



Awareness of Consumer Education among Higher Secondary School Students

KEYWORDS

Consumer awareness, consumer education, children in consumer protection

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ABSTRACT *The present study investigated awareness of consumer education among Higher Secondary school students of Kuzhithurai area of Kanyakumari district. The sample of the study consisted of 250 students who belonged to both rural and urban areas. Purposive random sampling method was used in this study. A self prepared questionnaire and unstructured interview were used to investigate the level of awareness of consumer education among higher secondary students. Results revealed that the students from rural areas have less knowledge in the matter comparing to urban students.*

Introduction

Consumer awareness is making the consumer aware of his / her rights. It means that consumers are aware of products or services, its characteristics and the other marketing place to buy, price and promotion (P's). Consumer Education is the process of gaining the knowledge and skills needed in managing consumer resources and taking actions to influence the factors which affects consumer decisions.

A person who has indicated his or her willingness to obtain goods and or services from a supplier with the intention of paying for them. Someone who has purchased goods and or services for personal consumption is also a consumer.

Need and Significance of the Study

Consumer education empowers to exercise their consumer rights. It is perhaps the single most powerful tool that can take consumers from their present disadvantageous position to one of the strength in the market place. Children become consumers from the very early age. The new born baby consumes hospital services, clothing, crib and many other items, which he or she needs. With the advance in age he consumes milk, water medicines and uses a variety of goods like toys, bicycles etc. In one sense even the unborn babies become consumers as they get affected through the consumption of goods and services by their mothers. It is therefore, necessary that children are protected from harmful 'products and service'. It becomes still more important for them as children are not nature enough to make the right type of choices in consuming the products and services they also do not possess adequate information required for making the right choices and they are not grown up enough to fight against exploitation consumer education helps the children become aware of their rights to survival and develops them in to responsible citizens. We have not yet reached a desirable level of knowledge and skill in managing personal financial resources. Growing ignorance in the various aspects and new trends of consumerism has made the ignorant in this regard susceptible to all the vices in the consumer field. So the researcher wants to investigate the awareness of consumer education among high secondary school students.

Objectives of the Study

The present study was confined to the following objectives.

1. To study the level of awareness of consumer education among higher secondary students.
2. To test whether there exist significant difference in consumer education awareness between rural and urban students.

3. To test whether there exist significant difference in consumer education awareness between boys and girls.
4. To test whether there exist significant difference in consumer education awareness between rural boys and urban boys.
5. To test whether there exist significant difference in consumer education awareness between rural girls and urban girls.

Hypotheses

1. There is only a minimal level of awareness of consumer education among higher secondary students.
2. There exists no significant difference in consumer education awareness between rural and urban students.
3. There exists no significant difference in consumer education awareness between boys and girls.
4. There exists no significant difference in consumer education awareness between rural boys and urban boys.
5. There exists no significant difference in consumer education awareness between rural girls and urban girls.

Methodology

The method adopted for the study was normative survey.

Samples used for the study

The sample selected for the study consisted of 250 students of Kuzhithurai area of Kanyakumari District purposive random sampling method was used in this study.

Tools used for the Study

A self prepared questionnaire and interview were used in this study.

Research Findings and Discussions

Table : 1 Awareness of students towards Consumer Education

Items	Total Responses	Total Score	Percentage
32	250	4007	50.088

This table gives the awareness of student towards consumer education. The awareness of students in the area of consumer education is only 50%. This may be because the knowledge that they inherit from their parents and surroundings in which they study fails to give a major part of the necessary awareness level.

Table 2 : Comparison of Awareness of Rural and Urban Students

Category	Number of Sample	Mean	SD	CR	Remarks at 5% level
Rural	124	19.31	3.55	3.24	Significant
Urban	126	17.83	3.68		

This table gives the comparison of the awareness of rural and urban students. The t value is found to be 3.24 which is greater than the table value at 5% level. So the null hypothesis is rejected. There exist significant difference in consumer education awareness between rural and urban students.

The students who study in urban schools were found to have a better awareness level than their counterparts studying in rural schools. This is because of the fact that the students who study in urban schools will have a better exposure from their parents and also gets frequent contact with media from which they gain a lot.

Table 3 : Comparison of Awareness of Boys and Girls

Category	Number of Sample	Mean	SD	CR	Remarks at 5% level
Boys	125	18.96	3.71	1.703	Not Significant
Girls	125	18.17	3.64		

This table gives the comparison of the awareness of boys and girls. The 't' value found to be 1.703 is less than the table value at 5% level. So the null hypothesis is accepted. There exist no significant difference in consumer education awareness between boys and girls. It shows that they both are equally exposed to knowledge acquiring fields.

Table 4 : Comparison of Awareness of Rural Boys and Urban Boys

Category	Number of Sample	Mean	SD	CR	Remarks at 5% level
Rural Boys	62	14.98	2.70	3.57	Significant
Urban Boys	63	16.97	3.49		

This table gives the comparison of the awareness of rural boys and urban boys. The 't' value is found to be 3.57 which is greater than the table value at 5% level. So the null hypothesis is rejected. There exists significant difference in consumer education awareness between rural boys and urban boys.

Table 5 : Comparison of awareness of rural girls and urban girls

Category	Number of Sample	Mean	SD	CR	Remarks at 5% level
Rural Girls	62	11.59	3.65	10.79	Significant
Urban Girls	63	18.69	3.69		

This table gives the comparison of the awareness of rural girls and urban girls. The 't' value is found to be 10.79 which is greater than the table value at 5% level. So the null hypothesis is rejected. There exist significant difference in consumer education awareness between rural girls and urban girls.

Conclusion of the Study

In the light of the findings obtained, the investigator suggests that the students in the level of education are not given proper training in the field of consumerism. Men in now a days, are being more and more a consumer students from urban areas are found more educated in this field by getting more contact with media which gives much importance to consumerism. But they are also to be given proper training in order to escape from the defects of growing consumerism. The students from rural areas have less knowledge in the matter comparing to urban students. But so as to be wise consumer in their further growth they are also to be given proper education in this field. On the whole, irrespective of area and sex, every students should be given proper consumer education taking account the needs of the country and the changing global economic world by making a necessary and sufficient change in the curriculum of higher secondary school students.

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