

Rural Consumers' Awareness on Legislations



Commerce

KEYWORDS : Consumer awareness, Rural Consumers, Legislation, Consumer.

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ABSTRACT

Government has initiated various legislative measures to protect the consumers from unfair business practices. Consumers have to be aware not only of the commercial aspects of sale and purchase of goods but also the legislative measures. Hence an attempt has been made to know the consumer awareness level on legislations among the rural consumers of Udumalpet taluk in Tirupur District. A sample size of 500 respondents among rural consumers of Udumalpet taluk is used by the convenience sampling technique method. The primary data is collected by the questionnaire. The collected data is analyzed with the help of percentages and ANOVA. The analyzed revealed that there is significant difference in the legislations awareness index of consumers classified on the basis of educational qualification, type of family and size of family.

1 INTRODUCTION

Government of India has initiated several legislative measures for the protection and welfare of the consumers. In 1985 an important event took place when United Nations passed a resolution indicating certain guidelines under which the State could make law for better protection of the interest of the consumers. Following this in India the Consumer Protection Act was passed in 1986.

2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The consumers in the rural area are not well organized and they have very weak bargaining power. Government is committed to the welfare of the consumers and it has initiated various legislative and administrative measures for the protection of consumers. Some of the legislative measures are: Contract Act 1872, Sale of Goods Act 1930, The Essential Commodities Act 1955, Prevention of Food Adulteration Act 1954, Trade and Merchandise Mark Act 1958, Standards of Weight and Measures Act 1976, Consumer Protection Act 1986, Law of Torts, Information Technology Act 2000, and Competition Act 2002.

In this context, it is of interest to study

How far rural consumers are aware of the various legislations protecting the consumers?

3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this study is to evaluate the awareness of rural consumer on legislations.

4 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The following hypotheses are framed

- i) Rural consumers are not aware of the consumer protection legislations.

5 METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of the study primary as well as secondary data were collected. A well structured interview schedule was used to collect primary data.

ANOVA test is employed to identify whether mean values of awareness index differs between and within the groups. Convenience sampling method is used and data was collected from 500 consumers of Udumalpet taluk of Tirupur district in the state of Tamil Nadu.

6 SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study is limited to Udumalpet taluk of Tamil Nadu. The study deals with the level of awareness on various legislations.

7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is restricted to Udumalpet taluk in Tirupur district. The sample size is limited to 500 consumers.

8 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Etefia E. Ekanem in his study "Institutional Framework for Consumers Protection. in Nigeria" state that it is obvious that beside the problem of lack of appropriate legislation, the court has not been able to raise to the occasion, whenever a consumer approaches it for redress

Gnanadesigan, C. and Sudha, P. in their study "Consumer Awareness about Consumer Legislations – A Study" clearly state that most of the respondents are aware of the consumer protection act and researcher concludes that consumer protection is an ineffective national problem affecting every section of the society irrespective of age and education.

Mohammed Solaiman, Sanoara Yasmin and Ahasanul Haque in their study "Issues of Consumerism in Bangladesh: Present Status and Challenges" state that in Bangladesh, consumerism movement is still in initial stage. However, Government of Bangladesh has adopted some legislative measures in order to protect consumers from the malpractice of the dishonest businessmen/marketers.

Parihar, B.B.S and Rajeev Agarwal. in their study "A Survey of Consumer Awareness about consumer legislations in India" state that the majority (54%) of the respondents are not aware of consumer legislations.

9 ASSOCIATION BETWEEN DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS AND LEGISLATIONS AWARENESS VARIATION

To ascertain whether there is variation in legislations awareness index of rural consumers based on the demographic factors, ANOVA are applied and the results are discussed under various heads.

9.1 Age and Legislations Awareness

H₀. There is no variation in the mean legislations awareness index based on age.

TABLE 1 AGE AND LEGISLATIONS AWARENESS

Age	Numbers	Mean Awareness Index	Above Average	Below Average	Range
Up to 20	140(28.00)	70.65	73	67	20.00-100.00
21 - 40	324(64.80)	67.52	167	157	20.00-100.00
Above 40	36(7.20)	70.73	22	14	40.00-100.00
Total	500	68.63	250	250	20.00-100.00

d.f.:v₁ 2, v₂ 497

Table Value: Five per cent level : 3.014

Calculated F Value:2.107

One per cent level : 4.648

ANOVA results indicate that the calculated F value is less than the table value at five percent level, hence there is no significant difference in the mean awareness index classified on the basis of age.

9.2 Gender and Legislations Awareness

H₀: There is no variation in the mean legislations awareness index based on gender.

TABLE 2 GENDER AND LEGISLATIONS AWARENESS

Gender	Numbers	Mean Awareness Index	Above Average	Below Average	Range
Male	376(75.20)	69.13	187	189	20.00-100.00
Female	124(24.80)	67.11	66	58	20.00-100.00
Total	500	68.63	250	250	20.00-100.00

d.f.: 498

Table Value: Five per cent level : 1.965

Calculated 't' Value:1.190

One per cent level : 2.586

ANOVA results indicate that the calculated 't' value is less than the table value at five percent level, hence there is no significant difference with mean average index classified on the basis of gender.

9.3 Educational Qualification and Legislations Awareness

H₀: There is no variation in the mean legislations awareness index based on educational qualification.

TABLE 3 EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION AND LEGISLATIONS AWARENESS

Educational Qualification	Numbers	Mean Awareness Index	Above Average	Below Average	Range
H.Sc.	25(5.00)	63.88	15	10	20.00-83.08
Under Graduate	265(53.00)	70.65	133	132	40.00-100.00
Post Graduate	169(33.80)	66.96	82	87	20.00-100.00
Others	41(8.20)	65.29	25	16	20.00-100.00
Total	500	68.63	250	250	20.00-100.00

d.f.:v₁ 3, v₂ 496

Table Value: Five per cent level : 2.623

Calculated F Value:3.240

One per cent level : 3.821

ANOVA results indicate that the calculated F value is more than the table value at five percent level, hence there is significant difference in the mean awareness index classified on the basis of educational qualification.

9.4 Marital Status and Legislations Awareness

H₀: There is no variation in the mean legislations awareness index based on marital status.

TABLE 4 MARITAL STATUS AND LEGISLATIONS AWARENESS

Marital Status	Numbers	Mean Awareness Index	Above Average	Below Average	Range
Unmarried	360(72.00)	69.40	177	183	20.00-100.00
Married	140(28.00)	66.65	74	66	20.00-100.00
Total	500	68.63	250	250	20.00-100.00

d.f.: 498

Table Value: Five per cent level : 1.965

Calculated 't' Value:1.687

One per cent level : 2.586

ANOVA results indicate that the calculated 't' value is less than the table value at five percent level, hence there is no significant difference in the mean awareness index classified on the basis of marital status.

9.5 Type of Family and Legislations Awareness

H₀: There is no variation in the mean legislations awareness index based on the type of family.

TABLE 5 TYPE OF FAMILY AND LEGISLATIONS AWARENESS

Type of Family	Numbers	Mean Awareness Index	Above Average	Below Average	Range
Nuclear	322(64.40)	69.78	164	158	20.00-100.00
Joint	178(35.60)	66.55	87	91	20.00-100.00
Total	500	68.63	250	250	20.00-100.00

d.f.: 498

Table Value: Five per cent level : 1.965

Calculated 't' Value:2.114

One per cent level : 2.586

ANOVA results indicate that the calculated 't' value is more than the table value at five percent level, hence there is significant dif-

ference in the mean awareness index classified on the basis of family.

9.6 Size of Family and Legislations Awareness

H_0 : There is no variation in the mean legislations awareness index based on the size of family.

TABLE 6
SIZE OF FAMILY AND LEGISLATIONS AWARENESS

Size of Family	Numbers	Mean Awareness Index	Above Average	Below Average	Range
Two	41(8.20)	74.71	22	19	46.15-100.00
Three	118(23.60)	67.47	61	57	20.00-100.00
Above Three	341(68.20)	68.30	169	172	20.00-100.00
Total	500	68.63	250	250	20.00-100.00

d.f.: v_1 2, v_2 497

Table Value: Five per cent level : 3.014

Calculated F Value:3.214

One per cent level : 4.648

ANOVA results indicate that the calculated F value is more than the table value at five percent level, hence there is significant difference in the mean awareness index classified on the basis of family.

9.7 Occupation and Legislations Awareness

H_0 : There is no variation in the mean legislations awareness index based on occupation.

TABLE 7
OCCUPATION AND LEGISLATIONS AWARENESS

Occupation	Numbers	Mean Awareness Index	Above Average	Below Average	Range
Employment	90(18.00)	66.75	40	50	20.00-100.00
Business	119(23.80)	69.63	54	65	38.46-100.00
Agriculture	96(19.20)	68.93	49	47	20.00-98.46
Others	195(39.00)	68.73	108	87	32.31-100.00
Total	500	68.63	250	250	20.00-100.00

d.f.: v_1 3, v_2 496

Table Value: Five per cent level : 2.623

Calculated F Value:0.554

One per cent level : 3.821

ANOVA results indicate that the calculated F value is less than the table value at five percent level, hence there is no significant difference in the mean awareness index classified on the basis of occupation.

9.8 Monthly Income and Legislations Awareness

H_0 : There is no variation in the mean legislations awareness index based on monthly income.

TABLE 8
MONTHLY INCOME AND LEGISLATIONS AWARENESS

Monthly Income	Numbers	Mean Awareness Index	Above Average	Below Average	Range
Below 10000	259(51.80)	68.76	132	127	20.00-100.00
10001 to 20000	154(30.80)	67.76	77	77	20.00-100.00
20001 to 30000	53(10.60)	71.09	22	31	33.85-100.00
30001 to 40000	25(5.00)	67.63	11	14	49.23-90.77
Above 40000	9(1.80)	67.86	3	6	43.08-100.00
Total	500	68.63	250	250	20.00-100.00

d.f.: v_1 4, v_2 495

Table Value: Five per cent level : 2.390

Calculated F Value:0.436

One per cent level : 3.357

ANOVA results indicate that the calculated F value is less than the table value at five percent level, hence there is no significant difference in the mean awareness index classified on the basis of monthly income.

12 FINDINGS

Rural consumers' awareness on legislations is ascertained and ANOVA indicate that there is significant difference in the legislations awareness index classified on the basis of educational qualification, type of family and size of family.

There is no significant difference in the legislations awareness index classified on the basis of age, gender, marital status, occupation and monthly income of the family.

13 SUGGESTIONS

- Publish pamphlets, periodicals and booklets, exhibit slides and documentary films in regional languages for promoting consumer awareness.
- Organize motivational campaigns for various groups of rural consumers.
- Regular consumers' awareness programmes may be initiated at schools and colleges level.

14 CONCLUSION

Legislation initiated by Government protects the consumer from fraudulent businessmen. ANOVA is applied to ascertain whether there exists any difference in the mean values of legislations awareness index of rural consumers based on demographic factors. It indicates that there is significant difference in the legislations awareness index of consumers classified on the basis of educational qualification, type of family and size of family.

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