

Importance And Source of Information of Consumer Protection Act 1986

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Abstract

The consumer protection act 1986, gives protection to consumers against unfair trade practices by manufacturers. The consumer protection act places vital to save consumers from malpractices, adulteration, and unfair trade practices from manufacturers and traders. To study the awareness and attitude of consumers on consumer protection measures, to appraise the legal measures taken by the Government for the protection of consumers, to analyze the basic knowledge required for consumers while purchasing, to offer valuable suggestions to improve the awareness level based on the findings of the study. This Study analyses the demographic profile of the respondent and also checks the Source of Information about the Consumer Protection Acts the study found that social media is the most widely used medium for accessing information, being preferred by almost half of the respondents. Overall, this interpretation suggests that social media has emerged as a powerful force in information dissemination, impacting how people access news and content.

Keywords: Consumer, Awareness, Consumer Protection Act.

INTRODUCTION

A Consumer is a person who acquires goods or services for direct use or ownership rather than for resale or use in production or manufacturing. Under Consumer Protection Act, a consumer is defined as any person who buys any goods for consideration which has been paid or promised or partly paid and partly promised, or under any system of deferred payment and includes any uses of such goods other than the person who buys such goods for consideration paid or promised or partly paid or partly promised, or under any system of deferred payment, when such use is made with the approval of such person, but does not include a person who obtains such good for resale or for any commercial purpose; or Any person who hires or avails any service for a consideration which has been paid or promised or partly paid or partly promised or under any system of differed payment and includes any beneficiary of such services other than the person who hires or avails of the services for consideration paid or promised or partly paid or partly promised, or under any system of deferred payment, under such services as availed of with the approval of the person concerned but does not include a person who avails of such services for any commercial purpose.

Consumer protection laws are a form of government regulations which aim to protect the rights of consumers and to avoid exploitation and make a considered choice in availing of products and services from the market.

THE CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT (CPA) OF 1986

The Consumer Protection Act (CPA) of 1986 is a pivotal legislation enacted in India to safeguard the interests of consumers. It empowers consumers with fundamental rights, including the right to information, choice, and redressal, aiming to protect them from unfair trade practices and ensure access to safe and quality goods and services. The CPA established Consumer Disputes Redressal Forums

at various levels to enable consumers to seek swift and cost-effective resolution for their grievances. It has significantly contributed to raising consumer awareness about their rights and responsibilities and holds businesses accountable for maintaining high standards and ethical practices. While the act has been effective in enhancing consumer protection, there are challenges in its implementation and enforcement, emphasizing the need for continuous improvements to address emerging issues in the dynamic consumer market.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyze the demographic profile of the respondent
- To know the key importance and benefits of the Consumer Protection Act 1986
- To check the Source of Information about the Consumer Protection Acts
- To provide suggestions and a conclusion

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Patel, M., & Desai, R. (2018), "Consumer Disputes Redressal Mechanism: A Comparative Analysis of The Consumer Protection Act (CPA) of 1986 and Global Consumer Protection Laws" published in Journal of Consumer Affairs : This study conducts a comparative analysis of The Consumer Protection Act (CPA) of 1986 with consumer protection laws from selected countries. The research evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the CPA in resolving consumer disputes and providing redressal mechanisms. It compares the legal frameworks, institutional setups, and consumer court systems in different jurisdictions. The findings highlight the areas where the CPA can learn from best practices from other countries and improve its consumer redressal mechanisms to ensure more effective and efficient dispute resolution.

S. Sharma, R., Singh, A., & Gupta (2019), "An Assessment of Consumer Protection Act (CPA) of 1986: Effectiveness and Challenges" published in International Journal of Consumer Studies: This study evaluates the effectiveness of The Consumer Protection Act (CPA) of 1986 in safeguarding consumer rights and resolving grievances in the Indian context. It examines the impact of the CPA on consumer awareness, redressal mechanisms, and its influence on businesses. The research employs both qualitative and quantitative methods, including surveys and interviews with consumers, businesses, and legal experts. The findings shed light on the positive aspects of the CPA in protecting consumers, as well as the challenges in its implementation. The study provides valuable insights to policymakers and stakeholders in improving consumer protection measures.

Verma, P., & Choudhury, S. (2020), "Consumer Awareness and Utilization of The Consumer Protection Act (CPA) of 1986: A Case Study of Urban India" published in Journal of Consumer Policy : This case study investigates consumer awareness and utilization of The Consumer Protection Act (CPA) of 1986 in urban areas of India. The research employs a mixed-method approach, combining surveys, focus group discussions, and analysis of consumer complaint data from consumer forums. The study assesses the level of awareness among consumers about their rights under the CPA and their knowledge of the dispute resolution process. It also examines the reasons for underutilization of the act by consumers. The findings provide insights into consumer behavior and suggest strategies to enhance awareness and utilization of the CPA for better consumer protection.

Sharma, V., & Kapoor, S. (2021), "Business Compliance and Consumer Protection: A Study of The Consumer Protection Act (CPA) of 1986's Impact on Indian Enterprises" published in International Journal of Business and Economics Research : This study investigates the impact of The Consumer Protection Act (CPA) of 1986 on Indian businesses, particularly in terms of compliance with consumer protection regulations. The research employs a mixed-method approach, combining surveys and interviews with businesses across different sectors. It assesses the level of awareness and

understanding of businesses about their obligations under the CPA and the steps taken to comply with consumer protection laws. The findings provide insights into the challenges faced by businesses in adhering to consumer protection regulations and offer recommendations to improve compliance and strengthen consumer protection practices in the business sector.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This table represents the data collected from the study, which includes information about respondents' demographics. The data is organized into four categories: Gender, Age, Educational Qualification, and Occupation.

Table 1 . Demographic Variables

Variables	No. of respondents	Percentage
GENDER		
Male	76	63%
Female	44	37%
Total	120	100
AGE		
20-30	23	19%
30-40	64	53%
Above 40	33	28%
Total	120	100
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION		
Upto SSLC	13	11%
HSC	16	13%
Under Graduate	25	21%
Post Graduate	57	47%
Illiterate	9	8%
Total	120	100
OCCUPATION		
Professional	38	32%
Self Employed	18	15%
Govt. Employee	44	37%
Private Employee	20	16%
Total	120	100

The total number of respondents is 120. The most number 76 respondents (63%) identified as Male. 64 respondents (53%) fall within the age range of 30-40. 57 respondents (47%) are Post Graduates. 44 respondents (37%) are Government Employees.

Overall, this table provides an overview of the respondents' demographics, educational qualifications, and occupational distribution in the study. There were more male respondents than female respondents. The majority of respondents fall within the age range of 30-40. The most common educational qualification is Post Graduate, and the most common occupation is Government Employee.

KEY IMPORTANCE AND BENEFITS OF THE CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT 1986

The Consumer Protection Act (CPA) of 1986 is a crucial piece of legislation that serves to protect the interests of consumers in India. The act was enacted to address various issues faced by consumers, empower them, and provide a legal framework to safeguard their rights. Here are some of the key importance and benefits of the Consumer Protection Act 1986:

Consumer Rights Protection: The act ensures that consumers have certain fundamental rights, such as the right to be informed, the right to choose, the right to be heard, and the right to seek redressal. It empowers consumers to seek legal recourse if their rights are violated, promoting a fair and just marketplace.

Redressal of Consumer Grievances: The act provides a platform for consumers to file complaints against unfair trade practices, defective goods, and deficient services. Consumers can approach Consumer Disputes Redressal Forums at the district, state, and national levels to seek compensation and resolution for their grievances.

Quick and Cost-Effective Dispute Resolution: One of the significant advantages of the CPA is the establishment of consumer courts with the mandate to resolve disputes swiftly and efficiently. These courts offer a simpler and less expensive legal process, making it easier for consumers to seek justice without the need for prolonged and costly litigation.

Product Safety and Quality: The act puts the onus on manufacturers and sellers to ensure that the products they offer are of good quality, safe for consumption or use, and comply with the prescribed standards. This provision encourages businesses to maintain high-quality standards and helps protect consumers from substandard or unsafe products.

Awareness and Education: The CPA plays a vital role in consumer awareness and education. It promotes knowledge about consumer rights and responsibilities, enabling consumers to make informed choices and decisions in the marketplace. This, in turn, encourages a competitive and transparent market environment.

Regulation of Unfair Trade Practices: The act prohibits various unfair trade practices, such as deceptive advertising, misleading information, and false claims. It acts as a deterrent against unethical business practices and ensures fair competition among market players.

Protection against Unscrupulous Business Entities: The CPA safeguards consumers from fraudulent and unscrupulous business entities by providing legal remedies against exploitative and dishonest practices. This enhances consumer confidence and trust in the market.

E-commerce Consumer Protection: With the rapid growth of e-commerce, the Consumer Protection Act has become even more relevant. It addresses issues related to online transactions, e-commerce fraud, and the protection of consumer data, contributing to the growth and development of the digital economy.

Overall, the Consumer Protection Act 1986 is of paramount importance as it strengthens consumer rights, ensures accountability, and fosters a fair and transparent marketplace. By empowering consumers and holding businesses accountable, the act contributes to a healthy and equitable consumer-business relationship, promoting economic growth and consumer welfare in the country.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT

From the data, it was inferred that among the respondents surveyed social media is the most widely used medium for accessing information, being preferred by almost half of the respondents. Television is the second most popular medium, used by 27% of the respondents. Newspapers and Radio are less frequently used, with only 13% and 4% of respondents respectively. There is a small group of respondents (9%) who seem to have a particular interest in the law subject, possibly indicating that the survey or study is related to legal matters.

Table 2. Source of Information about Consumer Protection Acts

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Newspaper	15	13%
Radio	5	4%
Television	33	27%
Social Media	56	47%
Law subject	11	9%
Total	120	100

Overall, this table provides insights into the information consumption habits of the surveyed respondents, highlighting the popularity of social media as a major source of information in comparison to traditional media like newspapers and radio.

INFERENCE

- Social media is the most dominant medium for accessing information among the surveyed respondents. Almost half of the respondents (47%) rely on social media platforms to get information. This suggests that social media has become a significant source of news and content consumption in modern times, surpassing traditional media channels.
- While social media is highly popular, traditional media channels like television and newspapers are still relevant to a portion of the respondents. Around 27% of respondents use television as a medium for information, and 13% rely on newspapers. Though their usage is lower compared to social media, they still have an audience.
- Radio appears to be the least preferred medium among the respondents, with only 4% of them using it for information. This indicates that radio might have lost some ground as a primary source of news and information, especially when compared to more visually engaging mediums like television and social media.
- The presence of 9% of respondents who seem to have a particular interest in the law subject suggests that the survey or study might be related to legal matters. These respondents might have a specific interest in legal news or subjects related to the law.
- The data reflects a shift in how people access information. Traditional media channels like newspapers and radio, which were once dominant sources of information, now have to compete with the widespread popularity of social media. This shift indicates the changing landscape of media consumption and the increasing reliance on digital platforms.
- It is important to note that these inferences are based on the responses of 120 participants. While the data provides valuable insights into the information consumption habits of this particular group, it might not represent the entire population's preferences and behaviors.

SUGGESTION

- **Embrace social media for Information Dissemination:** Considering the dominance of social media as the primary medium for accessing information, organizations, news outlets, and content creators should prioritize their presence and engagement on popular social media platforms. This includes creating and sharing content tailored for social media consumption, and utilizing engaging formats like videos, infographics, and interactive posts. By effectively using social media, they can reach a wider audience and stay relevant in the digital age.

- **Diversify Information Channels:** While social media is a powerful tool, it is essential not to neglect other information channels, particularly traditional media like television and newspapers. There is still a significant portion of the population that relies on these mediums for information. Organizations and content creators should adopt a multi-channel approach, diversifying their information dissemination strategies to accommodate different audience preferences. This can involve maintaining a presence on both digital and traditional media platforms, ensuring that content is adapted to suit each channel's unique characteristics.

By following these suggestions, businesses, media outlets, and content creators can effectively navigate the changing landscape of information consumption, reaching a broader audience and meeting the preferences of different segments of the population. The key is to strike a balance between leveraging the potential of social media and not overlooking the significance of traditional media channels in ensuring comprehensive and inclusive information dissemination.

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CONCLUSION

Overall, this interpretation suggests that social media has emerged as a powerful force in information dissemination, impacting how people access news and content. Traditional media channels still hold relevance but are facing competition from digital platforms, and this shift in media consumption has implications for media companies, advertisers, and information dissemination strategies.

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