1.0.0 Introduction

Youth is period of joy, belief in oneself, freedom. It is the time to think for one’s future which is prosperous, dignified, well established, content but what takes it to hopelessness, gravity, stress, shamefulness and ultimately…………SUICIDE, a question mark on society, family and the way the world is running…!?!.

The creation and destruction of mankind has been a matter of intense intrigue for many years. In recent years, the emerging self-directed violence or suicides and destructions by others or homicides for a wide variety of reasons has been a matter of debate across the world. Voices are emerging from every corner of the globe to understand or reduce the same in country. What drives a person to the ultimate state of destruction or deliberate self harm has baffled scientists, researches, priests, philosophers, lawyers, doctors, social workers and communities within geographical locations. No barriers of age, sex, class, religion exist in suicides. Suicide or deliberate self harm, an event considered as more of cultural or social phenomena is recently recognized as a public health problem in every country. The phenomenon of suicides in recent years has become so common that no single day passes without reading, hearing or watching an act or attempt in the media.

Educators in India are worried over an increasing figure - that of the rising suicide rate among Youth. Shorewala, S. (2013, July 13) highlighted At least 125 people aged 29 years or below are committing suicide every day and 51 per cent of the total suicide victims are graduates, college students or younger. Youth has always been a
period of confusion with varying temperaments where teens have to deal with academic, social and individual pressures. Additional stress factors like violence in the family, poor performance, fear of punishment, rivalry etc can make them feel that there is nothing to live for. Youth suicides are like precious lives turned futile causing an irreparable loss to the individual as well his close concerns. The problems of youth, drug use, ragging, peer pressure depression and suicide are evident in our society. Ragging and peer pressure are the causes which turn an individual to think for suicidal thoughts. These are very real and threatening issues that have to be dealt with.

Now in the 21st century we have to face the problems of our future generations. Youth seeks the fruits of friendship whether they are sweet or sour. The peer group consisting of best buddies plays a great role in one’s life. Looking at what friends do, may lead to the imitation of the same. If one can pick selectively, it can actually result in a positive change in one’s way of life but most of the times it results into the addiction towards alcohol, drugs, smoking i.e. peer pressure. It also creates disparity between parent child relationships. It could extend to committing a crime or engaging in unprotected sex. Peer pressure can lead to a loss of individuality. Many a times, it so happens, that one is forced to lead a certain kind of lifestyle due to peer pressure. One may not like partying on every weekend, one may not like night outs with friends, one may hate drinking or smoking, but peer pressure may make one do all one had never wished to. There are many youngsters who experience great pressure from their peer group that forces them to take to drinking. If the youth gives in and participates, putting acceptance ahead of values, the result is loss of youth. They stop believing in their ability to stand up for them, and their ability to live consistently with
the values they want to have. Once they have compromised their values, it becomes easier to do it again the next time. They may let their values go after a while, and go further participate in situations that they otherwise would have resisted. The damage to the one's self esteem is lasting. It can lead to depression or other emotional illnesses over time. Participating in illegal or immoral activities can also lead to legal trouble or health problems. It happens that some situation which become grave for them and which have no escape lead them to end their life by committing suicide.

In the good old days, ragging used to be a common affair with the object of making the new comer feel free, the things that are being done (and often very stupid) notwithstanding. It became a menace that the Government decided to put its foot down. There are many who defend ragging as a sport or fun. The fact that one is born earlier than one’s victim but that is an act of nature, not one is doing. So what gives the senior right to humiliate and harass junior? And from which angle can anyone justify ragging as a sport or fun? The victim is humiliated, harassed physically, emotionally and sometimes even sexually. So where is the sport? And ragging sometimes turns violent and leads to suicide. So where is the fun? Kulkarni, P (2010, 29th July) highlighted that according to the Coalition to Uproot Ragging from Education, a total of 164 cases of ragging were reported in the academic session 2009-10 (July, 2009 June, 2010). This shows that ragging cases reported have doubled this academic year. The maximum numbers of ragging deaths were recorded in Maharashtra (4), West Bengal (4) and Punjab (3) registered maximum deaths due to ragging. It is alarming to observe that 4 states comprise to 57% of the total ragging deaths across the country. The highest incidents were reported from Uttar Pradesh.
(26), Andhra Pradesh (18), Tamil Nadu (14), Kerala (13) and West Bengal (11). In comparison to last year, Tamil Nadu is a new entrant to this list, whereas Punjab has exited the list.

Death is chosen because suffering becomes intolerable. There is little hope for change, improvement or possibility of a better future with the life that they experience. They have an easy solution in mind i.e. death means no pain. Most of the teen suicidal attempts are consequences of improper dealing with feelings of depression.

1.1.0 Peer Pressure

_Dressed in her denim skirt, and petite pink t-shirt, Sarah almost felt as if she was hiding herself behind the layers of make-up that she dabbed before coming to college. She remembered the first time she stepped into college. College was a nightmare for Sarah when she was ridiculed for her dull dressing sense, her messed up hairdo and her geeky spectacles. She was sick and tired of kids laughing at her and looking at her as if she had walked out straight from another planet. She was sick of having lunch alone, and leading a non-existent profile in college until she decided it was time for her to join the bandwagon. She started dressing up like the ramp models in her class, even picked up a few make up tips from them. She was listening to the same music that everyone was listening to, she was going to the places that everyone frequented and even though she hated it, she tried to gulp down a glass of beer at every weekend party that she attended. Soon she was what her peers wanted her to be – one of the lots._ –Uttara Manohar
A majority of children continue to struggle with it through years of schooling and perhaps even later. Peer pressure is inevitable since there always exists one ‘cool group’ at college – which basically includes a bunch of youngsters who do all the things that they are not supposed to do and make it seem like a ‘cool’ or ‘happening’ thing to do. Students, who are too sincere at studies, have often been at the receiving end of ridicule, and a lot of meaningless bashing by the bullies at college. Indulging in unsafe sexual practices, alcohol, drug abuse, eating disorders and smoking are some of the activities that are a part of the peer pressure phenomenon.

Youth is that period of life when one is exposed to the world outside. These are the years when they spend most of their time with friends. Youth is the period of beginning to become independent in life; the years of forming ideals and principles, the years that shape personality and the years that introduce them to their own self. Students often spend most of their daily time with friends and owing to this vulnerable age, they tend to imitate their friends. The people around them are bound to influence them. However, the effect of the influences of the masses is greater during teen years. The parameters of good and bad replace by ‘what’s in’ and ‘what’s out’. Peer pressure is nothing but the incessant desire of the children to be perceived as ‘happening’ and ‘cool’ in order to belong to a particular group. Often at schools and colleges the students are always forming groups, and there is a lot of group politics and bullying than one can ever imagine.

The thoughts, behavior and tastes of fashion, music, television and other walks of life of the masses are often seen having a deep impact on the living of the society. We tend to get influenced by the lifestyles of our peer group. The changing ways of life of
peers often force us to change our ways of looking at life and leading it. It’s a human tendency to do what the crowd does. Few have the courage to resist the peer pressure and be their own selves rather than being one among the lot.

Peer pressure refers to the term describing the pressure exerted by a peer group in encouraging a person to change his/her attitude, behavior, morals, to ‘fit in’ a particular group. While people are involved in this process of fitting in, they fail to see the consequences of giving in to Peer pressure. People fail to realize that negative peer pressure not only erodes their own identity but also is the sole reason for some of the most erroneous choices in their lives.

Peer pressure starts becoming a real influence in a child's life as he grows older. When kids are small their minds are not developed enough to understand such things, but as they grow older more and more peer pressure situations start arising. Some parents cannot believe that their child is pressurizing another to do something wrong and immoral, but the truth of the matter is that this happens everywhere, and almost every child has been a part of both sides of the coin. It is human nature to be influenced by someone who is a part of friend circle and to be enticed to do whatever he/she is doing. Some researchers say that this is a good thing, because it leads individuals to see more of the world and attempt to improve themselves. But things take a turn for the worse when peer pressure situations arise regarding something illegal or immoral.

*Either you change your mind, succumbing to peer pressure and adopting the new memes as your own, or you struggle with the extremely uncomfortable feeling of being surrounded by people who think you're crazy or inadequate.- Richard Brodie*
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This quote clearly explains the state of mind of almost every youngster who has had to deal with peer pressure. It is the pressure faced by a youngster that takes advantage of the desire for conformity or general acceptance, with the rest of the crowd. It is a natural human tendency, to want to do 'what everyone else is doing', or to be part of the 'happening' crowd. However, the consequences of relenting to peer pressure are not always positive, and can have a severely negative impact on a tender mind such as that of a child's.

Dealing with peer pressure in the youth years is never an easy task. We all get swayed and influenced by the latest fashion, music, television and movies. And getting influenced by our peer groups is perfectly normal. However, the way one is getting influenced by a peer group must be taken into account as that can lead to various consequences. The distinction between positive and negative friends lies in a thoughtful analysis of the views of the masses. Following peers blindly leaves a negative impact on their life while an analytical approach of looking at peer behavior can act positively.

If student stays in the company of good, sincere student from educated families, he will get the opportunity to learn a lot from them. This will improve his personality and overall behavior. One can see over a period of time that he has become a mature person and has acquired the ability to take correct decisions himself. One will also notice that he succeeds in achieving his set goals and targets. True friends can encourage doing good things and can also boost morale by providing emotional support at times. Healthy competition among friends can help in enhancing the academic as well as extra curriculum performance of youth.
1.1.1 Effects of Peer Pressure

Peer pressure occurs when a group coerces someone into doing something inappropriate. The group makes it clear that the person will be kicked out of the group or targeted for revenge if she/he does not participate. The group also makes it clear that participation leads to acceptance by the group, which is very desirable during these years. However, if the peer pressure is negative, then it can severely hamper the progress of person. Living in bad company can force to get under the pressure or influence of bad habits such as drinking, smoking and drugs. There have been many instances where youngsters get spoiled and commit the biggest mistakes of their lives due to negative peer pressure. When one does not like a particular idea or when we have no inclination towards a particular field, it is obvious that we won't like to go by it. For sure, we won't like to go that way. But it is peer group, which may compel on doing something one hates. In such cases, there are chances that one won't do well in those things. Things one do not enjoy doing cannot fetch success. One cannot emerge successful in something that he/she has never liked doing. So, it is important that one do not lose happiness of one’s life by succumbing to Peer Pressure.

Many a time it so happens that we are forced to lead a certain kind of lifestyle due to peer pressure. One may not like partying on every weekend or holidays, one may not like night outs with friends, one may hate drinking or smoking, but peer pressure may make it to do all that one had never wished to. There are many youngsters who experience great pressure from their peer group that forces them to take to drinking. One may take to something as grave as drug use, and that too, only because of peer
pressure. In such cases, being overly pressurized by peers can be detrimental to living. Some youngsters literally spoil their lives by giving in to peer pressure.

Peer pressure can lead to a loss of individuality. Extreme peer pressure may lead to follow what your peers feel right. Their pressure may compel them to go by everything they think right. One tends to blindly imitate the masses; adopt their tastes of fashion, clothing, hair, music and general living. Peer pressure can actually lead to lose your tastes of life and force to begin liking what they like. Peer pressure is the human tendency to join the bandwagon, in which, the person loses his/her original way of looking at life.

*The main consequence of saying no to negative peer pressure is not just withstanding "the heat of the moment," as most adults think. Rather, it is coping with a sense of exclusion as others engage in the behavior and leave the adolescent increasingly alone. It is the loss of the shared experience. Further, the sense of exclusion remains whenever the group later recounts what happened. This feeling of loneliness then becomes pervasive but carries an easy solution - go along with the crowd.* ~ Michael Riera

### 1.2.0 Ragging

Ragging is an act which causes, or is likely to cause physical, psychological or physiological harm or apprehension or shame or embarrassment to a student. It includes teasing, abusing or playing practical jokes or causing hurt to any student or asking them to do any act, or perform anything which he/she would not, in the ordinary course, be willing to do. The term “ragging” means different things to different people. To some of us it constitutes just “fun and frolic” including “singing and dancing” in front of seniors. To some others, it means working on assignments for
seniors and doing their daily chores. For many others it constitutes physically tiring, verbally abusive or even sexually assaulting acts.

Teasing, ducking and ragging are becoming a serious problem in educational institutes. Teasing is defined as the mildest form of harassment, irritation or provocation, characterized by persistent petty distractions. Ducking may be more severe, and chiefly involves some one having to perform humiliating imitations of animal behavior. “Ragging” is the most severe of the three initiations practices. Ragging is an act of aggression committed by an individual or a group of individuals over another individual or a group of individuals where former, by virtue of their being senior to latter somehow get the authority and audacity to commit the act and latter, by virtue of their being new to the institution are automatic victims. Its imposition on new students became established in colleges as the right and privilege of the senior students and as necessary punishment for the new ones, who at the same time were granted concessions and protection by their seniors. It is often found that many a times ragging starts as a healthy introduction exercise but due to sudden rush of adrenaline in teenage that gradually the seniors get carried away in a large group of friends and ragging turns ugly.

The horrified acts of ragging include pulling a person by ears, slapping, beating or kicking him, stripping him of clothes and making him indulge in humiliating sexual and other acts, or making him stand naked in the cold for hours. It is also seen that the new students are treated “like slaves”, they are made to complete senior students’ work books, polish their shoes, cater to whimsical and non whimsical demands, entertain the senior students, often out of their money, and generally show total
submission and humility. In subordination they are punished severely; in one case a “victim” was severely sexually abused and suffered a serious mental breakdown. Indeed, some students abandon their studies and exhibit neurotic symptoms. Severe ragging has been linked directly to hypomania, suicides and at least one death. Students from rural areas and medium stream find institutes, particularly those in city, a cultural shock. The huge textbooks, the English speaking senior students and even the dressing styles scare them. Many students suffer from home sickness and bouts of depression.

1.2.1 Types of Ragging

Coalition to Uproot Ragging from Education (CURE) gave a very comprehensive picture of Ragging in its report ‘Ragging in India: A Summary Report on Incidents, Social Perceptions and Psychological Perspectives’ in 2007. The report highlighted the following types of Raging.

1.2.1.1 Verbal Ragging: Verbal ragging is defined as a non-consensual conversation between the senior and freshman, where the senior humiliates the freshman, forces him to answer personally/socially-unacceptable questions/topics, teases/harrasses him/her, does an exhibition of his/her superiority leading to mental trauma, uneasiness, discomfort for the fresher.

1.2.1.2 Physical Ragging: Physical ragging is defined as a non-consensual act by a senior toward the junior with the goal of hitting, inflicting physical injury or compromising the dignity of the fresher. Also, the act of asking the fresher to do something which is not normal human physical disposition; could create physical injury, health problems
or lose of dignity for the freshman are considered physical ragging. Possible examples for the former are: beating the fresher, touching the fresher with one's shoe/feet, hitting the fresher with objects, etc. The latter would comprise asking the fresher to slap him/herself, sit in a 'cuckoo' position, drink/eat something inedible, stand for long on one feet, sweep his/her room, etc.

1.2.1.3 Sexual Ragging: Sexual ragging is defined as an non-consensual act by a senior, that of asking the junior to do something which is damaging or compromises the sexual dignity of the junior; doing an act of sexual nature with the junior. This shall comprise of asking the junior to strip, have unnatural sex, masturbate in public, touch private parts, etc.

Ragging is more of a psychological problem than anything else. The whole concept of it is based on two major superstitious beliefs about ragging i.e. first that it has a positive effect on the personality of the fresher and secondly that it helps in the interaction between the seniors and freshers. The seniors make every effort to ensure that these beliefs are well passed on to their juniors. It is normally seen that when fresher enters the college then initially he is too horrified with the ragging practice. During the initial days of ragging, even a minor abusive word hurled on him or a small act of physical or sexual violence with him is unbearable. He makes every possible effort to save himself from this unjustified torture. The option of complaining this to the authority is mostly ruled out by him due to the already set in insensitivity among the college authorities towards this traditional concept of ragging. Secondly the newly admitted fresher lack confidence in complaining this to the college administration and rather see it as a possibility of a backlash by his seniors. Most of
the freshers choose to rather run away home and see it as the most viable option to temporarily avoid ragging. When they return back they face the same ordeal again. The initial ragging days are some of the most traumatic days in anyone’s life. Since getting admission in professional colleges in India is too difficult therefore the freshers decide to compromise with the situations and search for support among the fellow sufferers i.e. batch mates. It is commonly seen that most often the freshers who drop out of college or commit suicide are the ones who are singled out from their batch or are ragged most severely. It is also observed that sometimes one or two freshers who are ragged severely or are singled out by their seniors are ostracized by their batch mates too and this leads to severe depression among the fresher who then decides to harm himself. It is noted that most of the cases which are reported are the ones in which the victims were singled out.

Freshers are told that if they don’t go through ragging they will not only remain shy but never know their seniors and would thus remain isolated in college. Gradually as the fresher goes through repeated tortures and is inculcated with the myths of ragging, he not only becomes insensitive to it but starts believing in the concept of ragging. It is this which ensures the phenomenon of ragging to pass on from batch after batch. Ragging has also been associated with machoism. Seniors, who are able to sexually or physically rag their junior, see it as an act of courage. It is because of this that many seniors who are reluctant to rag their juniors, finally succumb to peer-pressure. It is often found that not all the seniors are in favor of sever ragging but are indirectly forced to rag in order to stay in their group of friends else they are bullied by their batch mates.
CURE’s report in 2007 highlights 42 instances of physical injury, and reports on ten deaths purportedly the result of ragging. Ragging has reportedly caused at least 30-31 deaths in the last 7 years. In the 2007 session, approximately 7 ragging deaths have been reported. In addition, a number of freshmen were severely traumatized to the extent that they were admitted to mental institutions. Ragging in India commonly involves serious abuses and clear violations of human rights. Often media reports and others unearth that it goes on, in many institutions on innocent victims.

In many colleges, like IIT Bombay and IIT Hyderabad, ragging has been strictly banned. However, this ban has not been very effective, as seen by the number of ragging cases still reported by the media. Ragging involves gross violations of basic human rights. The seniors are known to torture juniors and by this those seniors get some kind of sadistic pleasures. Though ragging has ruined the lives of many, resistance against it has grown up only recently. Several Indian states have made legislatures banning ragging, and the Supreme Court of India has taken a strong stand to curb ragging. Ragging has been declared a criminal offence. The Indian civil society has also started to mount resistance, recently. But in India, ragging is more infamous for its ubiquitous presence in the educational institutions. According to the observations by the Dr. Raghavan Committee, which has been constructed by the Union Human Resource Development ministry on the orders of the Supreme Court of India, the professional colleges are the worst affected in India. However, India's first and only registered Anti Ragging NGO, Society Against Violence in Education (SAVE) has supported that ragging is also widely and dangerously prevalent in Engineering and other institutions.
"The rules have been put down on paper, but how they will be implemented, executed, how the victim will benefit, nothing of the sort has been written. And no college wants to get into it because a ragging case becomes a criminal case, so there will be cops on campus and there will be an inquiry. No college wants that," - Harsh Agarwal

1.3.0 Suicidal Ideation

SUICIDE is not chosen; it happens when pain exceeds resources for coping with pain........!!!!!!!

Suicide, by definition, is a behavior. It is an issue which generates apprehension, disbelief, fear and anger in many people, provoking strong attitudes, beliefs, and opinions. All of these people may be in such a world of pain and hurt that death ceases to be scary-it begins to look like an easy way out. They have lost their perspective on reality, and suicide seems to be a simple solution to end their despair. Other people may be experiencing a steady decline in the quality of their lives, and may blame themselves and think that something is wrong with them. The more they blame themselves, the less worthy they feel of having success, having friends, or having fun. They perceive the future as being hopeless. Others feel so buried under so many little things that have gone wrong that they feel like they are drowning.

Suicide is fast becoming one of the leading causes of death in the country. According to WHO's latest suicide rate estimates, India along with China holds the dubious distinction of having the highest suicide rates in the world. While in China, 99 out of every 100,000 people commit suicide annually, for India, it stands at 98 per 100,000 populations. On the occasion of World Suicide Prevention Day 2008, WHO says China, India and Japan may account for 40% of all world suicides. According to
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Union health ministry's estimates, as many as 1.2 lakh people end their lives every year in India by committing suicide. Besides that, more than four lakh people attempt to commit suicide. The majority of suicides (37.8%) in India are by those below the age of 30 years. Over 71% of suicides in India are by persons below the age of 44 years. (The Times of India, 2008). Nearly one million people worldwide die by suicide annually, making it one of the world's leading causes of death. There are estimated 10 to 20 million attempted suicides every year. The rate of suicide in India in 2002 is estimated to be 10.5 per 100,000 people per year (WHO, 2008).

Suicide may occur for a number of reasons, including depression, shame, pain, financial difficulties, ragging, peer pressure or other undesirable situations. General trend specifies, suicidal behavior often occurs in response to a situation that the person views as overwhelming, such as social isolation, emotional trauma, serious physical illness, aging, financial problems, guilt feelings, or dependence on alcohol or other drugs. Attempted and committed suicides result in enormous social, economic, and medical costs. Suicide is very disruptive to the quality of life of survivors and their families and friends. Yet it all starts with an impulse, an ideation that over-extends long period to reach the act.

Suicidal ideation (SI) –specifically, thoughts and cognitions about taking one’s life –is both a primary marker for suicidal risk and basic component in the classification of suicidal behaviors. Within a hierarchical continuum, suicidal ideation can be characterized as ranging from general thoughts about death to much more serious ideation about specific means of committing suicide. Thus, suicidal ideation refers to
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a myriad of cognitions specific to death, self-destructive behavior, and related actions and activities.

Kumar (2007), in one of his study mentioned that suicide is an important issue in the Indian context. More than the southern states of Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu have a suicide rate of > 15 while in the Northern States of Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jammu and Kashmir, the suicide rate is < 3. One lakh. Higher literacy, a better reporting system, lower external aggression, higher socioeconomic status and higher expectations are the possible explanations for the higher suicide rates in the southern states. The majority of suicides (37.8%) in India are by those below the age of 30 years. The fact that 71% of suicides in India are by persons below the age of 44 years imposes a huge social, emotional and economic burden on our society. The near-equal suicide rates of young men and women and the consistently narrow male: female ratio of 1.4:1 denotes that more Indian women die by suicide than their Western counterparts.

Suicidal ideation is a common medical term for thoughts about suicide, which may be as detailed as a formulated plan, without the suicidal act itself. Although most people who undergo suicidal ideation do not commit suicide, some go on to make suicide attempts. The range of suicidal ideation varies greatly from fleeting to detailed planning, role playing and unsuccessful attempts, which may be deliberately constructed to fail or be discovered or may be fully intended to succeed. Strictly speaking, suicidal ideation means wanting to take one’s own life or thinking about suicide without actually making plans to commit suicide. However there is a critical distinction between a person's thoughts regarding death and suicide, and actually
wanting to die. When doctors hear that someone wants to die, they refer to these thoughts as suicidal ideation and divide them into 2 categories: (i) Suicidal ideation can be active and involve a current desire and plan to die. (ii) Suicidal ideation can be passive, involving a desire to die but without a plan to bring about one's death (As shown in fig.-1.1).

![Algorithm for the evaluation of patients with suicidal ideation](image)

Fig 1.1: Algorithm for the evaluation of patients with suicidal ideation (Gliatto, M. F. & Rai, A.K. 1999)

An ideation session is basically a concentrated period of brainstorming with rules of engagement. In this sort of session one conceptualizes rather than perceptualizes. Perceptualizing is what one most commonly does in daily life. Conceptualizing, on the other hand, is something one does only rarely- like building up a concept, synthesis, or principle from a body of information. Chioqueta & Stiles (2007), examined the role of psychological buffers (life satisfaction, self-esteem, perception of family cohesion, and perception of social and Peer support) in the development of hopelessness and suicidal ideation. The results of a set of hierarchical multiple regression analyses suggested that life satisfaction and self-esteem are independent predictors of lower levels of hopelessness, while perception of peer support seems to be the major
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predictor of lower levels of suicidal ideation independent of depression and hopelessness severity. Thus, hopelessness seems to be minimized by the level of life satisfaction and level of self-esteem exhibited by the individuals, while the key factor to the mitigation of suicidal ideas seems to be perception of social support.

The interpersonal-psychological theory of suicidal behavior (T. E. Joiner, 2008) proposes that an individual will not die by suicide unless he or she has both the desire to die by suicide and the ability to do so. Van Ordan, Wittw, Gordon, Bender, and Joiner (2008), in their three studies test the theory's hypotheses. In Study 1, the interaction of thwarted belongingness and perceived burdensomeness predicted current suicidal ideation. In Study 2, greater levels of acquired capability were found among individuals with greater number of past attempts. Results also indicated that painful and provocative experiences significantly predicted acquired capability scores. In Study 3, the interaction of acquired capability and perceived burdensomeness predicted clinician-rated risk for suicidal behavior.

![Fig 1.2: Self-harming Techniques used to commit suicide](image)
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The figure 1.2 clearly shows some of the techniques used by the people who try to commit suicide especially youngsters. They choose these techniques to end their precious lives to escape from the humiliation they may face after being victimized by the acts of ragging and the situations that arise as the result of the negative peer pressure including alcohol use, smoking, drug use, unprotected sex, crimes, accidents, cheating, piracy, forgery, stealing, gambling, anti social behavior and going against the social norms. The youth that is driven by hopelessness, indecisiveness, and impatience take a strong decision to turn their life into death. They are unable to cope up with the pressure of being pissed off between the parental expectations v/s peer impositions, free life v/s a career oriented life. The troubles of the world defeat them and thus death wins over the young life.

1.4.0 Professional Course and Non Professional Course

A professional course is a course that leads to a professional qualification. Courses like Engineering, Medical, and Management come under this category whereas Non-Professional Course as the name suggest does not lead to any specific Profession. The courses that come under Non-Profession are graduation from Humanities, Commerce and Science.

1.5.0 Emergence of the Problem

Every year when the admissions in the colleges are over, the news about ragging and consequential suicides can be heard from various colleges which are shocking as well as heartbreaking for many people affected by these incidents. The newcomers facing problems in adjusting in the new surroundings have to face the cruel face of ragging and negative peer pressure that shatters them internally as well as psychologically.
ultimately the death is chosen in place of life. Laws against ragging are made but still the ragging cases are heard. Unfortunately, the traditional practice of familiarizing beginners or juniors with their seniors has now turned into a potent tool for ill-treating and punishing juniors. The torture on innocent students often run for months, and involve the same batch of students being physically and mentally abused by same and/or different group of seniors. The agony of the ragging cannot be bear by many students and they think that suicide is the only way to escape from such situations. Ragging is used as a measuring rod to test the courage of the seniors. Many juniors who have been victimized of ragging form a peer group to save themselves and in this process to protecting themselves from one evil (ragging), jump into the lap of another evil i.e. peer pressure. There is another condition such as students from school transition into college, times can be rough. They have to get used to their new environment and adapt to any changes that come their way. Someone who was not into the party scene in school might wind up living on a floor that is wild and crazy, and they will have to adapt to their environment in order to fit in with everyone else. Next thing they know their whole persona changes. They begin to think differently, dress differently, and act differently just to fit in with a group of people. It is crazy to think that a group of people can have such a massive influence on one person, but someone’s lifestyle can be changed drastically just by conforming and adopting to other people’s values and actions as they forget about their own. Chaudhary (2010), The engineering and medical colleges of India are the havens of the worst possible ragging in this country. The students studying in these colleges and their families are liberal in their attitude so they think that they can do anything fearlessly. Also the students studying in these colleges are better in economic status so they waste their
money in spending lavish life which includes alcohol intake, late night parties, disco, pubs, and drugs. Therefore they adopt all such things as a trend. Students under these conditions continue to do so many things totally wrong that now they have no way to justify anything. To overcome these big mistakes sometimes suicide passes by their mind as for them this is again the bypass way to withdraw. So the researcher wants to see to what extent ragging and Peer pressure lead to the suicidal ideation.

1.6.0 Justification of the Problem

With all these concepts and related literature explored the apprehensions about suicidal ideation are still not crystal clear. It brings to our mind some problem statements such as why suicidal ideation is found among youngsters? Helplines have been floated, psychologists have pronounced their presence in the society to help and many more measures taken, yet the problem still persists. Despite stringent laws and severe punishment against ragging of students in colleges, the menace is continuing. Every year the police and the managements of the college carry out publicity, warning the students that ragging will lead to expulsion from the college, such incidents are continuing with alarming frequency. A severe kind of ragging may turn into suicide. Today suicide is a major socio-economic and health problem that needs a special concern and it is found to be quite prevalent among young people. Youngsters frequently find themselves under tremendous stress. Problems most often occur when stressors at home, college, and with peer group occur within a context of minimal social and emotional support. It is the stage when youngsters face hard time dealing with the expectations of peers, society and expectations of their own. They often feel trapped between the way they want to be and the way others want them to be and it is
then suicidal thoughts take place in their sensitive mind. These problems are further exacerbated when there is a lack of coping strategies, or when behavioral deficits or dysfunctions exist.

Flisher, Ziervogel, Chalton, Leger and Robertson (1993) report that 85.7% of those who make suicide attempt have seriously thought about doing so earlier. Suicidal behavior among people is a well-explored public health problem but still health policy decision-making on suicidal behavior needs reliable information on the prevalence of suicidal ideation and to trap the most vulnerable group having suicidal thoughts so that steps can then be taken to design the intervention or treatment programs accordingly in order to reduce the suicidal rate.

Now the points related to problem of the study will be highlighted

1.6.0 Statement of the Problem

The following problem will be taken for the study:

**Peer Pressure and Ragging as the Determinants of Suicidal Ideation among the students of Professional and Non-Professional Courses.**

1.7.0 Definitions of the Terms used in the Study

The variables related to study can be defined in following way:

1.7.1 Peer Pressure

**According to Sim & Koh (2003)**

“Peer Pressure is an attempt by one or more peers to compel an individual to follow in the decision or behaviors favored by the pressuring individual or group”.
Chapter I  Conceptual Framework of the study

Operational definition (Singh & Saini , 2010- Manual: Peer Pressure Scale)

“A Peer is a person who belongs to the same societal group based on age, grade, or status. Peer Pressure is a feeling pressure from age-mates to do something harmful for self and others”.

1.7.2 Ragging

According to The Honorable Supreme Court of India (2001)

Ragging is any disorderly conduct, whether by words spoken or written, or by an act which has the effect of teasing, treating or handling with rudeness any student, indulging in rowdy or undisciplined activities which cause or are likely to cause annoyance, hardship or psychological harm or to raise fear or apprehension thereof in a fresher or a junior student and which has the effect of causing or generating a sense of shame or embarrassment so as to adversely affect the psyche of a fresher or a junior student.

Operational Definition

Ragging is an act of aggression committed by an individual or a group of individuals over another individual or a group of individuals where former, by virtue of their being senior to latter somehow get the authority and audacity to commit the act and latter, by virtue of their being new to the institution are automatic victims.

1.7.3 Suicidal Ideation

According to American Psychiatric Association (2003)

Suicidal ideation is defined as thoughts serving the agent of one’s own death. It may vary in seriousness depending on the specificity of suicide plans and the degree of suicidal intent.
Operational Definition

Suicidal ideation means wanting to take one’s life or thinking about suicide without actually making plans to commit suicide. However, the term suicidal ideation is often used more generally to refer to having the intent to commit suicide, including planning how it will be done.

1.8.0 Objectives of the Study

Following objectives were taken into consideration for the study:

1.8.1. To study the Peer Pressure among undergraduate students.

1.8.1.1 To identify the levels of Peer Pressure among the students of Professional and Non-Professional Courses.

1.8.1.2 To compare the Peer Pressure between the students of Professional and Non-Professional Courses.

1.8.1.3 To compare the Peer Pressure between the Male and Female students.

1.8.2 To study the Severity of Ragging among undergraduate students.

1.8.2.1 To identify the levels of Severity of Ragging among the students of Professional and Non-Professional Courses.

1.8.2.2 To identify the Popular Styles of Ragging.

1.8.2.3 To compare the Severity of Ragging between the students of Professional and Non-Professional Courses.

1.8.2.4 To compare the Severity of Ragging between the Male and Female students.

1.8.3 To study the Suicidal Ideation among undergraduate students.

1.8.3.1 To identify the levels of suicidal Ideation among the students of Professional and Non-Professional Courses.

1.8.3.2 To compare the Suicidal Ideation between the students of Professional and Non-Professional Courses.

1.8.3.3 To compare the Suicidal Ideation between the Male and Female students.
1.8.4 To compare the Suicidal Ideation among the students of High, Average and Low Peer Pressure Group.

1.8.5 To compare the Suicidal Ideation between the students of High, Average and Low Ragged Group.

1.8.6 To study the Contributory Role of Peer Pressure and Ragging in determining the suicidal Ideation of students.

1.9.0 Hypotheses of the Study

Following Hypotheses were proposed for giving direction to the study:

1.9.1 There will be no significant difference between the students of Professional and Non-Professional courses with reference to their Peer Pressure.

1.9.2 There will be no significant difference between the male and female students with reference to their Peer Pressure.

1.9.3 There will be no significant difference between the students of Professional and Non-Professional courses with reference to their severity of Ragging.

1.9.4 There will be no significant difference between the male and female students with reference to their severity of Ragging.

1.9.5 There will be no significant difference between the students of Professional and Non-Professional courses with reference to Suicidal Ideation.

1.9.6 There will be no significant difference between the male and female students with reference to Suicidal Ideation.

1.9.7 There will be no significant difference between the students of High, Average and Low Peer Pressure Group with reference to Suicidal Ideation.

1.9.8 There will be no significant difference between the students of High, Average and Low Ragged Group with reference to Suicidal Ideation.
1.9.9 There will be no contributory role of Peer Pressure and Ragging in determining Suicidal Ideation of the students.

1.10.0 Delimitations of the Study

The study was delimited to the followed attributes:

1.10.1 The study was delimited to Agra city only.
1.10.2 Only the first year students were taken.
1.10.3 The age group of the students was varying from 18-20 years.
1.10.4 The students of Professional and Non-Professional courses were considered for the sample.

1.11.0 Variables of the Study

The operational variables were as follows:

![Diagram](image.png)
1.12.0 Method of the Study

It was an’ descriptive survey study. In the present study Peer Pressure and Ragging were considered as Independent Variables and Suicidal Ideation as the Dependent Variable. Peer Pressure, an independent variable in the present study was studied by dividing its effect into three categories such as high effect, average effect and low effect and Ragging; the other independent variable was also investigated by dividing its effect into three categories such as high effect, average effect and low effect.

1.13.0 Sample of the Study

The sample of the study was consisted of the students of first year undergraduate level. Form the undergraduate course two courses were selected. Professional courses- Medical, Engineering, Management were taken into consideration. Non–Professional courses were included the undergraduates of Arts, Commerce and Science. One college for each stream was selected by random method. Equal number of students belonging each stream and to both genders was considered. The age range of the students was varying from 18-20 years. Total 360 sampling units were taken. Selection of the sample was done by using ‘Stratified Random Sampling Method so that every unit of the population segment had the equal chances to be selected for the sample.

1.14.0 Tools used in the Study

1.14.1 For measuring the effects of Peer Pressure a tool ‘Peer Pressure Scale’ (2010) by Singh and Saini was used. Peer Pressure Scale is a five point scale consisted of 25 items for measuring the peer pressure in adolescents aged 16 to 19 years.
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1.14.2 For measuring the Ragging a self constructed tool “Ragging Severity Scale” was
created by the researcher herself.

1.14.3 For identifying most popular styles of ragging: scales on Style of Ragging- for Boys
and Style of Ragging- for Girls were constructed. The scales are dichotomous in
nature and consisted of 38 and 27 items respectively.

1.14.4 For measuring the level of suicidal ideation, The Beck Scale for Suicidal Ideation
(1991) was used. This test has 19 items based on Suicidal Ideation. Each item consists
of three options graded according to suicidal intensity on a 3-point scale ranging from
0 to 2.

1.15.0 Statistical Techniques

1.15.1 Measures of Central Tendency viz. Mean, Median and mode

1.15.2 Measures of Variability viz. Standard Deviation

1.15.3 Coefficient of Variance was computed to see the relative variance of groups in terms
of Homogeneity and Heterogeneity.

1.15.4 Test of significance viz. t-test

1.15.5 Multiple Regression

1.16.0 Significance of the Study

The study would be significant for the Parents, Teachers, College Administrators and
Guidance Bureau;

1.16.1 For Parents

In most of the cases it is seen that youngsters get drifted from their parents because of
the peer pressure or some other problem which they hesitate to discuss with them
whereas youth is that stage of life where the parental guidance is most required.
Parents must also take some responsibility and encourage their children to report any such incident immediately so that they can take up the issue with the management and prevent any tragic untoward outcome. Also they could counsel their wards to refrain from ragging. So through this study the drift between parents and children can be reduced as the parents of those children who have faced the negative consequences such as suicidal ideation of peer pressure and ragging may take their vulnerable kids towards the right and safe path. Generating confidence in children is very important as youngsters low on confidence and emotional strength are more prone to give in to Peer Pressure. By guiding youngsters in a friendly way, parents can pave the path of their progress. Parents can openly communicate, involve with their children’s lives and teach their children tools for coping with negative peer pressure and ragging will have the best chance of protecting children from the negative effects of surrendering.

Fig 1.4: Exhibiting the impact of social aspect on suicidal behavior
1.16.2 For College Administrators

This study will stress that Ragging in any form must be condemned and colleges must be places of fun and learning. There is enough pressures on the children, and the stress of ragging can be disastrous. The laws have to be stringently applied and colleges have to be safe places, physically and emotionally. Just putting a complaint box somewhere near the principal's office is not going to work. No fresher has the courage to approach the complaint box and name a particular senior. Periodic checks by flying squads will do the trick. A policy of "Zero Tolerance" on ragging is essential in Educational Institutes. All students need to have a Ragging Free record and also crime free records as including no drug habits, no gang wars as a prerequisite for completing their academic qualifications, for awards and for contesting college elections etc. the provision for compulsory attendance and regular evaluation must be there. Colleges need to talk to students and give them an opportunity to think. We need them to weigh whether what they are doing is rational. There needs to be a comprehensive awareness program.

1.16.3 For Guidance Bureau

Guidance workers have the unique responsibility of promoting the development of community initiatives for the prevention of bullying, pressure and related social problems like ragging and suicide. Counselors need to be aware of the physical and psycho-social symptoms associated with ragging and negative effects of Peer Pressure so that they can screen the youngsters involved and provide the support needed to develop healthy relationship between parents and children, seniors and juniors and teachers and students.
1.16.4 For Teachers

Several times, students give in to peer pressure than resisting it, simply because it seems like the easy way out. They also bear the acts of ragging uncomplaining although sometimes these situations become intolerable. This study will make the teachers aware that how difficult the situation becomes for the youngsters that are unable to cope up with the pressure of peer group and ragging. So the teachers should held co curricular activities like debate, drama and role play so that the students could have their strong individual decision while resisting the pressure of the peer group and ragging. Teachers must present various scenarios to students, where they have to deal with peer pressure and other problems, and their natural response to it, will help teacher to identify their problem areas, and will enable a teacher to deal with it in the required manner. When the reasons leading to peer pressure and Ragging and their
preventive measures taken are openly discussed, students will be able to understand how to tackle peer pressure and ragging that is an inevitable part of every student's life.

1.17.0 Overview of the chapter

The conceptual framework provided a foundation to the research. In this chapter the theoretical explanation of the variables of the study; Peer Pressure, Raging and Suicidal Ideation were given. The details of main components of any research; objectives, hypotheses and variables were comprehensively explained. A precise explanation of the technical details; sample, method, tools and statistical techniques that are to be employed and administered were given. In the later section assumed significance of the present study was highlighted.