
Class –X Economics

Consumer Rights

Answer1: Rules and regulations are required in the marketplace to protect consumers. Sellers often abdicate responsibility for a low-quality product, cheat in weighing out goods, add extra charges over the retail price, and sell adulterated/ defective goods. Hence, rules and regulations are needed to protect the scattered buyers from powerful and fewer producers who monopolise markets. For example, a grocery shop owner might sell expired products, and then blame the customer for not checking the date of expiry before buying the items.

Answer2: The factors that gave birth to the consumer movement in India are manifold. It started as a "social force" with the need to protect and promote consumer interests against unfair and unethical trade practices. Extreme food shortages, hoarding, black marketing and adulteration of food led to the consumer movement becoming an organised arena in the 1960s. Till the 1970s, consumer organisations were mostly busy writing articles and holding exhibitions. More recently, there has been an upsurge in the number of consumer groups who have shown concern towards ration shop malpractices and overcrowding of public transport vehicles. In 1986, the Indian government enacted the Consumer Protection Act, also known as COPRA. This was a major step in the consumer movement in India.

Answer3: Consumer consciousness is being aware of your right as a consumer while buying any goods or services. Example:

- It is common to see consumers bargaining with sellers for additional discounts below the MRP.
- Because of conscious consumers, most of the sweet shops do not include the weight of the container when they weigh sweets.

Answer4: Factors which cause exploitation of consumers are:

- Lack of awareness of consumer rights among buyers.
- Improper and inadequate monitoring of rules and regulations.
- Individual purchase quantity is quite small.
- Consumers are scattered over large areas.

Answer5: The rationale behind the enactment of COPRA 1986 was to set up a separate department of consumer affairs in Central and State governments and it has enabled us as consumers to have the right to represent in a consumer court.

Answer6: Some of my duties as a consumer if I visit a shopping complex include checking expiry dates of the products I wish to purchase, paying only the maximum retail price printed on the goods, preventing shopkeepers from duping me with defective products, and registering a complaint with a consumer forum or court in case a seller refuses to take responsibility for an adulterated or flawed product.

Answer7: We should look for Agmark symbol before buying the food items because this mark is certified by the government and assures the quality of the product.

Answer8: Legal measures taken by the government to empower consumers in India are plenty. First and foremost being the COPRA in 1986. Then, in October 2005, the Right to Information Act was passed, ensuring citizens all information about the functioning of

government departments. Also, under COPRA, a consumer can appeal in state and national courts, even if his case has been dismissed at the district level. Thus, consumers even have the right to represent themselves in consumer courts now.

Answer9: Some of the rights of consumers are as follows:

- Right to choice — Any consumer who receives a service in whatever capacity, regardless of age, gender and nature of service, has the right to choose whether to continue to receive that service. Under this right, a consumer may also choose any one of the various brands of a product (say, a refrigerator) available in the market.
- Right to redressal — Consumers have the right to seek redressal against unfair trade practices and exploitation.
- Right to represent — The act has enabled us as consumers to have the right to represent in the consumer courts.

Answer10: Consumers can express their solidarity by forming consumer groups that write articles or hold exhibitions against traders' exploitation. These groups guide individuals on how to approach a consumer court, and they even fight cases for consumers. Such groups receive financial aid from the government to create public awareness. Participation of one and all will further strengthen consumer solidarity.

Answer11: The consumer movement in India has evolved vastly since it began. There has been a significant change in consumer awareness in the country. Till the enactment of COPRA in 1986, the consumer movement did not bear much force, but ever since its inception, the movement has been empowered substantially. The setting up of consumer courts and consumer groups has been a progressive move. However, in contemporary India, the consumer redressal process is quite complicated, expensive and time-consuming. Filing cases, attending court proceedings, hiring lawyers, and other procedures make it cumbersome. In India, there are over 700 consumer groups of which, unfortunately, only about 20-25 are well-organised and functioning smoothly.

Answer12:

(i)	Availing details of ingredients of a product	(e)	Right to information
(ii)	Agmark	(c)	Certification of edible oil and cereals
(iii)	Accident due to faulty engine in a scooter	(a)	Right to safety
(iv)	District Consumer Court	(b)	Dealing with consumer cases
(v)	Consumers International	(f)	Global level institution of consumer welfare organisations
(vi)	Bureau of Indian Standards	(d)	Agency that develops standards for goods and services

Answer13:

- (i)** False
 - (ii)** True
 - (iii)** True
 - (iv)** True
 - (v)** True
 - (vi)** False
 - (vii)** True
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