

Research Paper :

Consumer awareness about consumer forum/court

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ABSTRACT

The present study was undertaken to know the consumer awareness about consumer forum/court. A total of 400 respondents from different cities representing the multicultural groups including Faridabad, Panchkula, Panipat, Hisar and Karnal of Haryana state were selected purposively. Majority of respondents were aware about existence of consumer forum/court and none of the respondents in any city filed complaint in consumer court. Bothersation for procedure was the major reason for not approaching the consumer forum/court followed by amount of loss which was very less, whereas, fear of rivalry was the least reason for not approaching consumer forum.

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Key words : Consumer, Awareness, Consumer forum

A customer buys a textile article largely based on the colour, appearance and style. The variety of man made fibres and blends coming out of textile mills along with other types of materials confuses any consumer. Visual judgement is not a reliable guide for selection of household articles of textiles.

In the present day competitive and ever expanding market, the consumers are better able to prevent problems and when they do occur, have them satisfactorily resolved. An educated and rational consumer can make a choice in such a way that the selected item gives maximum utility and satisfaction. Consumer education enables the consumer to make the wise selection through comparative judging of quality and price and averts from the tendency for impulsive buying.

Indian consumer is largely ignorant. Due to their ignorance of consumer rights and responsibilities, they face a lot of problems at the time of buying regarding quality, quantity products range, price of goods, etc. manufacturers or sellers easily befool the consumers who lack knowledge about household textiles and their purchase.

Manufacturers and shopkeepers are cheating costumers in the name of fashion. They are selling low quality of curtains and upholstery. So consumers faces many problems like colour fading after washing or loss of luster after washing and coming out of the embroidery threads/mirrors. Most of the consumers do not know how to deal such types of problems. In case, the consumers

have any complaint about the purchased articles they used to go to the shopkeepers who generally dissatisfy them either by refusing to replace or accept back and return the money. Rarely, the consumers file complaint in consumer court or approach the manufacturer for the defective piece. It is only because they lack knowledge about consumer courts and the procedure to seek redressal, also they are not aware of textile legislation, different regulations and laws formulated to protect the consumers. Considering these facts, the study has been carried out to access the consumer awareness about consumer forum/court.

METHODOLOGY

The different cities representing the multicultural groups including Faridabad, Panchkula, Panipat, Hisar and Karnal were selected purposively. Efforts were made to take different colonies of different cities of Haryana so that the sample could be true representation of the population.

The respondents for the study were both men and women as both are usually involved equally in purchase decision. Hence, both need to be educated about curtains and upholstery to be able to make the wise purchase. A total of 400 respondents were selected belonging to upper, middle and higher income groups because they use and change curtains and upholstery more frequently. All the respondents selected were graduates as this is considered important criteria since education gives better

comprehension, better understanding and awareness. The sample was comprised of those who were constructing and setting up new homes or have set up their homes for the last one year.

An interview schedule was prepared to gather information from consumers regarding knowledge about existence of consumer forum /court.

For construction of interview schedule, information available from labels, literature from Manak Bhawan (BIS), books, journals and previous studies was utilized. Necessary additions and deletions were made after pre-test. The schedule was administered by personal interview method. The respondents were asked to answer each item as always, seldom, never and score assigned were 2, 1 and 0, respectively.

The collected data were analysed in the light of information collected from various sources. It was then compiled and tabulated to draw the meaningful inferences.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings obtained from the present investigation are presented below:

Consumers awareness about existence of consumer

forum/court:

The data presented in Table 1 clearly indicate that 72.5, 73.7, 68.7, 80 and 78.8 per cent of the respondents in Karnal, Panipat, Hisar, Faridabad and Panchkula, respectively were aware about existence of consumer forum/court. Out of total respondents, 74.8 per cent were aware about existence of consumer forum/court. This might be due to the fact that all of the respondents were well educated.

Filing of complaint in consumer court:

Table 2 clearly reveals that none of the respondents in any city filed complaint in consumer court. Similar results were also reported by Khippal (2007).

Reasons for not approaching consumer forum/court:

It is evident from Table 3 that botheration for procedure was the major reason for not approaching consumer forum/court in Karnal (rank 1) followed by the reason that amount of loss was less and some of the respondents also had fear of not getting justice (ranks 2 and 3, respectively). Some of the respondents also reported that the experience of other consumers was not encouraging and their family members also did not permit

Table 1 : Consumers awareness about existence of consumer forum/court

Awareness	Karnal (n=80)	Panipat (n=80)	Hisar (n=80)	Faridabad (n=80)	Panchkula (n=80)	Total (n=400)
Aware	58(72.5)	59(73.7)	55(68.7)	64(80.0)	63(78.8)	299(74.8)
Unaware	22(27.5)	21(26.3)	25(31.3)	16(20.0)	17(21.2)	101(25.2)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages n = Total number of respondents

Table 2: Filing of complaint in consumer court

Frequencies	Karnal (n=80)	Panipat (n=80)	Hisar (n=80)	Faridabad (n=80)	Panchkula (n=80)	Total (n=400)
Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-
No	80 (100.0)	80 (100.0)	80 (100.0)	80 (100.0)	80 (100.0)	400 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages n = Total number of respondents

Table 3 : Reasons for not approaching consumer forum/court

Reasons	Karnal (n=80)		Panipat (n=80)		Hisar (n=80)		Faridabad (n=80)		Panchkula (n=80)		Total (n=400)	
	WS	R	WS	R	WS	R	WS	R	WS	R	WS	R
Fear of not getting justice	49	3	80	3	65	3	65	3	65	3	324	3
Amount of loss was less	78	2	95	2	90	2	81	2	82	2	426	2
Wastage of money	10	6	20	5	20	5	8	5	16	5	74	5
Botheration for procedure	106	1	112	1	115	1	116	1	112	1	561	1
Family members did not permit	24	5	5	6	17	6	6	6	16	6	68	6
Experience of other are encouraging one	34	4	35	4	30	4	18	4	26	4	143	4
Fear of rivalry	5	7	-	-	-	-	3	7	3	7	11	7

W= Weighted score R= Rank n = Total number of respondent

(ranks 4 and 6, respectively). Very few respondents also considered it as wastage of money and cause of rivalry (ranks 5 and 7, respectively). Almost similar reasons for not approaching consumer forum/court were observed in Panipat, Hisar, Faridabad and Panchkula also.

It can be concluded from the data that botheration for procedure was the major reason for not approaching consumer forum/court followed by amount of loss which was very less, whereas, fear of rivalry was the least reason for not approaching consumer forum/court. This might be due to the fact that the consumers were employed and could not spare time. Similar results were reported by Pankaj (1998), Parashar (1999) and Dhankhar (1999).

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