

Paper: Consumer Affairs
(For Undergraduate courses in any discipline as an elective)

Duration: 3 hrs.

Max Marks: 100

Total Lectures: 65

Objective: This paper seeks to familiarize the students with their rights and responsibilities as a consumer, the social framework of consumer rights and legal framework of protecting consumer rights. It also provides an understanding of the procedure of redress of consumer complaints, and the role of different agencies in establishing product and service standards. The student should be able to comprehend the business firms' interface with consumers and the consumer related regulatory and business environment.

Unit 1: Conceptual Framework

13 Lectures

Consumer and Markets: Concept of Consumer, Nature of markets: Liberalization and Globalization of markets with special reference to Indian Consumer Markets, E-Commerce with reference to Indian Market, Concept of Price in Retail and Wholesale, Maximum Retail Price (MRP), Fair Price, GST, labeling and packaging along with relevant laws, Legal Metrology.

Experiencing and Voicing Dissatisfaction: Consumer buying process, Consumer Satisfaction/dissatisfaction-Grievances-complaint, Consumer Complaining Behaviour: Alternatives available to Dissatisfied Consumers; Complaint Handling Process: ISO 10000 suite

Unit 2: The Consumer Protection Law in India

13 Lectures

Objectives and Basic Concepts: Consumer rights and UN Guidelines on consumer protection, Consumer goods, defect in goods, spurious goods and services, service, deficiency in service, unfair trade practice, restrictive trade practice.

Organizational set-up under the Consumer Protection Act: Advisory Bodies: Consumer Protection Councils at the Central, State and District Levels; Adjudicatory Bodies: District Forums, State Commissions, National Commission: Their Composition, Powers, and Jurisdiction (Pecuniary and Territorial), Role of Supreme Court under the CPA with important case law.

Unit 3: Grievance Redressal Mechanism under the Indian Consumer Protection Law

13 Lectures

Who can file a complaint? Grounds of filing a complaint; Limitation period; Procedure for filing and hearing of a complaint; Disposal of cases, Relief/Remedy available; Temporary Injunction, Enforcement of order, Appeal, frivolous and vexatious complaints; Offences and penalties.

Leading Cases decided under Consumer Protection law by Supreme Court/National Commission: Medical Negligence; Banking; Insurance; Housing & Real Estate; Electricity and Telecom Services; Education; Defective Products; Unfair Trade Practices.

Unit 4: Role of Industry Regulators in Consumer Protection

13 lectures

- i. Banking: RBI and Banking Ombudsman
- ii. Insurance: IRDA and Insurance Ombudsman
- iii. Telecommunication: TRAI
- iv. Food Products: FSSAI
- v. Electricity Supply: Electricity Regulatory Commission
- vi. Real Estate Regulatory Authority

Unit 5: Contemporary Issues in Consumer Affairs

13 Lectures

Consumer Movement in India: Evolution of Consumer Movement in India, Formation of consumer organizations and their role in consumer protection, Misleading Advertisements and sustainable consumption, National Consumer Helpline, Comparative Product testing, Sustainable consumption and energy ratings.

Quality and Standardization: Voluntary and Mandatory standards; Role of BIS, Indian Standards Mark (ISI), Ag-mark, Hallmarking, Licensing and Surveillance; Role of International Standards: ISO an Overview

Note: Unit 2 and 3 refers to the Consumer Protection Act, 1986. Any change in law would be added appropriately after the new law is notified

Suggested Readings:

1. Khanna, Sri Ram, Savita Hanspal, Sheetal Kapoor, and H.K. Awasthi. (2007) *Consumer Affairs*, Universities Press.
2. Choudhary, Ram Naresh Prasad (2005). *Consumer Protection Law Provisions and Procedure*, Deep and Deep Publications Pvt Ltd.
3. G. Ganesan and M. Sumathy. (2012). *Globalisation and Consumerism: Issues and Challenges*, Regal Publications
4. Suresh Misra and Sapna Chadah (2012). *Consumer Protection in India: Issues and Concerns*, IIPA, New Delhi
5. Rajyalaxmi Rao (2012), *Consumer is King*, Universal Law Publishing Company
6. Girimaji, Pushpa (2002). *Consumer Right for Everyone* Penguin Books.
7. E-books :- www.consumereducation.in
8. Empowering Consumers e-book, www.consumeraffairs.nic.in
9. ebook, www.bis.org
10. *The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 and its later versions.*

Articles

1. Misra Suresh, (Aug 2017) "Is the Indian Consumer Protected? One India One People.
2. Raman Mittal, Sonkar Sumit and Parineet Kaur (2016) Regulating Unfair Trade Practices: An Analysis of the Past and Present Indian Legislative Models, Journal of Consumer Policy.
3. Chakravarthy, S. (2014). MRTP Act metamorphoses into Competition Act. CUTS Institute for Regulation and Competition position paper. Available online at www.cuts-international.org/doc01.doc.
4. Kapoor Sheetal (2013) "Banking and the Consumer" Akademos (ISSN 2231-0584)
5. Bhatt K. N., Misra Suresh and Chadah Sapna (2010). *Consumer, Consumerism and Consumer Protection*, Abhijeet Publications.
6. Kapoor Sheetal (2010) "Advertising-An Essential Part of Consumer's Life-Its Legal and Ethical Aspects", *Consumer Protection and Trade Practices Journal*, October 2010.
7. Verma, D.P.S. (2002). *Regulating Misleading Advertisements, Legal Provisions and Institutional Framework*. Vikalpa. Vol. 26. No. 2. pp. 51-57.