

Existing Knowledge on Consumer Education at Household Level in Lucknow District

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Abstract: Consumer education is the process by which people learn the workings of the-marketplace so that they can improve their ability to act as purchasers or consumers of those products and services they deem most likely to enhance their well being. In order to ensure that the food sectors match up to the best global standards, the Government of India enacted an integrated food law called the Food Safety and Standards Act. The study was conducted in Lucknow of Uttar Pradesh to know the existing knowledge about consumer rights, consumer protection, consumer laws, food safety & standard acts and knowledge about food marks & symbols. Urban area of Lucknow district was selected with a sample of 300 women respondents. The data were collected with the help of pre-structured questionnaire personally by the researcher. It was found that more than 50.00% were having knowledge about food marks and symbols. Ten to six per cent respondents having knowledge about consumer rights, consumer laws and food safety and standard acts. Less than 5.00% know about consumer protection covers a wide range of topics.

Keywords: Consumer education, knowledge, food safety.

1. Introduction

Consumer education is the process by which people learn the workings of the-marketplace so that they can improve their ability to act as purchasers or consumers of those products and services they deem most likely to enhance their well being. Consumer education is therefore treated as being rather different than consumer information -- something with which it is often confused. Consumer education is considered to be a learning process which people go through which, of course, cannot be readily observed or heard. Consumer information, on the other hand, is clearly something which can be observed or heard.

In order to ensure that the food sectors match up to the best global standards, the Government of India enacted an integrated food law called the Food Safety and Standards Act in August 2006 and in addition a Food Safety Authority is being established shortly. This autonomous authority will set standards and license the manufacture of food products which are healthy and safe.

The legal enforcement is only one measure for the prevention of food adulteration and it will not have any appreciable impact unless and until there is adequate supply of food at a reasonable price which the average consumer can afford, awareness of the small traders about the food standards which they are expected to maintain, awareness of the common consumer regarding the dangers of adulterations and how to take advantage of the legal machinery to force the traders to get the proper food and lastly, a sense of honesty among the food traders, big and small, in the maintenance of the safety and quality of food.

2. Methodology

On the basis of pilot study, three hundred families were selected. This study was conducted for six months in urban of Lucknow district of Uttar Pradesh state. Urban areas of

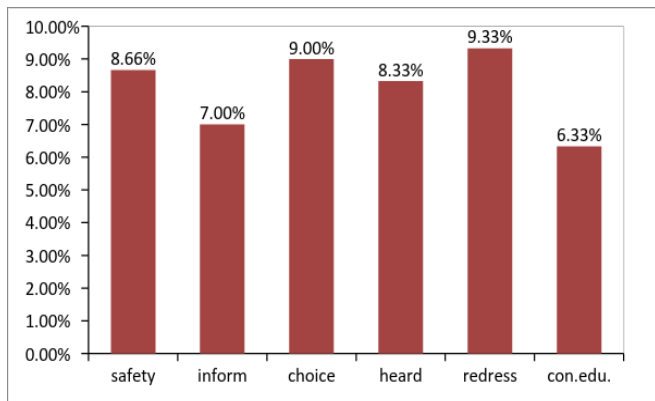
urban and Lucknow district were selected randomly and purposively on the basis of availability of sample from household. This study was conducted for three months to assess the consumer awareness and existing knowledge about consumer rights, consumer protection, consumer laws, food safety & standard acts and food marks & symbols. The pre-designed and pre tested questionnaire used for collection the data.

3. Result

In this study, regarding the knowledge on consumer education of female respondents in urban area of Lucknow district, majority of respondents were dependent on their family members for purchasing of food items. So, that more than 75.00% of respondents were not even heard about consumer education, consumer rights, food standards and acts and food marks.

Table 1: Percentage Distribution Regarding Consumer Rights N=300

S.No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Right to safety	26	8.66%
2	Right to information	21	7.00%
3	Right to choice	27	9.00%
4	Right to heard	25	8.33%
5	Right to redress	28	9.33%
6	Right to consumer education	19	6.33%



It is evident from **Table-1** that 9.33% respondents (28) were aware about 'right to redress'. Nine per cent respondents (27) were aware about 'right to choice', where as 8.66% (26) were know about right to safety', 8.33% (25) were know about right to heard' and 7.00% (21) aware were about 'right to heard'. Only 6.33% per cent of respondents (19) were aware about 'right to consumer education' from 300 respondents.

Table 2: Frequency Distribution of Consumer Protection Covers a Wide Range of Topics, N=300

S. No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Product liability	9	3.00%
2	Privacy rights	7	2.33%
3	Unfair business practices	8	2.66%
4	Fraud misrepresentation	9	3.00%

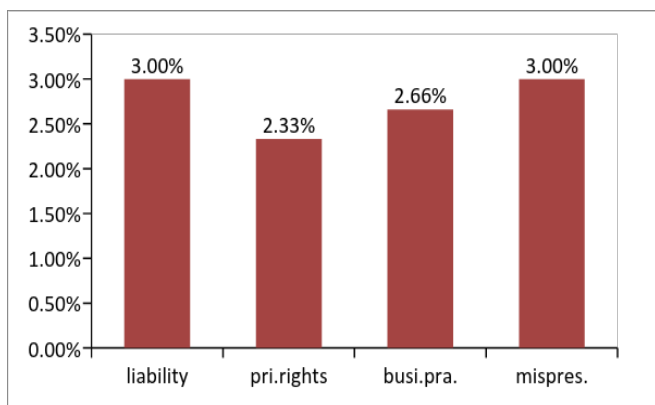


Table 2: shows that respondents (9.00) i.e. 3.00% were aware about 'product liability', and 'fraud misrepresentation'. Eight respondents (2.66%) were aware about unfair business practices and 7 respondents i.e. 2.33% were aware about privacy rights from 300 respondents.

Table 3: Existing Knowledge about Consumer Laws Deals with Wide Range of Issues, N=300

S. No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Credit repair	0	0.00%
2	Debt repair	0	0.00%
3	Product safety	26	8.66%
4	Service	20	6.66%
5	Sales contract	0	0.00%
6	Bill collector regulation	0	0.00%
7	Pricing	23	7.66%
8	Utility turnoffs	0	0.00%
9	Consolidation	0	0.00%
10	Personal loans that may lead to bankruptcy	0	0

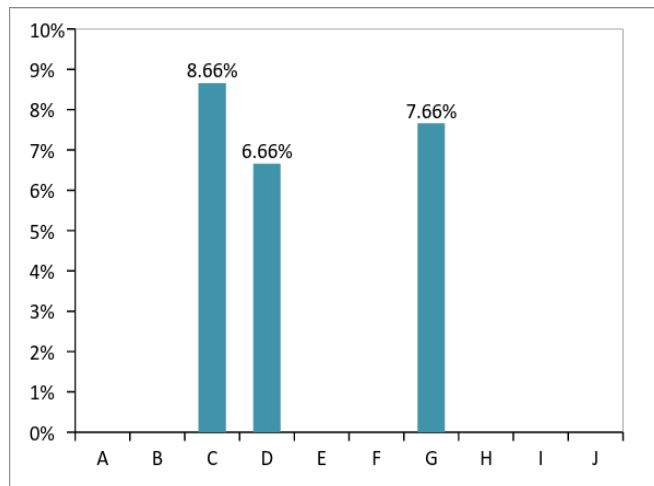


Table 3: represents the existing knowledge about consumer laws deals with wide range of issues. Table-3 shows that 26.00 respondents (8.66%) were familiar with 'product safety', followed by 'pricing' (23.00) i.e. 7.66%. and only 20 respondents (6.66%) were familiar with 'service'. Almost all the respondents were not even heard about 'credit repair', 'debt repair', 'sales contract', 'bill collector regulation', 'consolidation' and 'personal loans that may lead to bankruptcy'.

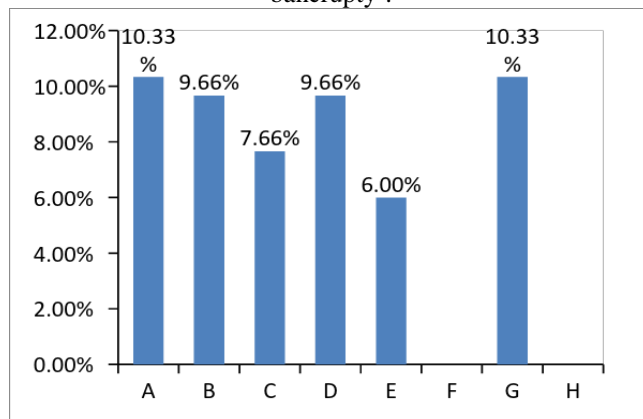


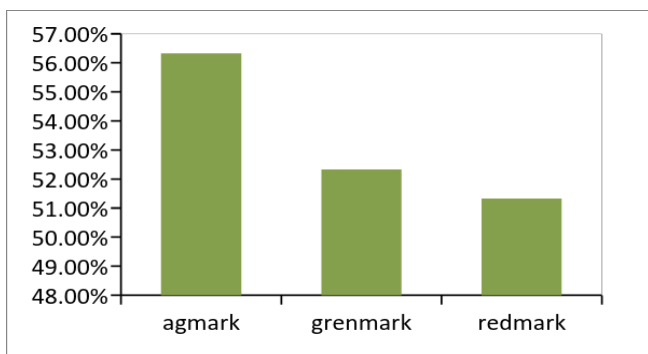
Table 4: Percentage Distribution of Knowledge on Food Safety and Standard Acts N=300

S. No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Prevention of food adulteration act	31	10.33%
2	Fruits products order	29	9.66%
3	Meat food products order	23	7.66%
4	Vegetable oil products (control) order	29	9.66%
5	Edible oils packaging (regulation) order	18	6.00%
6	Solvent extracted oil, de oiled meal & edible	0	0.00%
7	Milk and milk products order	31	10.33%
8	Essential commodities acts, relating to food	0	0.00%

Table-4 shows that respondents (31) i.e. 10.33% were know about 'prevention of food adulteration act' and 'milk & milk products order' followed by 'fruit products order, and 'vegetable oil products (control) order' (9.66%). Twenty three respondent i.e. 7.66% were aware about 'meat food products order'. Whereas only six per cent respondents were aware about edible oils packaging (regulation) order and no one know about 'solvent extracted oil, de oiled meal & edible' and 'essential commodities acts, relating to food'.

Table 5: Percentage Distribution of Food Marks and Symbols, N=300

S.No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	AGMARK	169	56.33%
2	Green mark	157	52.33%
3	Red mark	154	51.33%



Data in **Table-5** indicates that 56.33% respondents (169.00) were known about AGMARK. Respondents (157) i.e. 52.33% were know about green mark whereas 51.33% respondents (154) were know about red mark.

4. Conclusion

It can be concluded that little more than 50.00% respondents were aware about marks and symbols used on the packed food items but regarding other parameters of consumer education, less than 15.00% were only aware about it.

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