



State of Consumer Protection in India: A survey on engineering students' perception

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Abstract: The process of development coupled with increasing liberalisation and globalisation across the country has enabled consumers to realise their increasingly important role in society and governance. However, concentration of the market power in few hands has affected consumers,. Unlike in the developed world, consumers in the developing countries have not been able to play a greater role in the development process. The paper attempts to present the state of consumer protection in India by way of analysing the present status with respect to the UN Guidelines for consumer protection. The paper throws light on the current scenario by giving some data and highlighting the problems. It observes that the legal and the policy framework in India is fairly good to capture the measures suggested by the UN Guidelines but when it comes to implementation, the situation is not up to the mark. It concludes with some suggestions and recommendations that might further improve the consumer protection and administration in the country.

Key words: Consumer Protection, liberalisation and globalisation ,

Introduction: The advertisements of goods and services in television, newspapers and magazines influence the demand for the same by the consumers though there may be manufacturing defects or imperfections or short comings in the quality, quantity and the purity of the goods or there may be deficiency in the services rendered .It became necessary to protect the consumers from the exploitation and to save them from adulteration and sub-standard goods and services and to safe guard the interests of the consumers. In order to provide for better protection of the interests of the consumer the Consumer Protection Bill,1986 was introduced.

A survey was conducted in Bhimavaram, West Godavari District to understand the

state of Consumer Protection in this region

Objectives of the study:

1. To know about the students perception on consumer protection act
2. To give necessary suggestions for consumer grievance redressal
3. To discuss about the need for consumer protection in India
4. To analyse the role of consumer clubs in protecting the consumer rights

Methodology: The study is based on primary and secondary data. Primary data has been collected from 100 engineering students of various colleges in Bhimavaram, with the help of a well-structured questionnaire. Percentages and Multiple bar charts had been presented according to the requirement



The secondary data has been collected from books, magazines and internet.

Sampling method: Convenience sampling method was used.

Sample Size: A sample of 100 was targeted for the study. The sample consisted of 100 engineering students who were interviewed with the help of a well-structured questionnaire.

Scope of the study: The geographical scope of the study is confined to Bhimavaram town, West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh.

Data analysis and interpretation:

Table 1: When you buy the product do you carefully note the expiry date?

Opinion	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	38	38
No	62	62
Total	100	100

Table 2: Do you observe the MRP of the products you buy?

Opinion	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	33	33
No	67	67
Total	100	100

Table 3: Have you ever charged more than the MRP?

Opinion	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	32	32
No	68	68
Total	100	100

Table 4: Have you ever checked the weight of the products mentioned on the package?

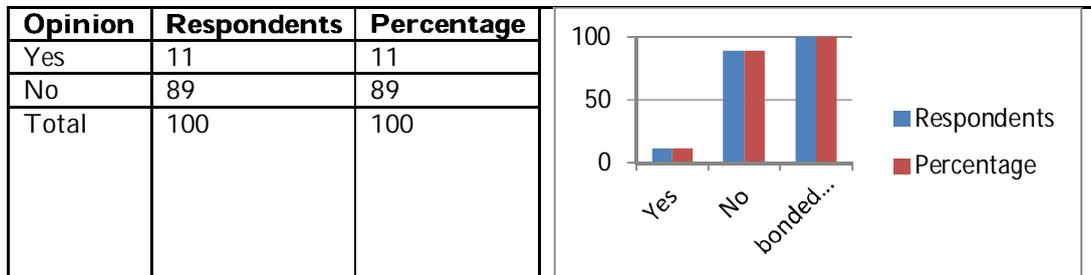


Table 5: Have you ever got any duplicate products at any time of your purchase?

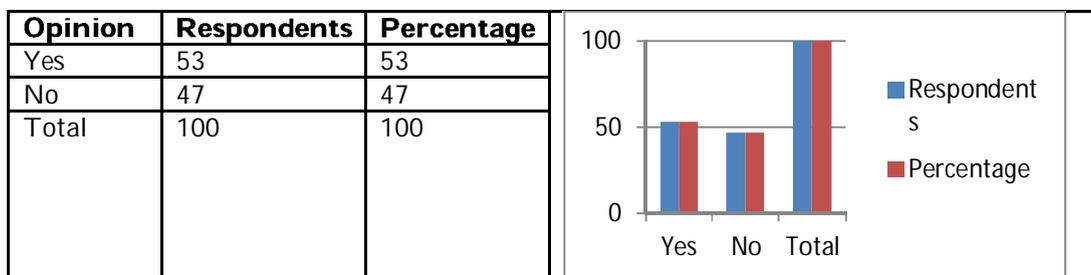


Table 6: If you got duplicate item, did you ever complain to the supplier?

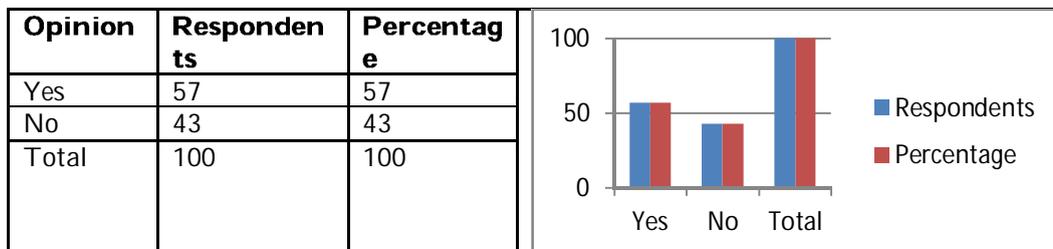


Table 7: How was the response from the supplier for duplicate items sold by him/her?

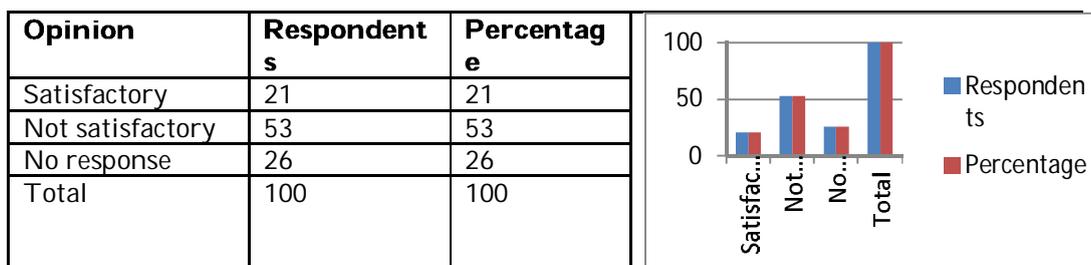




Table 8: Do you have any awareness about the rights of the consumers?

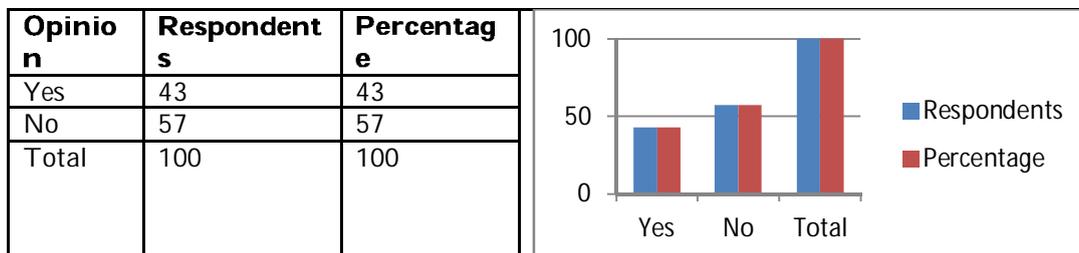


Table 9: Do you realize the need for forming the consumer clubs to fight for your rights?

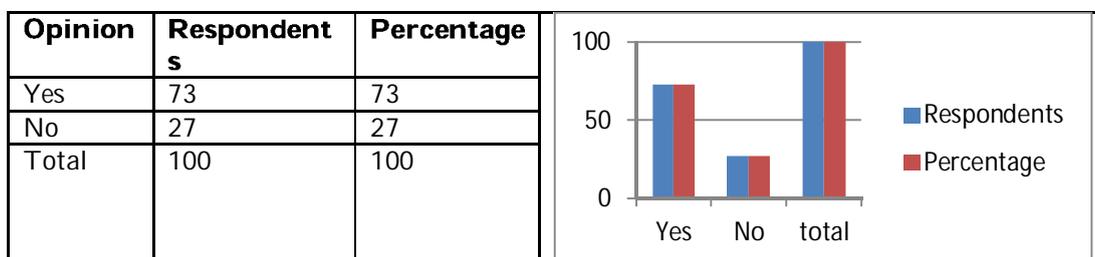


Table 10: Are you willing to join in consumer redressal forums to solve your grievances?

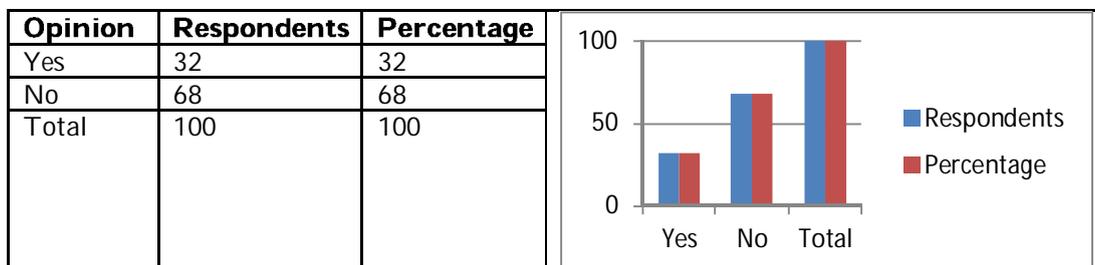


Table 11: Do you have any awareness about the consumer courts for redressal of grievances?

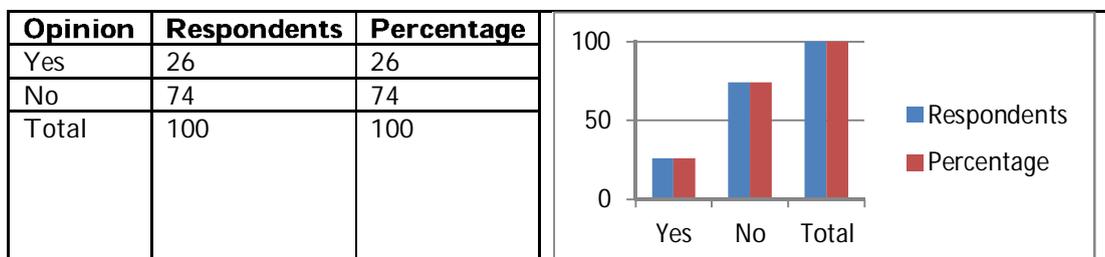
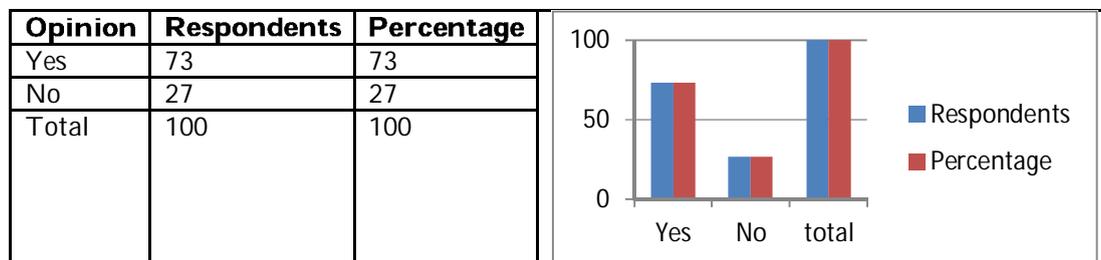




Table 12: Do you think media plays a key role in creating awareness about consumer protection act in India?



Findings:

1. From the table 1 it is clear that 38% of the respondents said that they will carefully note the expiry date during the purchase while the remaining 62% of the respondents are not.
2. It is evident from table 2 that 33% of the respondents said that they observe the MRP rates while the remaining 67% of the respondents are not bothered about MRP.
3. It is clear from the table 3 that 32% of the respondents said that they are charged more than the MRP while the remaining respondents were not charged much than the MRP.
4. Table 4 projects that only 11% of the respondents check the weight of the products mentioned on the package.
5. Table 5 shows that 53% of the respondents got duplicate products while purchasing.
6. Table 6 highlights that only 57% of the respondents complained to the supplier regarding the duplicate products.
7. From the table 7 it is clear that only 21% of the respondents were satisfied with the response regarding duplicate products from the suppliers.

8. It is evident from table 8 that only 47% of the respondents were aware about the rights of the consumers.
9. Table 9 shows that most of the respondents are willing to form consumer clubs to solve their problems.
10. From the table 10 it is clear that only 32 % of the respondents are willing to join in consumer redressal forums for grievance redressal.
11. Table 11 highlights that majority of the respondents are not aware about the consumer courts.
12. It is clear from the table 12 that majority of the respondents strongly believed that media will play a major role in creating awareness about consumer protection act.

Suggestions:

1. Consumers should carefully have a note on the expiry date during the purchase for their health and safety.
2. The suppliers who are exploiting the consumers by selling the products in excess to the MRP should be legally punished.
3. Weighing machines should be arranged by the suppliers to get the trust and confidence of the consumers.



4. Consumers should very much carefully check their products during the purchase to avoid duplicate products.
5. Media should actively participate in creating awareness about the consumer protection act in India.
6. Consumers, inspite of their busy schedule should participate in the consumer clubs to counter the exploitation of the marketers.
7. Right from the school level the citizens should educated about the consumer rights.

Conclusion:

The present day techniques by many firms to mislead the customers by reduction of weight, quality, price differences, worthless services, lack of after sales service by ignoring customer's complaints, requests, and lethargic high handedness of monopoly practices. It is our fundamental right to know about the safety, durability, worthiness of any product we buy. There are many instances we insist for bills, records, warrantee cards and

many times they ignore and it leads to black money transactions, malpractices and what not. Right from the beginning we have been cheated by wrong information, higher pricing, after sales service. The suppliers who are exploiting the consumers by selling the products should be legally punished.

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