



# Consumer Rights and Awareness on Consumers: A Critical Study

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## 1 Abstract:

The objective of this study is to find out the awareness of Consumers on Consumer rights. The data was collected by preparing questionnaire throughout online which was to know the level of consumers. Although India has strong and clear laws protecting consumer rights, the actual situation for Indian consumers could be described as absolutely dire. Very few consumers know their rights or understand their basic rights as consumers. Of the various laws that have been enacted to protect consumer rights in India.

**Keywords:** Consumer Rights, Consumer Protection and Consumer Awareness.

## 2 Introduction:

The present time is the era of consumers. The word "consumer"<sup>1</sup> refers to any person who consumes any goods or services in any form. In addition, the consumer is not only the focal point of the market but he is also the controller of the functioning of the market, the violation of his rights cannot be ignored under

<sup>1</sup> Section 2 (7) of the Consumer Protection Act 2019, the Gazette of India, No. 54 of 2019, pp. 03

any circumstances. The present time is called digital age due to communication revolution in which business transactions, and other purchases have become even more easy and populist. This has been possible because the development of electronic communication has brought new dimensions, due to which direct connectivity between different countries has increased business opportunities. But this opportunity is further attacking the rights of the consumers due to the greed of the business class. However, during consumption the consumer may face many problems despite best efforts.<sup>2</sup>

### 3 Review of Literature:

**Dr. Mona Sikka, (2012)<sup>3</sup>**, Consumer Protection Act-Awareness, according to the research paper, the rights of patients have always been a matter of debate at the global level and patient rights are also being legalized across the world, such as in India under the "Consumer Protection Act, 1986". Attempts have been made to protect the rights of consumers, including patients going to the hospital for treatment, but health professionals' awareness of these laws is ignored. With the development of science and biotechnology in the last few decades, people's living standards have improved, they have also become more aware of their rights. This is the reason why in the medical profession, the contract between the doctor and the patients, i.e., there is a multiplicity of claims made by the patients against the doctors for any default in the treatment.

**Dr. Ishwar Mittal. (2015)<sup>4</sup>**, Consumer Awareness about Different Consumer Protection Legislation in India, this present research paper is based on the research done in the state of Haryana to find out the awareness of the people regarding the various laws made to protect the interests of the consumers. All relevant laws to ensure better protection of the interests of consumers by taking force from the

<sup>2</sup> Wadhwa, D.P. (J) & Rajah, N L (2017), The Law of Consumer Protection, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, pp. 10

<sup>3</sup> Sikka, M (2012), Consumer Protection Act – Awareness, pp. 52

<sup>4</sup> Mittal, I (2015), Consumer Awareness about Different Consumer Protection Legislation in India, pp. 27

right to "life and personal liberty" guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of India, preventing them from various forms of fraud, deceit and exploitation. Enacted for the purpose of saving.

#### **4 Statement of the Problem:**

In today's hectic era, we have become so careless about our rights despite being educated that before buying any goods and taking any service, it is necessary to check its quality, see its standard trademarks, see its expiry date etc, we don't have time either. In case of any loss later, there is no other way but to approach the consumer forum. For that too many consultations are taken before going to the forum, then if the consumer feels that the forum can get compensation for his loss, then only he will move towards that otherwise not.

#### **5 Objectives of the Study:**

1. To study the levels of consumer's awareness on Consumer Rights.
2. To study the factors of consumer's awareness on Consumer Rights.
3. To assess consumer awareness based on geographic location and occupational differentiation.

#### **6 Hypothesis of the Study:**

The geographic location, Qualifications and Occupation of the consumer have no significant impact on him/her.

#### **7 Research Methodology:**

##### **1. Data Collection of the Study-**

The study was based on primary data. A structured questionnaire was designed for the collection of primary data through online interactions with the respondents. The method of random sampling has adopted. The questionnaire has been shared in the three WhatsApp groups and Facebook in which a total of 108 Consumers responded our structured questionnaire.

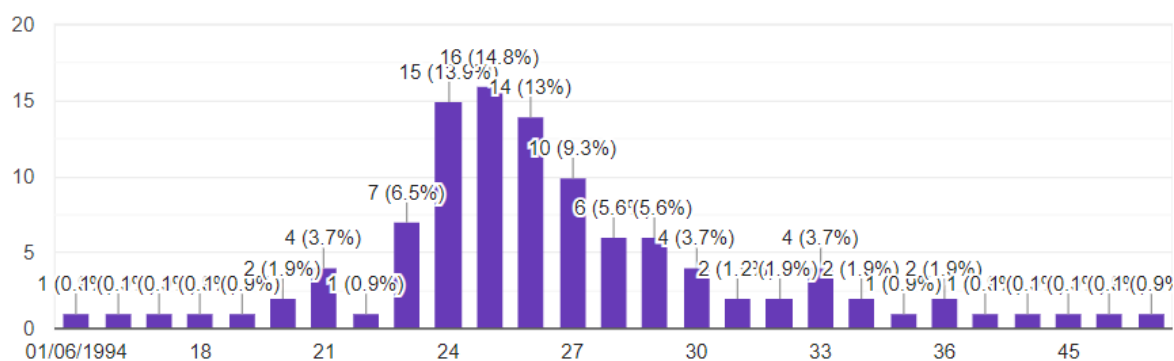
2. **Likert scale** has been used to know the rights of the consumers on awareness which includes very high, high, neutral, very low and low.

3. **Mean and standard deviation**, etc. have been used to determine the level of responsibilities along with age, education, occupation and geographic area of the respondents for the research results.
4. The following **formulas** have been used to measure the awareness level of the consumers. For the score, (1) Mean > SD = good (2) SD > Mean = poor.

## 8. Research Finding and Discussion

### Graph – 1 (Age Group of the Consumers)

108 responses

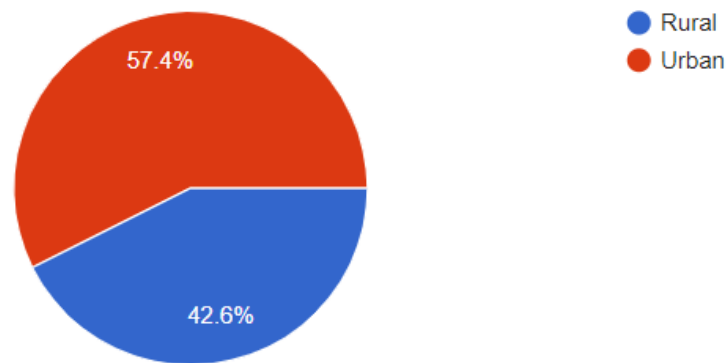


Five questions were designed to know the level of rights of consumers and their background information has been received by consumers of different age groups. It is clear from graph 1 that maximum number of the age group of the respondents was between 21 to 30 years. However, replies have also been received from consumers in the age group of 18 to 21 years and 30 to 45 years.

At present, modern technology is used by most of the youth like mobiles, laptops etc. That is, most of the online material is purchased by them.

## Graph 02 (Geographical Status of Consumers)

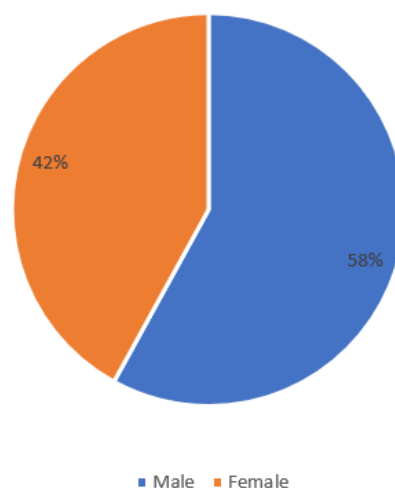
108 responses



The above graph shows that out of total 108 respondents (consumers), 57.4 percent are urban and 42.6 percent are rural area. From this it is understandable that consumers of rural areas also show equal interest in online purchase of goods and services.

## Graph 03 (Gender Status of Consumers)

Gender Status

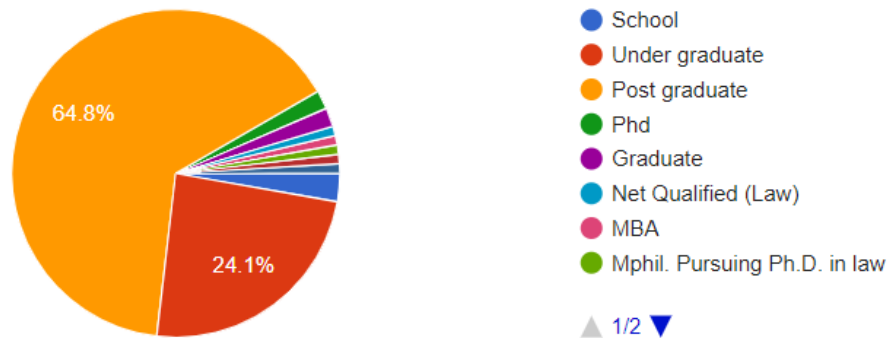


The above graph signifies that 58 percent male and 42 percent female respondents have given information about consumer rights. This shows that women also believe in online shopping.

## Graph 04

### Educational qualifications

108 responses



The above graph indicates that in the context of awareness related to the rights of consumers, respondents from primary school to PhD degree have responded, in which 64.8 percent of post-graduate, 24.1 percent graduate respondents and 11 percent are respondents with other qualifications. It was hypothesised by the researcher that educated consumers would be exercising their rights in a proper way.

**Table 01**  
**Data Analysis**  
**Level of Awareness of Consumers**  
**(Likert Scale Calculation)**

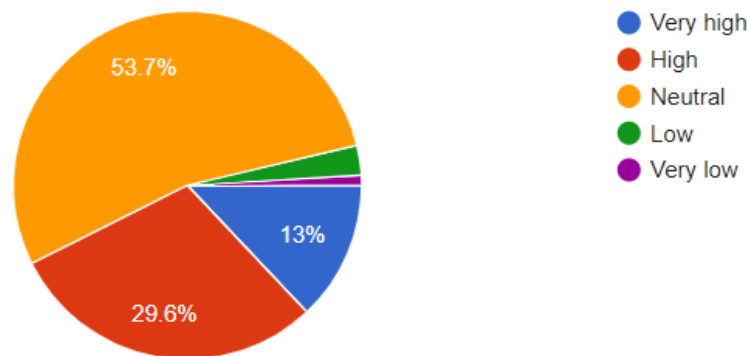
S.N.	Statements	Very High	High	Neutral	Other	Total	Mean	SD
1	Knowledge on Decision Making Process related to Consumer Interest	14	32	58	4	108	2.4814815	2.0637973
2	Knowledge about Hazardous Goods and Services	11	32	60	5	108	2.5462963	2.116951
3	Knowledge on Performance and Quality of all Goods and Services	13	40	51	4	108	2.4259259	2.0046243
4	Knowledge of Seeking Redressal Mechanism	9	35	49	15	108	2.6481481	2.2443344
5	Knowledge of Consumer Education	21	40	44	3	108	2.2685185	1.8757714

The above table indicates that researcher sent total 5 questions and responses were received from 108 respondents, whose mean and standard deviation were calculated through Likert scale.

### Graph 05

Knowledge on decision making process related to Consumer Interest

108 responses



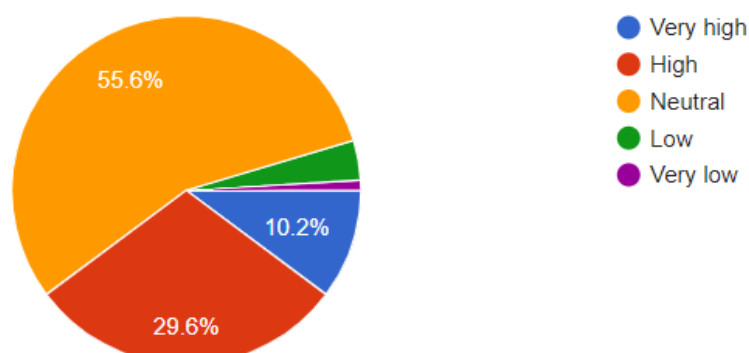
### Interpretation:

It is observed from the above graph that more than half (53.7%) of the respondents had neutral knowledge on decision making process related to consumer interest, 29.6% of the respondents had high knowledge and 13% of the respondents had very high knowledge. According to Likert Scale, mean value (2.4814815) is greater than SD value (2.0637973). It is clear that most of the respondents had neutral knowledge on decision making process related to consumer interest.

### Graph 06

Knowledge about hazardous goods and Services

108 responses



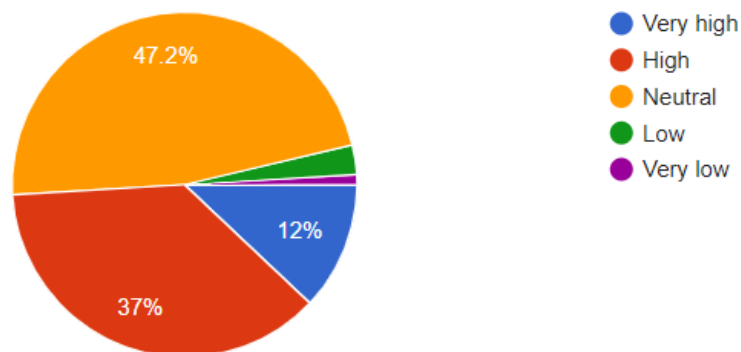
## Interpretation:

It is clear from the above graph that less than half (55.6%) of the respondents had neutral knowledge about hazardous goods and services, 29.6% of the respondents had high awareness, 10.2% of the respondents had very high awareness. The mean value (2.5462963) is greater than SD value (2.116951). It means clear that most of the respondents had neutral knowledge about hazardous goods and services.

### Graph 07

Knowledge on performance and quality of all goods and services

108 responses



## Interpretation:

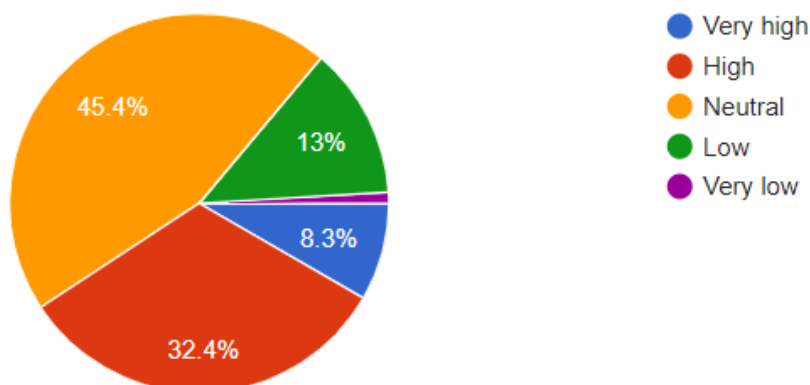
It is observed from the above graph that less than half (47.2%) of the respondents had neutral knowledge on performance and quality of all goods and services, 37 % of the respondents had high knowledge, 12% of the respondents had very high knowledge. The mean value (2.4259259) is greater than SD value (2.0046243) that is also cleared that most of the respondent had neutral awareness on knowledge on performance and quality of all goods and services.



### Graph 08

#### Knowledge on seeking Redressal Mechanism

108 responses



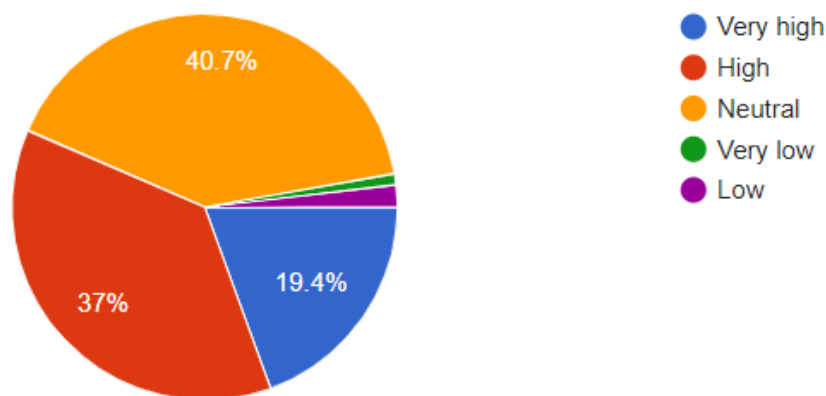
#### Interpretation:

It is evident that less than half (45.5%) of the respondents had neutral Knowledge on seeking redressal machinery, 32.4% of the respondents had high Knowledge, 13% of the respondents had very high Knowledge. The mean value is 2.6481481 and SD value is 2.2443344.

### Graph 09

#### Knowledge on Consumer Education

108 responses



#### Interpretation:

The above graph reveals that 40.7% of the respondents had neutral Knowledge on consumer education, 37% of the respondents had high Knowledge on consumer education, 19.4% of the respondents had very high Knowledge on

consumer education. The mean value is greater than SD value, that means most of the Consumer had neutral knowledge in this statement.

## 9. Conclusion:

Although India has strong and clear laws protecting consumer rights, the actual situation for Indian consumers could be described as absolutely dire. Very few consumers know their rights or understand their basic rights as consumers. Of the various laws that have been enacted to protect consumer rights in India, the Consumer Protection Act 1986 is the most important. Under this law, any person, including an individual, an undivided Hindu family, a business and a corporation, can exercise his rights as a consumer over the goods and services that he purchases. It is important that we, as consumers, know at least our fundamental rights and the courts and procedures that deal with violations of our rights.

In this age of capitalism and globalization, the main objective of any producer is to maximize his profits. In every way possible, the manufacturer is trying to increase sales of its products.

Therefore, in fulfilment of their objective they forget the interests of the consumers and they begin to exploit them, for example: excessive costs, underweight, sale of counterfeit and substandard products, mislead consumers with advertising misleading, etc. It is necessary for the consumer to be aware of it. In this way, making the consumer aware means making the consumer aware of their rights and obligations. After analysing all of the above, the results of from Study can conclude that the majority of consumers are partially aware of consumer rights, indicating the need for an awareness program to educate consumers about how to improve your quality of life. Most of the respondents have a medium understanding of consumer responsibility. The results showed that age was negatively related to consumer awareness of consumer rights, while education and income were positively correlated with level of awareness. From the above discussion, it can be concluded that if consumers can be educated, they can demonstrate this quality by setting their priorities based on their needs.

## 10. Suggestions:

1. Therefore, greater consumer protection is imperative in the emerging rural market. Better enforcement of existing laws, review of the redress mechanism, and sustained formal and informal consumer education strategies, including awareness campaigns through television and public meetings, would be steps in the right direction.
2. In particular, awareness of the consumer's right to education is uniformly low across all sectors and professions. This is vital as it allows the consumer to exercise all other rights.
3. Vendors continue to deny consumers the right to information with impunity. Cumbersome legal procedures discourage attempts to redress complaints through the courts.

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