the college are sensitized and made aware of ragging and anti-ragging measures, it will motivate them to report cases of ragging thus, it will help to tackle the cases of ragging at the very initial phase and this will help in the prevention of further ragging.

There are anti-ragging toll-free helplines 1800 180 5522 and anti-ragging email addresses [helpline@antiragging.net](mailto:helpline@antiragging.net), where it can also be reported.<sup>8</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Ragging is a social curse that must be stopped at every cost. All should be made aware that ragging is bad and no one should

indulge in it. If anyone is found ragging should be immediately reported to the authorities and after due inquiry, suitable punishment should be given to the erring students. Stopping the ragging will result in a conducive environment for learning. This will also help in avoiding the ill effects of ragging amongst the students and no one will die due to ragging.

## REFERENCES

1. NDTV.com [Internet]. [cited 2023 Aug 9]. UGC modifies the definition of ragging. Available from: <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/ugc-modifies-the-definition-of-ragging-396252>
2. IndiaTimes [Internet]. 2016 [cited 2023 Aug 8]. 5 cases of ragging in India that shocked the world! Available from: <https://www.indiatimes.com/news/world/5-cases-of-ragging-in-india-that-shocked-the-world-278321.html>
3. Sleep Deprivation, Slapping, Miming Sexual Acts: Inside The Murky World Of Ragging In Indian Colleges — Article 14 [Internet]. [cited 2023 Aug 8]. Available from: <https://article-14.com/post/sleep-deprivation-slapping-miming-sexual-acts-inside-the-murky-world-of-ragging-in-indian-colleges-6321389fe534f>
4. Ragging [Internet]. [cited 2023 Aug 8]. Available from: <https://www.legalservicesindia.com/article/1168/Ragging.html>
5. India Today [Internet]. [cited 2023 Aug 10]. Odisha girl dies by suicide; blames ragging by college seniors in last note. Available from: <https://www.indiatoday.in/cities/bhubaneswar/story/odisha-girl-suicide-ragging-by-seniors-bjb-autonomous-college-1969648-2022-07-03>
6. India Today [Internet]. [cited 2023 Aug 10]. Telangana medical student dies after attempting suicide over 'ragging'. Available from: <https://www.indiatoday.in/news/video/telangana-medical-student-dies-after-attempting-suicide-over-ragging-2340345-2023-02-27>
7. THE JAMMU AND KASHMIR PROHIBITION OF RAGGING ACT, 2011 (Act No. VI of 2011).
8. [ugc-iec-guidlines-for-councils-universities-and-colleges-for-curbing-the-menace-of-ragging.pdf](#) [Internet]. [cited 2023 Aug 10]. Available from: <https://www.antiragging.in/assets/pdf/information/ugc-iec-guidlines-for-councils-universities-and-colleges-for-curbing-the-menace-of-ragging.pdf>
9. Mission VJ, Maharaj S. The Supreme Court of India Judgement.
10. Bansal RN, Malhotra M. Catalyzing Public Healthcare Efficacy: Striking the Right Cords of Leadership. *J Clin Diagn Res* [Internet]. 2018 [cited 2024 Jul 12];12(10). Available from: <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&profile=ehost&scope=site&authtype=crawler&jrnl=0973709X&AN=131906308&h=k2zRQp3QUvhbcjqm5KTiqzzwQCChjC6qXvODF%2B7MbZb9o033qhUjUgKTRRGQpLHhtEi%2FruXOdZgAlwdZZAB18eQ%3D%3D&crl=c>