

**Problems Faced By Consumer Protection Authorities****Rajni Devi**

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With a view to strengthen the existing consumer protection and consumer grievance redressal mechanism, focus is given strengthen the redressal mechanism building strong consumer information system consumer empowerment and review of laws relating to consumer protection. In the light of experience gained with the working of consumer adjudicatory bodies significant changes in the legal provisions substantive and procedural are being made with a view to make the consumer justice delivery system efficient effective and economical. “ District forums yet to go into full swing”(1) Shourie concluded that functioning of District Forum was not up to mark in the country and highlighted the various problems for non- availability of accommodation, staffing, equipment and provisions of funds etc.

The respondents stated that they face various types of problems. Some of them are due to the system itself or other are related to the complainants, opposite parties etc. Singh (1995)<sup>(2)</sup> in his article “Consumer protection legislation- critique”

Critically analysed the consumer protection legislation in the country and explained various Acts, their scope, procedure and provision and their enforcement. Study revealed that overlapping and complicated nature of these acts was a major problem in the settlement of consumer disputes regarding defect in goods and deficiency in services.

The major problems according to their responses has been analysed here.

1. The respondents stated that one major problem arises due to vacant post. This increase to work load of the other involved persons and it also causes delay in the decisions of the cases. Vacant post here means the post of member of consumer forum as well as their supporting staff.

Dhyani (1989)<sup>(3)</sup> in his study “Consumer movement Awareness level and attitude of redressal” found that discontentment in relation to products was very high in the customer. Only five out of ten dissatisfied customers filed complaints and three of them found relief. It was further highlighted that consumer awareness regarding Consumer protection laws were very low.

2. Another problem mentioned by them was that the scope of consumer protection act is very vast and being increased day by day. Due to this the number of complaints are increasing. Further parallel acts in relation to the consumer protection act, sometime create conflict and confusion in solving the cases. Various acts of different departments which have been made to provide support to the customer, become sometime a hurdle in the solution of the problems.

According to McMillan “ Dictionary 1985” consumerism is concerned with protecting consumers from all organization with which there is exchanged relationship it encompasses the set of activities government business, independent organizations and concerned consumers that are designed to protect the rights of consumers”<sup>(4)</sup>

3. Consumer awareness is still not of very high degree in our society. Authorities stated that due to this reason the complainants come unprepared in the forum, with high expectation.
4. Another area of problem was very interesting and eye opener was that the forums are being dominated by the lawyers. Lawyers attitude of professionalism has become unwanted part of this system. The culture of civil court can be seen in this quasi-judicial machinery.

Mandal Nath Shashi(2009)<sup>(5)</sup> in his article “protection of consumer rights through judicial and extra judicial mechanism in India” highlighted the important provision of consumer protection including the six rights of the consumer. It further described that India has the biggest consumer movement today due to the efforts of consumer organization and establishment of consumer courts.

5. Respondents stated that in spite of huge publicity of the Act the sellers or service provider don't take this seriously. Their indifferent attitude towards complaints and complainants becomes a problem for solving of the case. The corporate sector and big companies of the society, sometime misused the provisions of the Act, Appeal is some time used to harass the customer or just to delay the implementation of the decision.
6. The role of voluntary consumer organization was not up to the mark according to the respondent. Sahoo and Sheetal (2009)<sup>(6)</sup> ‘in their article, “consumer protection problem and prospects” related to consumer protection. They mentioned that we all are consumer in one form or another. But in the present socio-economic scenario we find that the consumer is a victim of many unfair and unethical tactics adopted in the market place.
7. A very important provision of quorum, sometimes become a problem for the authority. Yadav and Singh (1992)<sup>(7)</sup> in their article “consumer awareness made a study on awareness of consumer protection measures in Hissar. The study revealed that the awareness level was very low among both urban as well as rural area. Their survey highlighted that majority of the

consumer had never heard of any consumer protection legislation and surprisingly 90% of the urban area respondent were also not aware about their types of legislation”

8. Another problem mentioned by the president specifically that the member with non-judicial background do not understand the technicalities of the provisions of the act and it become sometimes very difficult to make them understand these technicalities some other problem were of the repetitive nature are not being mentioned here. “Consumer is the king” is a statement which sounds well, but in reality it remains mere utopia in India marketing scene where the consumer is powerless entity. The situation is so disgusting that the doctrine of consumer” sovereignty is more or less a myth and a dogma”.(8)

### **Conclusion :-**

With a view to strengthening the existing consumer protection and consumer grievance redressal mechanism focus is given for building strong consumer information system ,consumer empowerment and review of laws relating to consumer protection . But inspite of these person involved in the grievance settlement are facing various problem. The provision of ‘quorum’ sometimes becomes problem ,for the authority.

### **Reference**

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