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## The Study Of Consumer Awareness Regarding Consumer Protection Act In Chandrapur City

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### Abstract:

December 24 is an important day in the history of the consumer movement in India as the Consumer Protection Act, of 1986 came into force on this day. The Parliament enacted the Consumer Protection Act, of 1986 to protect the interests of consumers from substandard products, price gouging through market manipulation, failed warranties, unsatisfactory after-sales services, and unfair trade practices. It is a progressive and comprehensive law covering all types of goods and services. In this way, December 24 is celebrated as National Consumer Day all over India. The Consumer Protection Act is considered a benevolent social law to protect consumers from the corruption of manufacturers. The Act has been amended several times to meet the changing needs of consumers in the emerging market environment. In this research paper, Consumer Awareness Regarding the Consumer Protection Act in Chandrapur City has been studied.

**Keywords:** *Consumer Protection Act, Consumer Awareness, Consumer Forum, Unfair and Restrictive Practices*

### Introduction:

One of the most important achievements in the field of consumer movement in India has been the enactment of the Consumer Protection Act, of 1986. In the Act, consumers have been given the right to act for settlement of their complaints. Unless a consumer is aware of his rights, he may not be in a position to protect his rights. The law can be effective only according to the level of awareness of the consumer. A higher and wider level of consumer awareness will make more and more consumers more aware of their rights during their dealings with trade and industry. The widespread concern of consumers will reduce their level of harassment in the marketplace. Businesses and industries will also become more careful in framing their business practices for fear of consumer backlash. As awareness increases among consumers, business managers will use such awareness to inform their decisions and act toward creating mutually beneficial offerings for products and services that satisfy consumers. Consumer satisfaction is a prerequisite for maintaining trust in brands and companies.

Consumer awareness is a performance of making sure the buyer or buyer is aware of the data and information about the goods, products, administrations, and privileges of the buyers. Consumer awareness is important with the goal that buyers can make the best choices and make ideal decisions. The buyer reserves the right to data or information privilege, choice, and well-being.

The government of India has provided various laws and legislations to protect the interest of the consumer and some of these rules are:

#### 1. Consumer Protection Act 1986:

The enactment of the Consumer Protection Act 1986 was one of the most important steps taken to protect the interests of the consumer. The provision of the Act came into force on 1st July 1987. The key characteristics of this act are:

- (i) The Act has provided various rights and responsibilities to consumers.
- (ii) It protects the customers against defective goods, deficiencies, services, unfair trade

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practices, and other forms of their exploitation.

(iii) The Act has provided for three-tier redressal agencies where consumers can lodge complaints. These are District Forum, State Commission, and National Commission.

#### **2. Contract Act 1982:**

This act is designed to bind people to the promises made in a contract. The Act also lays down the remedies available to the parties in case of breach of contract.

#### **3. Sale of Goods Act 1930:**

This act provides protection and relief to the customers if the goods are not complying with the expressed conditions and warranties.

#### **4. Essential Commodities Act 1955:**

This act is designed to control the production, supply, and distribution of essential commodities. It checks inflation and ensures a smooth and equal supply of these commodities. It also prohibits black marketing, and hoarding.

#### **5. Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Act 1937:**

This act has been made to ensure the quality of agricultural products. The Act provides grade standards for agricultural commodities. The quality mark provided by this act is "AGMARK". This mark is given only when the goods are produced following the minimum standards.

#### **6. Prevention of Food Adulteration Act 1954:**

This act has been made to check the adulteration of food items and to ensure their purity so that the health of the general public can be maintained.

#### **7. Standards of Weights and Measures Act 1976:**

The Act protects consumers against the malpractice of underweight, measurement. The provisions of this Act apply to goods that are sold or distributed by weight and measure.

#### **8. Trade Marks Act 1999:**

The Act prohibits the use of fraudulent marks on products. This Act has been introduced in place of the Trade and Goods Marks Act, of 1958.

#### **9. Competition Act 2002:**

This act is related to the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act 1969. The Act is designed to encourage healthy competition and protect consumers from companies that hinder competition.

#### **10. Bureau of Indian Standards Act 1986:**

The Act is designed to award special marks to products that meet certain minimum quality standards. The common mark issued under this Act is the ISI mark. The Act has set up a complaint cell where the consumer can complain about a product not being up to the quality mark and bearing the ISI mark.

Markets can only function effectively when customers are informed. Information systems are essential for competitive markets. Consumers should be alert and well-informed about the costs and benefits of each transaction. Wherever consumers are alert and informed, markets operate more efficiently and competitive forces intensify and play a wider role, benefiting consumers. Misguided members of trade and industry are also warned that the law

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provides for legal action by aggrieved consumers and that it would be more beneficial to treat consumers fairly than to harass them.

In the present era where every manufacturer is trying to make maximum profits through effective and misleading advertisements and unfair and restrictive practices are being used in trade matters, there is an imperative need to build a powerful, broad-based consumer movement in the country. Is. Once the level of awareness increases and both rural and urban consumers become aware of their rights and responsibilities, automatically the pressure will increase on the trade and industry and service providers to supply goods and services at affordable prices in the market. Provide services. In this way, they will also refrain from indulging in unfair and restrictive trade practices. In this way, the consumer or the customer plays an important role in the economic system of the country.

#### **Review of Literature:**

- 1) **Dr. S. Mohan and V. Suganthi (2013):** Consumer rights awareness among rural consumers. The research was carried out to determine the degree of consumer rights knowledge among rural consumers. The research found a strong correlation between rural customers' knowledge of consumer rights and their age, education level, marriage status, and monthly income. Additionally, there is no evidence of a substantial correlation between rural consumers' knowledge of consumer rights and their gender, family structure, employment, or monthly income.
- 2) **Dr. Horen Goowalla (2016):** completed a case study on consumer protection's knowledge among Assamese rural residents, paying particular attention to the Jorhat region. A poll of 400 customers was done. 90% of those polled reported feeling taken advantage of by the vendor at some point. 25% of individuals do not know about the Consumer Protection Act, compared to 75% who do. Additionally, it was discovered that while 30% of postgraduate respondents and 40% of graduates were conscious of the goods' quality.
- 3) **Jamuna (2017):** consumer knowledge and sentiments towards the Consumer Protection Act of 1986 were looked up. The goal of the research was to gauge customer awareness. Responses from respondents regarding customer duties were collected for the research. The majority of respondents placed getting an assurance and warranty certificate first. Additionally, it was discovered that 53.21% of respondents thought formalities were easy, and 67.14% of respondents were conscious of customer groups. Most respondents refuted the claim that the Consumer Protection Act improved consumer knowledge. 25% of respondents believed that the Consumer Protection Act has boosted commerce. Only 20% of respondents said they believed the customer Protection Act increased customer awareness of quality.

#### **Research Methodology:**

This research is based on the survey method.

#### **Objectives of the research:**

- 1) To study consumer awareness regarding Consumer Protection Act in Chandrapur city.
- 2) To study the changing nature of the Consumer Protection Act.
- 3) Based on the findings of the research, giving suggestions for increasing consumer

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awareness regarding the Consumer Protection Act in Chandrapur city.

**Research Hypotheses:**

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no awareness among maximum consumers regarding Consumer Protection Act in Chandrapur city.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is maximum consumer awareness regarding Consumer Protection Act in Chandrapur city.

**Data Collection Method:**

In this research, data has been collected from primary and secondary sources. For primary data, information has been collected through a questionnaire from 150 respondents from the research area. Literature related to the subject has been reviewed for secondary data.

**Sampling:**

Data has been collected through a questionnaire from 150 respondents from Chandrapur city by simple random sampling method.

**Consumer Awareness Regarding Consumer Protection Act in Chandrapur City :**

The consumer is the heart and spirit of all marketing practices currently in use. Buyer assurance is a demonstration of presenting complete data about the services, their rights, and goods to the consumers. Consumer awareness is important as they invest their time and money in promotional activities, and they reserve a choice for direct data. Misdirected advertisements, risky or unsafe goods, cheating and weighing, and various acts of neglect are perpetrated by corrupt business entities. Consumer awareness is a demonstration to protect buyers from such wrongdoings.

Consumer awareness is a performance of making sure the buyer or buyer is aware of the data and information about the goods, products, administrations, and privileges of the buyers. Consumer awareness is important with the goal that buyers can make the best choices and make ideal decisions. The buyer reserves the right to data or information privilege, choice, and well-being.

The shopkeeper or the final consumer is the main constituent of the business. No business can run without buyers as their fulfillment is the root cause of any business activity. Business is not only concerned with monetary gains but also updating society into a better version by keeping its welfare as a goal. The constitution has given us the Consumer Protection Act 1986 to protect customers from promoting any kind of abuse. Consumer protection rights drive a sound aggressive market that sustains financial growth. It prevents harmful exchange practices and fraudulent entrepreneurs from causing harm to fair or fair trade or exchange. Shopkeepers are an essential part of the market structure. Securing their privileges and rights is important for a fair market structure.

The Indian Parliament passed the Consumer Protection Act in 1986 to safeguard Indian customers' interests. As per our economy, accurate measurement of demand with constant and reliable supply can aid in the growth of the economy. Since then, this act was introduced to protect the buyers from any kind of exploitation or abuse.

The buyer has the option of receiving data about the quality, quantity, potency, standard, and cost of the products or services. The buyer should legitimately ask to receive all

data about the product or service before deciding on a decision or option. This will empower him to make a much more educated and thoughtful choice and prevent himself from succumbing to high-pressure sales methods. The right to data is used to protect shoppers from intrusive promotions, misleading markings, bundling, exorbitant costs, etc.

The right to choose gives access to an assortment of products and services and cutthroat costs. In a monopolistic market, products and services must be of the best quality and cost. The dealer must not use coercive methods to view items, and buyers must reserve the privilege of all forms of substitutes, substitutions, and substitutes. This right requires free competition in the market. The customer should take an independent decision to choose the product from the market. Other rights are meaningless if there cannot be an appropriate power to take care of the customer's complaints. Assuming that a buyer is disappointed with the service or product, then, one has the option of registering a complaint against it, and it should be done within a stipulated period. For example, assuming a shopkeeper purchases an electronic item and it begins to break down, a customer has every right to take a reasonable step to return or replace it. The buyers can resolve any disputes, make complaints, and make claims against the sellers for engaging in double-dealing, exploitation, or out-of-line trade practices. The buyer has the prerogative of review in case the item is compromised by its nature. Buyers need to file an objection under the Consumer Protection Act.

A buyer should be aware of his freedoms and obligations granted by the authorities concerning advertising and marketing practices. It is an important right as it determines the establishment of fair exchange or trade practices as the customer is aware of his freedom or rights. The Customer has all the title and rights to access the information in respect of its privileges and rights as the Buyer.

It is a fundamental right to be ensured against the advertisement of such products and services which are dangerous to life and property. The use or consumption of products and services that are not up to standard can effectively affect the well-being and safety of the shopkeeper. To safeguard the interest of the shoppers, they reserve the option of getting high-quality and dependable merchandise. For example, household products like LPG cylinders, if not fixed as expected, can cause huge damage to life and property; stale food products can harm the well-being of buyers; Low-quality beauty care products can cause a comparative loss.

Of the total number of members in the consumer households in Chandrapur city, 33% number of the members in the consumer household are more than 5 members. The number of members in 56% of consumer family is less than 5 members. The number of members in 11% of consumer families is more than 7 members. The number of members in the maximum consumer household in Chandrapur city is less than 5 members. In the total family income of consumer families in Chandrapur city, 36% of consumer family income is less than 5 lakh and more than 2 lacks. 52% of consumer family income is less than 2 lakhs. 12% of consumer family income is more than 5 lakhs. The maximum consumer family income in Chandrapur city is less than 2 lakhs.

Of the age of respondent consumers in Chandrapur city, 37% consumer age is between



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18 to 25. 25% of the consumers age is between 25 to 35. 22% of consumers are over 35. 77% of the respondents in Chandrapur city check the expiry date of consumer food items and medicines while purchasing them. 33% of the respondents do not check the expiry date of consumer foods and medicines while purchasing them.

65% of respondents double-check the weight of products mentioned on consumer items. 35% of respondents do not double-check the weight of products mentioned on consumer items. 80% of consumer respondents check the prices of goods purchased from alternative sources. 20% of consumer respondents do not check the prices of goods purchased from alternative sources. 82% of the respondent's consumer M.R.P. (Maximum Retail Price) View products before purchasing. 18% of respondents' consumer M.R.P. (Maximum Retail Price) Do not view products before purchasing. In Chandrapur city, offline shopping is most preferred over online shopping as 42% of respondents prefer consumer product experience, 27% of respondents prefer personalized attention and recommendations, and 31% of respondents prefer easy returns.

In Chandrapur city, 42% of the respondent consumers have seen food adulteration. 58% of the respondent consumers have not seen adulteration in food items. 71% of the respondent consumers who have seen food adulteration have complained to the shopkeeper. 27% of consumers have complained to the main supplier. 0% of the user has complained to the internet consumer forum. 2% of the consumer has complained elsewhere. 9% of consumer complaints were addressed to the satisfaction of the consumer. 91% of consumer complaints were not addressed to the satisfaction of the consumer.

34% of the consumers in Chandrapur city are aware of the Consumer Protection Act, which deals with consumer complaints. 66% of consumers are not aware of this Consumer Protection Act. 59% of consumers in Chandrapur city do not know about consumer courts, which deal with consumer complaints. 41% of the consumers are aware of the consumer courts. Only 3% of the consumer respondents have filed a case in the consumer court. 97% of the consumer respondents have not filed any case in the consumer court. Most of the consumers in the city are not aware of Consumer Protection Act, which means the consumer awareness level is low regarding Consumer Protection Act in Chandrapur city.

#### **Conclusion:**

The level of consumer awareness regarding the Consumer Protection Act is very low in Chandrapur city. Steps should be taken to create a facilitative mechanism for increasing consumer awareness. Encourage consumer education and the dissemination of knowledge to increase public understanding of consumer rights. From time to time, more product-specific booklets, pamphlets, cassettes, CDs, slides, documentary films, and other tools of mass communication should be published to promote consumer awareness in English and regional languages. The business community should highlight its ethical and legal obligations to maintain the quality of products or services and to be transparent in dealing with consumers. Consumer activities should be encouraged to strengthen the existing institutional framework of consumer dispute redressal by acting as a facilitator between the consumer and the institution. Researchers have studied, analyzed, and developed legal remedies available for

effective and better consumer protection. New measures should be suggested. It is necessary to bring together consumers, traders, and policymakers to exchange information of mutual interest for better coordination. Tie-up with educational institutions like universities, colleges, and high schools should be established to emphasize the need for improving consumer education in the curriculum.

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