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Topic of Research: A Study of Consumer Awareness among Rural and Slum Dweller women

Finding

In the present study awareness, attitude, practices and source of information of rural women consumers and slum dweller women consumers in light of various consumer protection aspects was studied. The study was conducted in two rural area, Holambikalan and Dichaokalan, and slums of Hauz Qazi and Shahzadabagh in New Delhi. Female respondents above the age of 18 years from every seventh house were interviewed using the interview schedule developed for this study.

The mean awareness percentage score about various aspects of consumer protection as well as the overall awareness of the rural respondents was higher than that of the slum dweller respondents. Mean percentage scores for both the rural (50.13) and slum dweller (47.35) respondents was highest for the aspect awareness about consumer protection council. 't' value was significant for overall awareness, awareness about preliminaries of COPRA (1986) and quality assurance marks. Rural respondents had more awareness than the slum respondents about items of consumer dispute redressal agency but this awareness was very poor. Both rural and slum dweller respondents had satisfactory awareness about the items of quality assurance marks but slum dweller respondents had more awareness about quality assurance marks on clothing and apparel.

Television was the most preferred source of information for both the rural and slum dweller respondents. Majority of rural respondents had positive attitude whereas majority of slum dweller respondents had neutral attitude towards various aspects of consumer protection. The overall mean percentage practice score as well mean percentage practice score of all the four aspects was higher in rural respondents than that of the slum dweller respondents. The mean percentage practice score for both the rural (58.79) and slum dweller (56.5) respondents was highest for the aspect practice of consumer protection council. None of the respondent had ever moved to consumer dispute redressal agency for any complaint. Practice of items of preliminaries of COPRA (1986) was seen more in rural respondents than the slum respondents. On the items of quality assurance marks rural respondents had more practice of items pertaining to pre-packaged food items and agricultural products, apparel and clothing, medicine and gold. On the items pertaining to safety labels slum respondents had more practice than the slum dweller respondents.

Study concluded that irrespective of efforts put by the government awareness about various aspects of consumer protection is quite low. Practice is even lower than the awareness. Both awareness and practice is comparatively better in rural respondents in some aspects whereas in few aspects respondents from both the groups had low awareness. But this awareness can be concluded as satisfactory. Even the practice is slightly better in rural respondents regarding few aspects but this is also not satisfactory. Attitude of rural respondents was found to be more favourable towards various aspect of consumer protection. Better implementation of policies needs to be planned especially in terms of creating awareness regarding various aspects of consumer protection.