

## An investigation of socio-economic conditions and level of consumer awareness and rights among women in Tiruppur district (T.N.)

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### ABSTRACT

Various measures to safeguard the consumer interest through legislation have been taken by government of India. Some of them are Essential Commodities Act 1955, Agricultural Products (Grading and Marketing) Act 1937, Drugs Act 1940, Drugs Control Act 1954, Standards Institutional Certification Marks Act 1952, Prevention of food Adulteration Act 1954, Standards weight and Measures Act 1956, Consumer Protection Act 1986, etc. But lack of awareness about the redressal machineries, their own rights and responsibilities as a consumer is some of the major problems among the Indian consumers. However, with specific reference to women consumers, they are ignorant and unaware of consumer protection and welfare acts and programmes. Therefore, there is a need for consumer education in rural areas to make them conscious of their own rights and responsibilities. Studies conducted on rural consumerism are very few and scanty. The findings of the present study facilitate to take up an immediate necessary step to educate the rural consumers on various aspects.

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**A** consumer is a person who buys any good or hires any service for valuable consideration (including deferred payment). The term does not include a person who obtains goods or services for resale or for any commercial purpose. However, persons who avail goods or services exclusively for the purpose of earning their livelihood by means of self-employment are considered as 'consumers'.

In the early times, consumer was considered as King of the market but in the contemporary society, consumers are no longer safe against the malpractices such as, substandard goods and unsatisfactory services. The consumer has every right to reject any product or services rendered by any manufacturer in the market and can mould them to produce goods of their choice (Seetharam and Sethi, 2002).

### Consumer rights :

Rights 1 to 6 are directly guaranteed under the Consumer Protection Act 1986 while Rights 7 and 8 are implied under the Constitution of India.

### Right to safety:

Right to be protected against marketing of goods or services which are hazardous to life and property.

### Right to information:

Right to be informed about the quality, quantity, potency, purity, standard and price of goods or services as the case may be, so as to protect the consumer against unfair trade practices.

### Right to choose:

Right to be assured, wherever possible, access to a variety of goods and services at competitive prices.

### Right to be heard:

Right to be heard and to be assured that consumer's interest will receive due consideration at appropriate fora.

### Right to redressal:

Right to seek redressal against Unfair Trade Practices or Restrictive Trade Practices or unscrupulous exploitation of consumers.

### Right to consumer education:

Right to acquire knowledge and skills needed for taking action to influence factors which affect consumer decisions.

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