

A comparative study: national law school and symbiosis law school

Business



National Law School and Symbiosis Law School: A Comparative Study from the sociological perspective Sociology I SUBMITTED BY: Pushan Dwivedi (1833) 1st Year B. A. LL. B (Hons.) Date of Submission: 08 August, 2010.

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National Law School is located in Nagarbhavi, a western suburb of Bangalore. It has consistently been marked as the top law school in India. What sets apart NLSIU from the newer law schools, with better infrastructure and facilities, is its unique social fabric. The researcher has made an attempt to provide a microscopic view of this sophisticated environment and provide a keyhole-peep to an outsider to the hectic, chase-at-your-own peril pace of the best law school in India. Symbiosis Law School, in Pune, has been the best private law college since its inception in 1977.

The college is known for its diverse and rich culture.

The study intends to highlight the dynamics which take place within and outside the symbiosis campus in regard to the students. The two institutions are a study in contrast with differing cultural end-products. The study, apart from looking into the factors which cause these differences from the sociological perspective, will prove to be beneficial to prospective law students in making an informed decision while choosing their preferred institute, rather than relying on industry or brand value only.

Research Methodology Aims: To conduct a survey among the students of National Law School and Symbiosis Law School in order to discover the factors which regulate student behaviour in the respective institutions and analyze their extent of influence. **Objectives:** The main objective of this study is to highlight the factors which are the cause of the distinct differences in behavioural trend among the students of NLS and SLS. This study will also help prevent any form of ‘ cultural shock’ that a prospective student may encounter.

Scope and limitations:

The scope of this project extends to the interpretation of the respective environments of the two institutes from various sociological angles like those of accommodation, socialisation and deviance. The major limitations faced by the researcher were 1. The collection of empirical data from Symbiosis Law School. 2. The absence of prior experience in a study of this nature coupled with constraints of time and resources which limited the researcher’s access to literature.

Method of Writing: The method of writing adopted is analytical.

Mode of Citation: NLS uniform citation has been followed. Interaction of Students with their Environment Holland’s theory of choice of vocational subjects/fields provides a potent framework for analyzing students’ college experiences. His theory combines psychological factors (students’ personality types) with that of sociological factors (the attributes of academic disciplines) to reproduce a model of person-environment fit which

may be utilized for the explanation of student development as affected by the college.

The premise upon which Holland's theory rests is that a person may be classified as one or more of the following six personality types: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional.

Another component of Holland's theory is the environment. There are six parallel environments corresponding to the six personality types and complement them. The final component of Holland's theory is the interplay of personality types and environments. Three aforementioned components of Holland's theory pave way to three propositions regarding college student and their academic majors 1.

Students choose their field of study which is complementary to their personality type 2. The ways and levels of satisfaction/rewarding in the different field of study is different.

3. The probability of students excelling increases in environments which are complementary to their personality types. ' National Law School and Symbiosis Law School: A Comparative Study from a sociological perspective' The researcher intends to investigate the sociological effect of the college environment with respect to nature of accommodation and mode of socialization upon its students.

The study also helps to analyze the effect of existing deviance among the first year students, i. e.

, the freshers. The researcher has compared two contrasting law schools, the best in their respective categories, to help bring out the effects more clearly. The respective law schools have been known to have polar social environments, and the study helps in discerning the responsible factors and their extent of influence. These factors were held to be the differential elements by analytical determination of tangible and observable differences in the various actors which come into play in both the institutions.

The Survey The survey was conducted from the 25th to the 6th of August, 2010 on a sample of 50 law schoolites drawn from all years of study and both genders. For making the survey more comprehensive several students in law school who have been exposed to the dark realities of law school life were interviewed.

Their opinions and views on deviance in law school were used to design and structure the questionnaire and in comprehensively analysing the findings of the survey.

The questionnaire also was modelled with some basic ice-breaker questions to familiarise the subjects with the approach of the survey and to resolve the apprehensions that could be on the mind of the subject regarding confidentiality of his/her responses. The researcher also talked to members of the SDGM (Student Discipline and General Management Committee), the disciplinary committee of the Men's Halls of Residence (MHOR), The methods of research used by the researcher are to some extent amateur. However all care has been taken to verify and confirm the findings of the survey and to ensure that the findings are reliable.

The best authorities on the subject have been referred to analyse the findings and to make the research more comprehensive.

Findings of the Survey In interviewees of Symbiosis Law school, it was found that 10% of the students interviewed had on-campus hostel allotted to them, 15% lived in off-campus hostels, 35% live as paying-guests while the rest 40% opt for private arrangement, i. e. mostly in the form of flats. 70% of interviewees were satisfied with the relationship with the local population. 50% of students wanted to change their accommodation.

All the interviewees of the National Law School were residents of the on-campus hostel.

None of them had any intention to shift to some other mode of accommodation. 50% of interviews from NLS replied that their social circle constitutes peers with similar extra-curricular and/or academic interest. 20% of interviewees regarded linguistic similarity as the common bond of their social group. 20% of interviewees regarded cultural similarity as the cementing factor of their social group while the rest 10% had other factors. In case of Symbians, 50% of interviews replied that their social circle constitutes peers with similar extra-curricular and/or academic interest, not unlike the results arrived on in case of NLS.

0% of interviewees had cultural similarities as the focal factor of their social group. However, the majority of students in SLS associate with a group which identifies itself with the similar lifestyle. Analysis of the Survey

Accommodation Accommodation has a vital role to play when it comes to

sociology. Symbiosis provides only 48 vacancies for on-campus hostel rooms. The rest have to arrange off-campus accommodation for themselves.

The wide spectrum of accommodation provides much scope for different form of interplay between the different residential environments and the students.

The researcher observed that that there was a significant social divide between the on-campus residents and the off-campus ones. The on-campus residents had a strong singular identity. They recognised themselves as being more integrated to the college system. One of the reasons for such self-identity was the fact that practically one must possess close contact with the college management in order to obtain admission in the on-campus hostel.

This self-identity of the hostellers raise their ' social-status' among their peers and they imbibe a sense of entitlement towards the college and its activities.

Further, the close proximity of the hostel to the academic building paves way for more intense participation in college activities on part of the hostellers. The number of students residing in off-campus hostels was few in number, dominated by the females. Next came the ones staying as paying guests. They were predominantly first and second years with very few – among others opting for this type of accommodation.

The researcher observed that most of the students staying in off-campus hostels and as paying-guests made up the majority of students intending to change their accommodation in the next session.

They found themselves restrained by the rules of the landlords. Their academic and college-related movements have to be tuned according to the rules of the establishment. As such, it was observed that the participation of such students in college activities was restricted to certain extent, so was their social presence among their batch mates and seniors in general. The majority of the interviewed students had made private arrangements, in the form of flats.

All the interviewees of the National Law School were residents of the on-campus hostel.

None of them had any intention to shift to some other mode of accommodation. Since most of the students in NLS are on-campus residents, there is no different dynamics as regard to accommodation. The researcher noticed that the students fostered a greater sense of camaraderie since they lived together. However, this feeling seems to wane to quite an extent among the senior students. The researcher came to the conclusion that cut-throat competition in academic as well as non-academic activities in a closed sphere was the source of the feeling of repulsiveness found in senior students.

Hence, the number of friends from outside the campus increased as the level of seniority increased in students. Social Structure National Law School is located in Nagarbhavi, a western suburb of Bangalore. The local area has not

been very friendly to the student population. Also the nearest malls are two kilometres away. As such the daily socialising occurs on the campus itself. 50% of interviews replied that their social circle constitutes peers with similar extra-curricular and/or academic interest .

The researcher found that the social group is important from a student's point of view in establishing his/her identity as a particular professional in the future and “ the self-presentations that will allow the student to successfully enact and achieve such an identity” . 20% of interviewees regarded linguistic similarity as the common bond of their social group. It is one of the major factors of social grouping in NLS, especially with respect to freshers, who are taken out for lunches by the seniors of the corresponding linguistic identity.

The researcher came to the conclusion that this category of group is formed to provide emotional security at a certain sub-conscious level to the freshers, as well as the seniors. 20% of interviewees regarded cultural similarity as the cementing factor of their social group. As such the socialising process in NLS seems to be grounded on a set-up involving various concrete parallel hierarchies, which allows the opportunity to a fresher to settle down in whichever level he prefers, at his own pace.

Each fresher has a ‘ family’ which consists of the cubicle parent, rank parent and roll parent.

The cubicle parent is the individual who had occupied the same cubicle in the previous year. The Rank parent is the individual who had obtained the same rank in the previous year's entrance exam, while the roll parent is the

individual who had been allocated the same roll number the previous year. Such a framework paves way for strengthening emotional security, which allows individual to have a more positive 'felt-identity' as well as the identity imputed to the student by others. Such a situation leads to better personal development of the individual in the institute.

However, the aforementioned relationships are unofficial.

The Student Bar Association gets seniors with similar attributes allocated to the freshers as mentors who act in the capacity to familiarise and make the fresher comfortable in the alien surroundings. There's also a project guide allotted to the freshers in order to help them with the academics. The researcher has observed that these relationships continue afterwards to form the pillar of the social network of the individual. Symbiosis Law School is located in within a vibrant and active section of Pune city.

Since most of the students live off-campus, there are various/varied levels of socialising taking place simultaneously in and out of the campus. The foremost sphere of socialising consists of the particular peers that may be residing in the same accommodation.

However, the researcher found, especially in case of the freshers and even the second year students, this sphere is formed involuntarily and hence does not reflect the identity of the student in any respect. 50% of interviews replied that their social circle constitutes peers with similar extra-curricular and/or academic interest , not unlike the results arrived on in case of NLS. 0% of interviewees had cultural similarities as the focal factor of their social group. However, the majority of students in SLS associate with a group which

identifies itself with the similar lifestyle. Hence, the way of living acquires a more pre-dominant role in the dynamics of socialisation in SLS.

The researcher was not able to find the existence of any fixed hierarchical structure in SLS. The most important social structure consists of the divide between the on-campus residents and the off-campus residents.

The on-campus residents once again are accorded distinct social advantage as they are provided a unique framework to work within and establish personal contacts with the seniors. This allows the hostellers to adjust quickly to the system. The basic social framework is comprised of the various social groups formed on the basis of similar life-style and perceived sense of felt identity (self-concept).

The rest of the freshers, however, are dependent on their own networking skills to establish a rapport with the seniors. This is a time-consuming process, and the average fresher takes time to identify himself in the new system.

The researcher recognises this situation as a social vacuum which should be attended to by the authorities or the seniors themselves on the lines of NLS. College culture and Deviance In terms of law schoolites, especially with reference to freshers, deviance would constitute all habits or thought process which came into being in the respective individual due to the specific law school culture. In order to discuss selective deviance by a largely conforming group of subjects, the researcher used the theory of anticipatory socialization, as propounded by Merton, and later developed by Huntington, Becker, and others.

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According to Armand, “ These scholars were mainly concerned with applying anticipatory socialization theory to the process by which students in medical schools, in anticipation of their eventual professional roles, begin actually to internalize the norms, values, attitudes, and behaviours appropriate to these roles long before completing their training.

Their discussion of this process makes clear, however, that anticipatory socialization theory might be applicable to many other situations as well, including, no doubt, the anticipatory socialization of college-bound high school students into collegiate roles as they perceive them”.

The initiation of night life in any law school is the starting-point of deviance of a fresher. The researcher came to the conclusion that in most of the cases, the initiation was a product of anticipatory socialization on part of the fresher. All the interviewees agreed to having imbibed a certain image of college night life which really propels the initiation. Herein, SLS offers more deviant opportunities to a student. The mostly unregulated mode of accommodation is the fundamental reason of the creation of an entire industry to accommodate the needs of the nocturnal students.

The researcher found that the unregulated life-style, except in case of individuals living in private hostels, served as the stimulus for the imitation of the deviant acts like smoking, drinking etc. Even in cases of student being restrained to an extent by the nature of their accommodation, the image of their peers and seniors indulging in various excesses imbibes in them an intense desire to experience the same. The researcher would like to signify

the importance of attendance with relation to deviance among students. The enforcement of the minimum percentage of attendance is negligible in SLS.

As such freshers, in the absence of enforceable sanction, feel free not to attend classes regularly. This in turn provides them with enough time to indulge in deviant acts in the absence of sufficient academic engagement.

In NLS, the researcher found the theory of anticipatory socialization to be again at work. However two distinct factors tend to change the dynamics as compared to SLS. The support system provided by the seniors in form of established relationships and social hierarchy ensured a certain buffer against immediate realization of the anticipated socialization into action.

Established student bodies like SDGM Student Discipline and General Management Committee (SDGM) and the disciplinary committee of the Men's Halls of Residence (MHOR) help in the regulation of the activities of juniors to a certain extent. Secondly, the strict enforcement of the concept of minimum attendance ensures that the students do not find themselves with the luxury of excess time, nor encounter any void with respect to academic engagement of self. However, many interviewees regarded lack of recreational activities and stress of pressure as the reason behind their deviant activities like smoking, drinking, drug abuse etc.

One should, at this juncture, understand that narcotics are not something to which the first year students are generally introduced to. Thus we can say with confidence that the students who end up using narcotics do it out of their free will and choice and not out of compulsion from seniors. The survey found that most law schoolites start using narcotics in the period between

IIInd year 3rd trimester and IIIrd year 2nd trimester. This means that the trend becomes common only as the students become familiar with the campus and its life style.

Conclusion The survey findings confirm the existence of a substantial difference in the social fabric of the two institutes. They exhibit the fact that social actors like socialising, accommodation, etc.

, play an important role, and influence in different ways with regard to a social environment. The study also correlated Peter Kaufman and Kenneth A Kennedy's views on as to the identification of a college student with his/her peer group. The effect of anticipatory socialization was also discussed in the study, especially with reference to deviance.

In Toto, the researcher has highlighted the various factors which effect college students' behaviour, by comparing the social fabric of two different college environments. Bibliography Books • A. Giddens, Sociology (4th ed.

, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002) Articles • Forming Identities in College: A Sociological Approach Author(s): Peter Kaufman and Kenneth A. Feldman Source: Research in Higher Education, Vol. 45, No. 5 (Aug. , 2004), pp. 463-496 Published by: Springer • Anticipatory Socialization toward College as a Factor in Adolescent Marijuana Use Author(s): Armand L.

Mauss Source: Social Problems, Vol. 16, No. 3 (Winter, 1969), pp. 357-364 Published by: University of California Press on behalf of the Society for the Study of Social Problems • Attitude toward and Propensity to Engage in Unethical Behavior: Measurement Invariance across Major among University

Students Author(s): Yuh-Jia Chen and Thomas Li-Ping Tang Source: Journal of Business Ethics, Vol. 69, No.

1 (Nov. , 2006), pp. 77-93 Appendix Survey Questionnaire What you will do in this survey: If you decide to participate, you will complete a brief survey. You will be asked several questions.

Most questions will be objective in nature while a few would be subjective.

Time required: The survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

Risks: There are no anticipated risks. Benefits: There are no direct benefits, but participating in this survey will contribute to a project aimed at helping prospective law students make an informed decision while choosing their institute with regard to their own personality and environment rather than base the decision on industry value, brand value etc. , Confidentiality: Your responses will be kept anonymous.

When research results are reported, responses will be aggregated (added together) and described in summary. Participation and withdrawal: Your participation is completely voluntary.

Questions: 1. Were you raised outside India? If yes, state the country and province. 1% 3. Your secondary school board was i) CBSE 62% ii) ISC 30% iii) State board 8% 4. What is the nature of your current accommodation? a. On-campus hostel 70% b.

Off-campus hostel 5% c. Paying guest 11. 6% d. private accommodation 14. 4% 5.

Would you like to change your nature of accommodation, if given a choice?

a.

Yes- I would switch to on-campus hostel 11% b. Yes- I would switch to off-campus hostel 0% c. Yes- I would switch to paying guest 4. 6% d. Yes- I would switch to private accommodation 15% e.

No. 84. 4% 6. If yes, would a change in nature of your accommodation affect your mode of study/academics at large? (may choose multiple options) a.

Yes-I can switch over to group-oriented study.

5% b. Yes-I can have more freedom in my movements for academic purposes. 3% c. Yes-I would have to worry less about trivialities. 1.

6% d. No. 84. 4% e. Yes-I can spend more hours in the campus. % 7.

What according to you is the cementing factor of your social group? a.

Academic/extra-curricular interests 50% b. linguistics similarities 20% c.

cultural similarities (example urban or rural) 13% d. Other factors. Please state.

05% 8. What is the average number of hours that you spend on pursuing academic interests every day? a. less than 2 hours 20% b. greater than 2 but lesser than 5 hours 60% c. greater than 5 but lesser than 8 hours 15% . greater than 8 hours 5% 9.

Which committee/cell is your most preferred one? 10. What is the reason for the same? a. Its the most popular. 10% b. it offers a lot of material/tangible advantage in form of free artefacts during events etc. , 10% c.

it exclusively focuses on a field of study you are interested in. 20% d. it adds to your CV. 30% e. it offers a good forum to interact with your peers 30% 11. How would you rate the usefulness of the library on a scale of 1 to 10? 6.

5 12.

Is there an alternate place of study that you prefer apart from the library? If yes, please state. 13. Do you drink? If yes, then how and when did your 1st contact with drinks occur? a. Before joining the college.

23% b. After joining the college, due to peer pressure. 20% c. After joining the college, under the influence of seniors. 2% d.

After joining the college, to emulate dominating personalities. 10% e. After joining the college, to deal with pressure. 25% f. After joining the college, to socialise.

20% 14. Do you smoke? If yes, then how and when did your 1st contact occur? a. Before joining the college. 0% b. After joining the college, due to peer pressure.

5% c. After joining the college, under the influence of seniors. 10% d. After joining the college, to emulate dominating personalities. 2% e. After joining the college, to deal with pressure.

10% f. After joining the college, to socialise. 3% 17. What are the factors which affect your participation and level of enthusiasm for college activities and cultural fests? Tick more than one if relevant. a. If it provides 'make-up' for attendance.

10% b. If it's an opportunity to associate yourself with certain group of peers/seniors. 60% c.

If the activities/fest is one that touches upon your own particular interest. 30% 18.

When have you interacted most with your seniors? 19. Why did you choose law? 20. What do you intend to do after graduation? a. I intended to go for litigation. 20% b. I intended to work in a law firm.

40% c. I intended to go in corporate firms. 35% d. I intended to teach law. 2% e.

Others. (Please state). 3% 21. What is your parents'/guardians' annual income? 22. Do you think a minimum percentage of attendance is beneficial/desirable for students? 23. How is your relationship with the local population? 24.

What is the your most preferred mode of entertainment? 25. What is your opinion on the reservation of seats for students from certain backgrounds in law school? 26. Have you availed any quota? If yes, state if you felt any difference in your interaction with the open category students. 27. If no, state if you felt any difference in your interaction with the reserved category students.

28. What are your experiences from interaction with the faculty? 29. In the application process for ABC's/cells have you come across any instances of favouritism for certain students? What is your opinion on the whole process?