

Survey Analysis

Consumer Protection Act – An Empirical Survey

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A B S T R A C T

Consumerism is a new found ideology percolating within the masses that choose to buy the right product at the right price and quality. Being an informed buyer they deem themselves to be having certain rights entitled, as a consumer and this survey aims at analysing how well does this consumerism function in society.

Keywords: Practical, Consumerism, Applicability, Behaviour

Introduction

Production of goods and rendering of services depends upon their consumption or use. By using the goods and services their utility is created and when these goods satisfy the needs and wants of people, they are valued as providers of satisfaction. So the entire process of production is deeply interlinked with consumption. The people who consume are known as consumers.

Consumer Protection Act

The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 (CPA) is an Act that offers for powerful protection of pastimes of clients and as such makes provision for the status quo of purchaser councils and different authorities that help in settlement of purchaser disputes and subjects connected therewith.

The client safety act presents for a quick and easy treatment to purchasers below a 3-tier quasi-judicial redressal business enterprise on the District, State, and National tiers. The CPA has been amended occasionally to increase its insurance and scope and to decorate the powers of the redressal equipment.

The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 (CPA) is an Act that

gives for powerful protection of interests of purchasers and as such makes provision for the status quo of consumer councils and different government that help in agreement of consumer disputes and subjects related therewith. It is an enacted legislation with the purpose of empowering the consumers towards having better safeguards against any malpractices against them. It secures to protect both the needs as well as the product satisfaction that a consumer can rightly claim.

One important concept in this case would be – Consumerism.

Consumerism is the theory that states a country that consumes goods and services in large quantities will be better off economically. Sometimes, consumerism is referred to as a policy that promotes greed since it often promotes buying the latest and newest products.

Methodology of Research

The present research work has been conducted by using both the empirical and doctrinal methods. In order to analyse the grass root scenario of the awareness and the topic being of socio-legal importance, doctrinal research was important to gather information on making the topic relevant to contemporary society and empirical methods

had to be used to analyse the practical application of this piece of research.

Survey method was chosen-a sample population was selected and data collected from them. The sample size in this research has been kept to be 20. For the purpose of collecting data, interview schedules were prepared by using brainstorming method and collecting, codifying inputs from law school professors into framing the questions. 10 questions had been shortlisted in the schedule. It was administered to the people in person and they were asked to respond so that their gestures could also be noted along with the responses.

Empirical data is the most significant aspect of any research undertaking as it seeks to provide valuable insights into the viability of research work. In the present case, consumerism has been studied with a data in hand that substantiates a proposition with practical validation.

The collected data was analysed and interpreted by categorising responses and accordingly a conclusion was obtained.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

(On the Basis of Questionnaire)

Sample Size: 20

Gender: Both Male And Female

AGE: 25 – 55 YEARS OF AGE

Residence: Urban and Sub Urban

- Are you aware of any laws relating to Consumers of a product?

YES – 17 (85%)

NO – 03 (15%)

This shows that a considerable section of the sample population is well aware of the fact that there are legislations concerning consumers. This shows a fair degree of legal awareness in the society.

- Do you know about Consumer Protection Act, 1986?

YES – 15 (75%)

NO – 05 (25%)

This shows that although people may be aware of certain legislations concerning consumers, they lack specific knowledge about this particular highly important act. This justifies why often people fail to recognise the principal statute in which they get protection of law.

- Do you feel that you should have rights as a consumer?

YES – 20(100%)

NO – 00 (00%)

The respondents have unanimously agreed on having rights as a consumer. This portrays a trend in the population whereby traditional market system values are rejected, and a more professional attitude is noticed among the people, as they want fair quality of goods and services for which they are supposed to pay.

- Have you ever been cheated in buying some product or service?

YES – 08 (40%)

NO – 12 (60%)

A fairly considerable amount of the respondents have been cheated. This indicates a trend of malpractices being exercised by sellers in dealing with the consumers.

- Are you aware of a consumer grievance cell? Have you approached it?

YES – 06 (30%)

NO – 14 (70%)

Very few have responded to be aware of the grievance cell. Among them it is surprising enough to note that none approached it or suggested people to approach it in case of any consumer or goods related disputes. This shows a lack of trust by the people and loss of their faith in the often inefficient government offices.

- How are your choices as a consumer determined?

Majority of the respondents identified their choices to be guided by preference of popular and costly brands. The consumer usable standards or food safety standards are seldom checked and verified by them, they also included their tendency of getting blindly persuaded by attractive and large scale advertisements that are being used to promote the products.

- Are you content with the existing consumer protection laws in the country?

While some could not actually identify the exact laws related to the consumers in the country, others pointed out that some modifications need to be incorporated.

- What are your suggestions towards establishing better consumer protection?

Respondents have suggested that better redressal forums be made and the access to these forums is more flexible, probably online and the markets to have strict consumer forum guidelines and enforcing officers- as in the shops can employ people from the forum as delegates in supervising that the standards are properly followed and maintained.

- Do you feel Government has given enough importance to consumerism?

YES – 10 (50%)

NO – 10(50%)

The drawing of a proper analysis of this question is tough provided the equal amount of positive and negative responses in this case. However it can be noted that there is a certain degree of satisfaction with the existing consumer laws although there is a sufficient demand for more laws and amendments, thereby more emphasis by the Government itself.

- *What do you feel are your duties as a consumer?*

The respondents have identified chiefly 4 duties – (i) Being aware of what goods to buy and their quality specifications, (ii) Reporting any discrepancy and not being quiet, (iii) Making other people aware about their consumer rights as well.

Analysis

The most important inference drawn from the survey is that:–

While a majority of the population seems to be aware of their consumer rights, seldom do they exercise it, at the same time; many seem to be unaware of those rights and hence cannot exercise them even if they want to. Instances of consumers being deprived of their rights are found with little or no protest hence the prevailing set up is not at all satisfactory.

It can be hence rightly concluded that awareness regarding consumer rights is neither high nor low. It is average with very poor function ability as justified by the responses of the sample group of population.

Annexure Sample Questionnaire

(For the Survey on Consumer Rights Awareness)

NAME

SEX

GENDER

RESIDENCE

- Are you aware of any laws relating to Consumers of a product?

YES/NO

REASON;

- Do you know about Consumer Protection Act, 1986?

YES/NO

REASON;

- Do you feel that you should have rights as a consumer?

YES/NO

REASON;

- Have you ever been cheated in buying some product or service?

YES/NO

REASON;

- Are you aware of a consumer grievance cell? Have you approached it?

YES/NO

REASON;

- How are your choices as a consumer determined?

RESPONSE;

- Are you content with the existing consumer protection laws in the country?

YES/NO

REASON;

- What are your suggestions towards establishing better consumer protection?

RESPONSE;

- Do you feel Government has given enough importance to consumerism?

YES/NO

REASON

- What do you feel are your duties as a consumer?

RESPONSE;