

## Impact of training on awareness of consumers regarding curtains and upholstery

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### ABSTRACT

The present study was undertaken to create consumer awareness through appropriate educational package "Consumer guide for curtains and upholstery". To create awareness and improve knowledge level regarding curtains and upholstery and their purchase, workshop for consumers, manufacturers and shopkeepers was held. The knowledge was imparted to a total of 120 respondents i.e. 20 consumers from each city and 20 manufacturers / shopkeepers. Maximum number of consumers had low knowledge, whereas; almost equal number of manufacturers/ shopkeepers had low or medium or high knowledge level regarding curtains and upholstery. There was significant gain in knowledge of consumers regarding terms used on labels, symbols used on labels, method of judging weave quality, colour fastness, composition and size, assessing quality of curtains and upholstery, advantage of having cash memo, type of relief consumer court can give, whom to be contacted for complaint and how to file a complaint in consumer forum after the training of the respondents.

**KEY WORDS :** Awareness, Curtains and upholstery

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### INTRODUCTION

Besides making a wise selection, it is equally important for the consumers to know about the proper usage, care and maintenance of the curtains and upholstery. In today's competitive market, the consumers need to be aware of prevailing fraudulent practices, the right to information and redressal. Also consumers are not aware of the labels available on the curtains and upholstery material and also on ready made articles.

The consumers are further subjected to various selling tactics adopted by the manufacturer's and the sellers like free gift schemes, reduction sales, off season sales, installment credit sales, festive sales, lottery coupons and discount coupons, etc. large amount of money is spent on advertising and sale promotion techniques. Every attempt is made by the manufacturers, suppliers and traders to make their products look more appealing and attractive than the competitors. Sometimes they also resort to dishonest means to enhance their profit. At special occasions or festivals like Diwali every shop, from the large departmental stores to the neighbourhood dress shop, is advertising a reduction in prices. But consumers may not get as good a deal as promised.

In such situations and more in the absence of labels, information about care of fabrics, guarantee about colour, etc., is given by seller which may not be reliable. At such times, it helps a consumer to have knowledge about simple ways to judge the quality of weave, composition, colour fastness, etc, to test the genuineness of a particular fabric.

Consumers are also cheated when fabric are sold in yards instead of meters; fabric is stretched while measuring or measured with a rod which is cut or not having authorized seal of weights and measurements department and less of a fabric is given even though they have paid the full price (Pankaj, 1998).

With such a large varieties in hand, it becomes really difficult for a consumer to assess the quality of curtains and upholstery and to compare it with others. The manufacturers are cheating the consumers as there is no commonly recognizable standardization mark in the case of textiles as in case of food items, so a consumer can be easily cheated in the market.

The consumer therefore needs to be well informed about the different kinds of fabrics that are available and their care and maintenance. An educated and rational consumer can make a choice in such a way that the selected item gives maximum utility and satisfaction.

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