

People's Perception for Consumer Protection Act in India: A Quantitative Investigation

BRIJ MOHAN DUTTA,

Assistant Professor, Department of Faculty of Law ,
Graphic Era Hill University, Dehradun Uttarakhand India 248002 ,

Abstract

To safeguard consumer interests against dishonest business practices, India's Consumer Protection Act (CPA) was passed in 1986. The CPA calls for the creation of consumer courts, which have the authority to resolve conflicts between customers and enterprises. These courts have been successful in resolving consumer complaints and offering relief to customers who have been offended. Consumers in India have generally had favorable opinions of the CPA and have learned to rely on it to uphold their legal rights. The act has been crucial in fostering fair trade practices and preventing dishonest companies from taking advantage of customers. The Consumer Protection Act is nevertheless a crucial weapon for defending Indian consumers' rights in spite of these complaints. The law has been crucial in advancing fair trade principles and making sure that consumers are treated fairly by enterprises. The legislation can continue to play a crucial role in defending the rights of Indian consumers with continuous support and improvements. The researcher had considered people with different occupation to know People's Perception for Consumer Protection Act in India and found that Consumer protection act has been crucial in advancing fair trade principles, Consumer protection act increases consumers to sue negligent manufacturers and service providers and Consumers believed that the redressal processes were time-consuming and ineffectual.

Keywords: Consumer Protection Act, Consumer Courts, Customer Complaints, Fair trade practices, People's Perception.

Introduction

The Consumer Protection Act is generally well-received by consumers in India, according to research on consumer awareness and attitudes towards consumer protection laws. They discovered gaps in understanding of the act's complaint procedures. The choices available to

them for settling disputes and the function of consumer courts may not be fully understood by consumers. This ignorance may deter some consumers from pursuing remedies, which may restrict the act's ability to defend consumers' rights. Customers are more likely to voice dissatisfaction with larger businesses than with smaller ones. It shows that, even if Indian consumers usually have positive impressions of the Consumer Protection Act, there may be room for improvement in terms of outreach and education (Jayasubramanian & Vaideke 2012).

The CPA and consumer rights have gained in popularity over time, yet many customers still have trouble using the act's complaint procedures. One of the main causes of this was a lack of knowledge and awareness of the processes and avenues available to submit a complaint. According to the report, many consumers are not aware of how consumer courts work, what they are used for, or how long it takes to get complaints resolved. Consumers believed that the redressal processes were time-consuming and ineffectual, which frequently led to irritation and unhappiness among them. underlined the requirement for increased consumer education and awareness campaigns regarding their rights and available CPA dispute resolution options. It recommends that these services be made to be more user-friendly and accessible to the information, with a focus on streamlining the processes and deadlines associated with making a complaint. The report also recommended that, in order to foster a more encouraging and favorable climate for the protection of consumer interests, government agencies, consumer organizations, and businesses should work more closely together. Overall, the analysis showed that although the CPA has significantly aided in defending consumer rights in India, much more work remained to be done to increase the efficiency and accessibility of the complaint procedures made available by the act (Chawla and Kaur 2018).

The Consumer Protection Act of India is generally seen favorably by women in Vellore, according to a study on women's understanding of consumer rights there. According to the survey, women are aware of their rights as consumers, but owing to societal and cultural circumstances, they might not always exercise their rights. Women frequently rely on recommendations from friends and family when making purchases, which may restrict their capacity for educated decision-making. According to the report, there may be a need for focused outreach and education initiatives to inform women of their legal rights under the Consumer

Protection Act. These initiatives could provide women the power to stand up for their rights and make educated shopping decisions (Sundaram & Balaramalingam 2013).

Literature Review

Ramesh and Kumar (2017) assert that India has to take a more aggressive approach to consumer protection. While the Consumer Protection Act is an important piece of legislation, they contend that relying entirely on customers to submit complaints and seek remedies is insufficient. The authors contend that preventive actions, such as routine corporate inspections to guarantee adherence to consumer protection legislation, need to be given more weight. In order to promote voluntary compliance, they also advocate for putting more of an emphasis on informing businesses about their legal responsibilities. The authors contend that these regulations would assist businesses by fostering a culture of fairness in the marketplace, in addition to protecting consumers from unfair corporate practises.

Singh and Joshi (2018) assert that the CPA has been effective in raising consumer understanding of their legal rights and instilling them with the confidence to sue dishonest producers, suppliers, and service providers. The act has given consumers more power by granting them the ability to report violations of their rights, request restitution, and bring legal action against those responsible. As a result, there have been more consumer complaints submitted, which has increased the number of consumer court systems established to handle these concerns. The Indian government has taken major steps to ensure that the rights and interests of consumers are protected as consumer protection has emerged as a crucial concern in today's society. Since its introduction in 1986, India's Consumer Protection Act (CPA) has undergone a number of revisions to reflect the evolving demands of Indian consumers. The law gives customers a number of protections and remedies against producers, suppliers, and service providers who engage in unfair commercial practices .

In a considerable way, the CPA has been successful in defending the rights of Indian consumers. The act has played a significant role in raising awareness of consumer rights and giving consumers the ability to sue negligent manufacturers and service providers. The Indian government must take action to address the CPA's critics and improve its ability to safeguard

consumers' interests. The government can do this to guarantee that customers' rights are upheld and that they are not exploited. According to Dr. M. A. Lokhande's case study of Jalna, consumers are more informed of their rights under the Consumer Protection Act in smaller cities and towns, but the Consumer Protection Act is low. According to the study, there may be a need for focused outreach and education initiatives in these regions to inform customers about their legal rights and the processes for filing complaints. The investigation also emphasizes how crucial it is for consumers to believe that consumer protection measures work, which may call for improved law enforcement and quicker dispute settlement.

The Consumer Protection Act of 2008's consumer redressal systems are compared in Van Heerde and Barnard's (2011) study. The authors stress the need for prompt and effective dispute settlement, emphasizing the significance of adequate remedies for consumers who have been affected by unfair trade practices. According to the study, redress procedures should be created to offer consumers who have been harmed by unfair business practices reasonable recompense. The authors underline the necessity for redress mechanisms that are readily available, simple to use, and offer a high level of consumer protection. The authors also stress the significance of consumer protection legislation enforcement, highlighting that this is necessary for redress systems to be effective. In order to ensure that firms are held responsible for their conduct and to enforce consumer protection legislation, the report emphasizes the importance of regulatory entities like consumer protection agencies. The authors contend that a variety of actions are necessary for effective enforcement, including consumer education and awareness-raising efforts as well as regulatory body capacity-building initiatives. The study concludes that in order to safeguard consumer interests and encourage honest and open business practices, robust redress procedures and the implementation of consumer protection legislation are crucial.

Khandelwal (2016) noted that even though India has had a Consumer Protection Act in place for more than 30 years, there are still problems and difficulties that need to be resolved. In terms of public perception, Khandelwal contended that Indian consumers have grown more conscious of their rights and the legal resources at their disposal for pursuing redress, compensation, and legal action against producers, suppliers, and service providers that participate in unfair trade practices. The Consumer Protection Act and consumers' rights under it are still not well known to customers in

rural areas and small towns, it was further stated. Other difficulties with the Consumer Protection Act's implementation have been noted. The Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission's (CDRC) inability to adequately address the substantial volume of consumer complaints is one such issue. Moreover, Khandelwal emphasised that the act's reach has limitations, particularly when it comes to dealing with problems relating to e-commerce and online transactions.

Rural customers generally have a favorable impression of the Consumer Protection Act in India, according to research on consumer protection awareness among rural Assamese people. Rural consumers are aware of their rights under the law, according to the survey, but they might not be entirely aware of the processes for complaining or seeking remedies. According to the study, it may be necessary to implement targeted education and outreach initiatives to inform rural customers about their legal rights and the steps to take in order to file a complaint. Because they have less access to information and less education, rural consumers may be more susceptible to deceptive practises. It is crucial to make sure they are able to assert their consumer rights in a powerful way. The work emphasizes the significance of addressing the unique difficulties rural consumers encounter in accessing consumer protection measures. The lack of consumer courts in remote locations, for example, may necessitate the development of access initiatives by policymakers and consumer advocates. Overall, the study emphasises the value of strengthening consumer protection policies and making sure that all customers, particularly those in rural areas, are capable of asserting their rights and safeguarding themselves against unfair business practises (Goowalla 2015).

In India, the Consumer Protection Act has played a crucial role in empowering consumers and defending their rights. However, putting it into practice effectively is difficult. The lack of consumer knowledge of their legal rights and the court system is one of the key issues highlighted by Chandrashekhar and Malhotra (2018). Due to a lack of consumer complaints being filed as a result of this lack of awareness, the act's ability to effectively protect consumers' interests is limited. Further awareness-raising and educational initiatives regarding consumer rights and the legal procedure for filing complaints are required to address this issue.

The CPA is often criticized for inadequately addressing the subject of product liability. Product liability is the term for a manufacturer's liability for any damage brought on by their products. Sood and Saini (2018) assert that because the CPA lacks a clear framework for product liability, consumers are unable to pursue compensation for losses brought on by defective items. They recommend that the statute be changed to incorporate provisions for product responsibility to safeguard customers from subpar and dangerous goods (Sood & Saini, 2018). Despite the difficulties, the CPA has been instrumental in defending the rights of Indian consumers.

Objective

To explore People's Perception for Consumer Protection Act in India.

Methodology

The researcher had considered people with different occupation to know People's Perception for Consumer Protection Act in India. The survey was conducted with the help of a questionnaire. The researcher had collected the primary data through random sampling method and analyzed it by statistical tool called mean.

Findings of the Study

People's Perception for Consumer Protection Act in India

S. No.	Statements	Mean Value
1.	Consumer protection act has been crucial in advancing fair trade principles	3.18
2.	It makes sure that consumers are treated fairly by enterprises	3.12
3.	Consumers believed that the redressal processes were time-consuming and ineffectual	3.15
4.	Consumer protection act relying entirely on customers to submit complaints and seek remedies is insufficient	3.11
5.	Consumer protection act increases consumers to sue negligent manufacturers and service providers	3.16
6.	Consumer protection act robust redress procedures and the implementation of consumer protection legislation are crucial	3.14

Table above is showing People's Perception for Consumer Protection Act in India where the respondent says that Consumer protection act has been crucial in advancing fair trade principles with mean value 3.18, Consumer protection act increases consumers to sue negligent manufacturers and service providers with mean value 3.16 and Consumers believed that the redressal processes were time-consuming and ineffectual with mean value 3.15. The respondent also says that Consumer protection act robust redress procedures and the implementation of consumer protection legislation are crucial with mean value 3.14, It makes sure that consumers are treated fairly by enterprises with mean value 3.12 and Consumer protection act relying entirely on customers to submit complaints and seek remedies is insufficient with mean value 3.11. Figure 1 presents the mean values through chart.

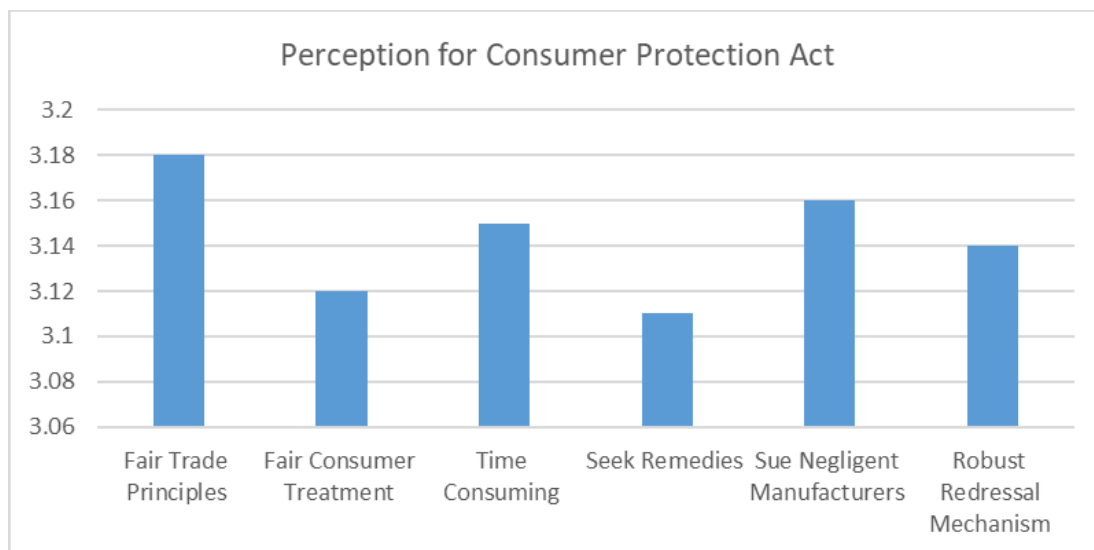


Figure 1 Perception for Consumer Protection Act

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Consumer Protection Act has been quite helpful in defending Indian consumers' interests. Despite its shortcomings and restrictions, the legislation has given consumers more power by giving them a legal defence against dishonest business practises. The act has also boosted consumer confidence and awareness, enabling customers to assertively

demand their rights. To effectively implement and enforce the legislation, there is still much work to be done. The lack of consumer knowledge of their legal rights and the legal system is one of the major obstacles to the act's implementation. Due to the low number of complaints from customers, the act's ability to effectively safeguard consumers' interests is constrained. Thus, there is a need for more initiatives that raise public understanding of consumer rights and the legal procedure for filing complaints. However, it can be difficult to guarantee prompt and effective conflict resolution as well as adequate reimbursement for damages. Effective redressal procedures are required to give customers a speedy and equitable way to resolve their issues. The success of the law also depends on how well consumer protection regulations are implemented. Companies must answer for their deeds, and the government must take action to guarantee that consumer protection rules are strictly followed. However, the expansion of e-commerce and digital transactions has created additional difficulties for the protection of consumers. To adequately address these issues, consumer protection laws must be updated and adjusted. Overall, the Consumer Protection Act has done a great job of defending Indian consumers' interests. To ensure the efficient implementation, knowledge, and enforcement of consumer protection legislation, however, ongoing efforts are required. Only then can consumers be guaranteed that they will be treated fairly and equally in society.

The study was conducted to know People's Perception for Consumer Protection Act in India where the respondent says that Consumer protection act has been crucial in advancing fair trade principles, Consumer protection act increases consumers to sue negligent manufacturers and service providers and Consumers believed that the redressal processes were time-consuming and ineffectual.

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