

32. CONSUMER PROBLEMS

A person who purchase or consume any kind of good or services available in the market is called the consumer. It becomes even more difficult to choose items due to available in different variety, prices and quality in the market. The goods vary in the qualities due to the greed of making more money by the producers and increasing competition. Hence, Adulteration, increasing inflation, increasing trend of advertising, bad presentation, mal practices of measurements, misbranding are increasing day by day, There is a lot of emphasis on promotions and advertisements instead of qualities of goods, so that manufacturer may attract consumers interest in the item and earn more profit. Foods are also adulterated which affects the health of the people. Some people are becoming patients of severe diseases such as dropsy paralysis, blindness, etc. Consumers

unknowingly attracted due to false advertisements and free gifts, and sometimes purchase substandard goods. Therefore, the goal of the producers is fulfilled, but the consumer can not get satisfaction by using the goods. This is the reason that consumers are facing so many problems. These are as follows:

Problems of the consumer :

1. **Illiteracy** : Most people in India are illiterate, there is still literacy of 50 to 60% in men, but the rate of literacy in women is very low. Cheating & misleading illiterate people is very easy for the seller. Illiterate people can not read the labels on the object and seller take the advantage of this and sells more low/substandard goods. Sometimes the seller also gives the goods to the illiterate consumers. He can not read it and buys the item.

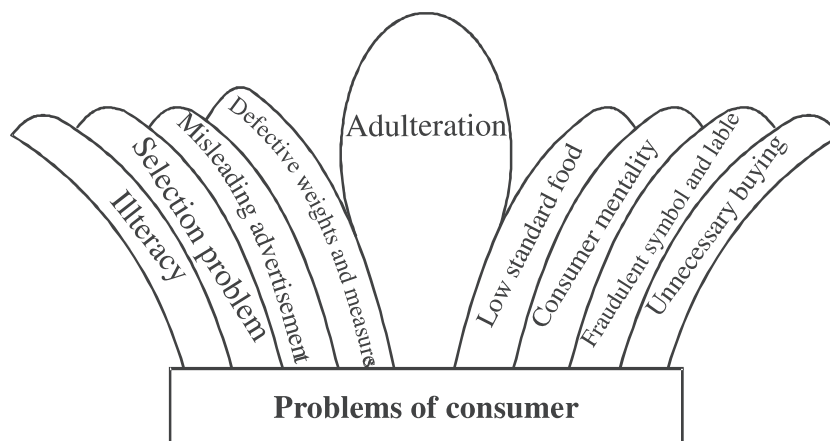


Fig. 32.1 : Problems of consumer

2. **Selection problem :** Today, variety of the same types of item available in the market causes very difficult to make the choice. The consumer gets confused by considering the different brands of the same item. The one item available in the market in different brands with different price for example shampoo is available in the market in many brands, which create problem to consumer for selection.

3. **Misleading advertising :** Advertising is the art of selling objects that affect the sentiments of consumers. Misleading advertisements give wrong information to the consumers. Consumer finds himself surrounded by misleading position due to the numerous fake advertisements of commodities for common consumption. The expenditure of advertisement recover by consumers and its value is added to the value of the item.

Advertisements are presented through many mediums such as Video, Cinemas, Posters, Fair-Exhibitions, mobile vehicles, TVs etc. in a very attractive manner to the consumer, so that consumers not seeing the merits or demerits of goods and buy goods by being influenced by advertisement. Especially young people, children, educated people and women are influenced by such advertisements and buy low value items.

4. **Defective weight and measurement :** Before independence, there was different systems of weight and measurement in different states of India which was something weighed in kilos, grams while somewhere used ratti, tolaa and masa. Similarly, in some places, mann, ser, chataank ets are used. In this situation, consumer get confused and the traders used to take advantage of the situation. They did not weigh properly and cheated the consumers. It was felt that the common system of measurement should be used throughout the country. Therefore, the Central Government passed the Standard of Weight Act on March 28, 1939, but it was not implemented, due to the commencement of the Second World War. It was implemented for the first time on 8th July,

1942, with effect. Even after using the weight and measurement system from all over the country, the business class has found such methods to cheat the consumer in unbelievable way. Some vendors and shopkeeper cheats the consumer with the skill of their hand. while weighing weight, weighing 1 or 2gm less or measure less while cutting clothes, put magnet under weighing balance etc. so that consumer get cheated in different ways. Even after giving full value to it, the goods with correct weight is not available.

5. **Adulteration :** It is a routine matter of daily adulteration in food items. It is becoming a big problem, which is also very harmful for health, such as brick powder in red chillies, pebbles and mud in pulses, dried papaya seeds in black pepper, chalk powder in flour. In the same way mixing water in the milk, removing the cream and selling it. The adulteration of linseed and yellow dhatura oil in mustard oil, selling bark of other trees in the name of cinnamon. Similarly, kerosene and lead are mixed in petrol, which result in permanent defects in machines of vehicles.

6. **Low standard items :** Many items of the same use are available in the market; some of these things are of high quality, while some items are of low. It is difficult to identify which item is of high quality or which is of low quality for the general consumer. The grading system of goods has been adopted by the Indian government in which the goods are given the best, ordinary and lower grades according to their quality but most items are not classed. Quality of most items are known by common consumer only after the use of the many items available in the market, and dissatisfaction occurs if does not fulfill the need of consumer.

7. **Consumer mentality :** Most consumers believe that expensive items are better and in this delusion they buy expensive items, even if this item is not more beneficial and useful for them. There is also a saying by our elders that cheap often repeatedly cry, but this is not always true, many times good quality things are also available at cheap prices.

8. Use of fraudulent symbols and label : Many sellers or producers mislead by using fake symbols and labels. They make a small change in the names of reputable companies and use it on the packet. There are duplicate items in the packets, thus uneducated and unsophisticated consumer trapped easily by vendors.

9. Unnecessary buying : Nowadays, the problem of unnecessary purchasing is also increasing. Consumers go for the purchase of the item even if they need those items or not. All this is due to the exhibition of all items in the mall. It is a new system of marketing and productivity of the vendor in which the consumer gets trapped and purchases unnecessary items because the items attract the consumer.

10. Dependent on market conditions : The biggest and major problem of the consumer is that it has to buy the available items from the local market, whether the item is of poor quality or the high quality. This problem is mostly with the rural consumer, because a lot of time, power and money are spent in buying goods by going away from the city. Going out to the city is costly for them, so whatever item is available in the nearby market, purchase to satisfy their need.

In this way, there are many problems that the consumer use to face in the present day. The present requirement is that they should try united and strongly fight for these problems. Although the government is also trying in this direction, but it will not be redressed until the consumer himself becomes aware.

Important points :

1. The consumer is the person who purchases and uses the items.
2. All items are easily available to the consumer in the market.
3. The consumer has to face many problems while purchasing an item from the market.

Questions :

1. Choose the correct answers for the following questions:

- (i) A person who consumes goods is called:
(a) Producer (b) Seller
(c) Consumer (d) All of the above
 - (ii) The adulterant in black pepper is :
(a) Papaya seed (b) Coal
(c) Pebbles (d) All of the above
 - (iii) The rod of the weighing balance should be :
(a) Flat (b) Round
(c) Slanting (d) Long
 - (iv) The value of the item become high when the item is bought from :
(a) Cooperative stores (b) Ration shop
(c) Unknown shop (d) Reputable shop
2. Fill in the blanks :
(i) The manufacturers sell products of the famous brand and sell them at the cheapest prices in the market.
(ii) If there are many brands of the same object, there is a problem in the of the object.
(iii) The consumer is king of himself, he should be happy to buy it.
 3. Describe briefly:
(a) Misleading advertising
(b) Problems in selection of goods
(c) Adulteration
(d) Fraud marks and label
 4. Define consumer.
 5. What are the problems faced by consumer while selecting the goods?
 6. What should the consumer do to avoid such consumer problems?
 7. How do false and misleading advertisement cheat the consumer?
 8. Why lack of education is a problem of consumer ? Explain.

Answer :

1. (i) c (ii) a (iii) a (iv) d
2. (i) fraud (ii) selection (iii) king