

**A STUDY OF WOMEN'S CONSUMER
RIGHTS & AWARENESS REGARDING
HOUSEHOLD GOODS AND SERVICES**

A major research project

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Submitted by

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SUMMARY CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDETION

5.1 Introduction:

Buyer or consumer behavior is a comparatively recent area of study. It tries to understand and predict human action in consumer's role as a buyer. Runyon (1980) defines consumer behavior as that behavior exhibited by people in planning purchasing and using economic goods and services. The term buyer behavior is also used frequently to describe this process. Runyon (1980) draws a slight distinction between buying behavior and consumer behavior. According to him a buying behavior focuses on the behavior of the particular individual who purchases the product. This person may or may not be involved in either planning the purchase or use of the product. This person is the one who is requested to purchase the product that will be consumed by another family member. Consumer behavior on the other hand includes those who may be consuming units, even though they may not be actively involved in buying activity. It encompasses the entire decision making buying and consuming process regardless of who is involved.

Sherlekar (1986) defines buyer behavior as all psychological, social and physical behavior of potential customers as they become aware, to evaluate, purchase, consume and tell other about the product. It included all the three components, i.e. communication, purchasing and consumption behavior.

The term buyer behavior and consumer behavior are frequently used inter changeably. They cover the entire decision-making, buying and consuming process regardless of how many individuals are involved.

Consumerism is as old as man, who did not know then how to produce, but was endowed with plenty by Mother Nature to discover, use and consume. The ancient consumer moved from place to place to hunt for food. He ate whatever he could find such as fruits, nuts, berries, sweet roots and the flesh of animals. He made use of wood and dry leaves from forests to make fire to keep himself warm and also to tenderize the meat he hunted.

It was purely by accident that man discovered that food can be grown by sowing seeds. This marked the beginning of man as a producer. Many such discoveries followed as he began to satisfy more of his needs with the resources around him. However he needed to stay at one place

to look after his products. Gradually he realized that he could not manage production on his own. So, he began to socialize and take the help of others around him. This led to group living, which resulted in sharing of goods with others, and exchange of services. The importance of consumer education is highlighted when the consumers are seen as part of the economy.

Consumer plays a vital role in functioning of the economy. The circular flow of money from consumers and back to consumers is base of economy. It is the consumer who provides for the production of goods in form of land, capital and human resources.

Consumer education also helps in making wise choices. In developing countries it becomes all the more important because there is variety of products and there is little control over standards. Consumers get cheated in several ways.

Lack of awareness of consumer regarding their rights is another reason why they should be armed with proper education about their rights. They need to be alert and cautious, well informed against the various misleading tactics of the market.

A marketer, who wants to be successful, should know that “the customer is the king”. He can justify his existence only when he is able to understand consumers wants and satisfy them. Consumer behavior is a complex system where there is an interaction of various social, economic and psychological factors. It is a subject of human behavior, by which individuals interact with their environment. Every attitude, action and motivation that people exhibit is a part of human behavior. The term ‘consumer behavior’ can be defined as the behavior that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, and evaluating and disposing of products, services and ideas which they expect to satisfy their needs. Modern marketing is consumer oriented. That is producers, sellers, and providers of services give importance to the consumer. In other words, every one of us is a consumer in one way or the other. Consumers differ tremendously in income, education level, taste and age. Understanding the consumer managers of the target-market is the essential task of marketing managers. The term ‘consumer’ is often used to describe two different kinds of consuming entities:

1. The personal consumer is the individual who buys goods and services for his own use, for example, lipstick, and is referred to as users or ultimate consumers.

2. Organizational consumer encompasses private business, government agencies (local, state, national etc.) all of which must buy products, equipments and services in order to run these organizations whether for profit or otherwise.

And use consumption is perhaps the most pervasive of all types of consumer behavior, since it involves every withdrawal, or every age and every background in the role either or user or both.

5.2 Research aim of the study:

All reasons and importance are kept in mind and present study has been planned with following objectives.

- 1) To study extent of women's consumer awareness among selected respondents.
- 2) To compare study of consumer awareness and buying practice among female of selected area.
- 3) To study effect of personal factors on buying practices and consumer awareness among selected respondents.
- 4) To study socio economic factors influencing buying practices and consumer awareness among selected respondents.

5.3 Limitations of the study:

- 1) The study was limited only for three zone of Gujarat state such as Western, North and Middle
- 2) The size of sample was 600 female only.
- 3) This study was limited for sample chosen according to purposive random sampling technique which is based on variables of the study. This study was limited on the opinion between 25 to 55 females age group.
- 4) This study was also limited up to having the monthly family income up to 5000 rupees to 45000 rupees.

- 5) This study was limited up to only 99 female of western zone, 82 female of north zone and 56 female of middle zone who were intervening about awareness regarding consumerism.

5.4 HYPOTHESES OF STUDY:

H₀1: *There will be no significant influence between buying behaviors of household goods and occupation and type of family of the respondents.*

H₀2: *There will be no significant association between buying behavior of house hold goods and age, education, monthly family income and place of residence of the respondents*

H₀3: *There will be no significant association between occupation and (Consumer awareness Protection act, redressal mechanism, Advertisement gimmicks and certification Marks) on house hold goods among the Respondents.*

H₀4: *There will be no significant association between type of family and (Consumer awareness Protection act, redressal mechanism, Advertisement gimmicks and certification Marks) on house hold goods among the Respondents.*

H₀5 : *There will be no significant influence of place of residence on (Consumer awareness, consumer Protection act, redressal mechanism, Advertisement gimmicks and certification Marks) on buying of house hold goods among the respondents.*

H₀6: *There will be no significant relationship between age and (Consumer awareness Protection act, redressal mechanism, Advertisement gimmicks and certification Marks) on house hold goods among the Respondents.*

H₀7: *There will be no significant influence of education on Consumer awareness (consumer Protection act, redressal mechanism, Advertisement gimmicks and certification Marks) regarding purchase of house hold goods among the Respondents.*

H₀8: There will be no significant effect of monthly family income and Consumer awareness (consumer Protection act, redressal mechanism, Advertisement gimmicks and certification Marks) regarding purchase of house hold goods among

H₀9: There will be no significant effect of intervention programme on Consumer awareness (regarding consumer Protection act, redressal mechanism, Advertisement gimmicks and certification Marks) on purchase of house hold goods among the Respondents..

5.5 MEHODOLOGY

This Current study was based on the aim of “A study of Women’s rights and awareness regarding household goods and services” The study was focused on woman consumer buying practices awareness regarding house hold goods because women is an important unit for family and satisfying wants of family members. Every woman are a home maker and she play an important role in a buying of house hold goods for satisfying desire of every members who lived in a home. She is a consumer for buying day to day things such as groceries, clothes, house hold equipments, cosmetics, medicines and anything. She is an important decision maker for purchasing house hold goods and planning for it. So the investigator chose a female oriented study and tried to make out how much awarded female regarding consumerism and how much female need intervention to enhance their awareness regarding consumerism.

Research design:

The research design used for present study has to pronged approach. A descriptive survey with pre-tested, validated interview schedule was used to acquire the information needed for knowing the awareness among the female regarding buying practices and awareness regarding consumerism. After the survey an intervention programme was designed to enhance the level of awareness among the need base respondents. Thus the most suitable design for the present study was prepared which was a combination of descriptive cum experimental method sandwiched with again the descriptive survey method for post test.

Variables of the study: There were two sets of variables selected for present research. They are as follow

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Independent variable:

1. Demographic factor:

Western, North and middle zone respondents of Gujarat state.

2. Personal variables:

Age, Education & Working status of the respondents

3. Socio economic variables:

Income and type of the family

Dependent variables:

Women's consumer rights and awareness:

DATA COLLECTION:

Searches for the Sample

- **Locale of the study:**

The sample was selected from the women of Western zone (Gandhidham city and Anjar town), North zone (mehsana city and Chansma town) and Middle zone (Ahmedabad city and Sanand town) of Gujarat state.

- The selection criteria decided is as follow:

1. Women who are in the age group of 25 years to 55 years.

2. Women whose monthly family income was in the range of ₹ 5,, 000/- to ₹ 45,000/- and above.

3. Women who lived in joint and nuclear family.

4. Women who were educated up to Primary school, graduate and post graduate of any discipline.

5. Working or non working women were included for the sample.

Gandhidham is a big city of western zone of Gujarat state. Cosmopolite population live and majority was business and service class group. Industrial development areas are located around the city. Anjar is a small town, 15 Km away from the Gandhidham city. Traditional business of tie and dye is a major occupation of inhabitant people. Due to rapid industrialization, Lots of people migrated in the city. Mehsana city is popular for trading business for agricultural products. Nowadays there is a rapid industrial development in the city. Chansma is a small town,35 kms away from Mehsana city, located in northzone of the Gujarat state. Mixed occupational groups were found in this particular town. Ahmedabad is going to be a mega city of the state and all modern facilities are developing here. Different industries are located in and around it. The number of purchase outlets and varieties of fairs are available in the market of Ahmedabad. But market facilities in Mehsana have not developed as much as Ahmedabad, so the area was selected for investigation for assessing difference in buying practices and consumer awareness among the respondents. Sanand is a small town,35 kms away from Ahmedabad city, located in middlezone of the Gujarat state. Mixed occupational groups were found in this particular town.

- **Sampling procedure:**

The objective of the study was used step by step among female of western, northern and middle zone of Gujarat state by using purposive random sampling technique.

Research tool:

According to the objective of the study, the interview schedule was designed which was divided into different sections covering in the following are

A. Background Information of the Respondents

This section had a set of questions to elicit the real backgrounds of respondents which include their place of residence, occupation, age, education, type of family and monthly family income.

B. Information Regarding Buying Process

This section deals with several questions regarding what to buy, where to buy, how to buy, why to buy and with whom to buy.

C. Information related buying behavior

This section deals with sets of questions related to the buying behavior awareness. 31 statements which includes pre buying, during buying and post buying behavioral statements. Three point scale in which always, sometimes and never were used for this questionnaire section.

D. General Consumer Awareness

This section of interview schedule had total 55 statements which include a list of twenty terminologies of general awareness, twenty-eight related to rights and responsibilities, seven related to certification marks should know as a consumer in day to day life. The respondents had to indicate their answers in term of whether the statement is always, sometimes, never.

E. Awareness Regarding Consumer Protection Act

In this section of interview schedule 10 questions were made with three optional answers to each question. Respondents were had to read and give suitable answers with tick mark.

F. Awareness Regarding Redressal Mechanism

This section contain a set of ten questions regarding problems faced by consumers and a set of six statement regarding awareness of redressal mechanism.

To know whether they were aware of problems faced while purchasing and whether they know about redressal mechanism, they were asked to answer their questions in terms of YES or NO.

G. Awareness Regarding Advertisement Gimmick

This section of interview schedule to contain a set of six statements regarding advertisement gimmick; two alternatives were given under each conditions. The respondents were asked to choose an alternative which they felt appropriate.

H. Awareness Regarding Certification Marks

This section was the last section in the schedule which contained set of nine questions in form of symbols which the respondents had to recognize and where ask to write their name and its use.

- I. Method of data collection:** Given the extensive nature of interview, it was considered essential to send a preliminary notification to interviewees, requesting their participation in the survey through interview schedule.

Data analysis:

I. Coding and Tabulation

All the data was coded to maintain confidentiality and facilitate data entry, documentation and discussion of findings. Code numbers were given to each questnnaire. The information from each interview schedule was transferred on excel sheet of computer.

The data was transferred from excel sheet into tabular form to give a clear picture of findings.

II. Classification

The interview schedule was framed using close-ended questions and scale depending on nature of questions. Ordinal scale was used for mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive categories. Interval scaling was used to measure the extent to which various aspects of the study were applicable or important.

A two point ordinal scale was used to score the responses in terms of **YES** and **NO** regarding redressal mechanism. A three point ordinal scale was used in which the responses regarding basic consumer awareness were scored and counted in terms of

True, False and Don't know. Similar pattern for scoring the awareness regarding buying behavior was scored in terms of **Always, Sometimes** and **Never.**

Statistical analysis:

The data was computerized and SPSS was used for analysis. Paired "t-test", and one way ANOVA were carried out for assessing the relationship of different variables with consumer awareness buying practices among the respondents.

Descriptive statistics:

The data was presented in frequencies; percentages and Means Net Gain score.

Relational statistics

Statistical analysis was carried out to test the relationship between selected variables and hypothesis postulated for the study.

- Paired t-test was computed to find out comparison of the level of awareness regarding consumerism between pre test and post test.
- Paired t-test was also carried out for establishing relationship between places of residence, occupation of the respondents and type of family with buying practices and general consumerism and its different areas such as knowledge regarding consumer protection acts, redressed mechanism, advertisement gimmicks and certification marks on consumer products.
- Analysis of variance one way ANOVA was computed to determine statistical relationship between pre-decided, dependent and independent variables such as age, education and monthly family income of the respondents and level of knowledge of buying practices and general consumerism with different areas.

5.6 Major findings:

- **Background information of the respondents:**

Background information covers details of the selected respondents such as place of residence, occupation, type of family, age, education and monthly family income of the

respondents. The sample was selected from western zone, north zone and middle zone of Gujarat state in which 200 female were selected from each zone purposively and randomly for the study.

Collected data for place of residence was informed that 33.33 percent respondents were chosen from each zone.

Data of Occupation revealed that 46 percent respondents were from service and 54 percent were homemaker's from all selected zones.

Type of family is a social factor which influenced buying behavior, and general practices of consumerism.

Data informed that 23 percentage, 26.33 percentage and 26.88 percentage respondents were belongs from nuclear families among western zone, north zone and middle zone respectively. Whereas 10.33 percentage, 7 percentage and 6.5 percentage respondents were belongs from joint families among western zone, north zone and middle zone respectively.

Data informed that overall 41.01 percentage were from 25 to 34 year of age, 31.17 percentage and 27.83 were from 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 year age of respectively.

Majority respondents were qualified up to graduate and post graduate and very few were primary and secondary educate.

Majority of the respondents had monthly family income was 15000 to 30000 rupees.

- **Details related to buying process of household goods of the respondents**

This section gave information regarding respondent's habits of buying process.

In middle zone responsibility of purchasing house hold goods was shown more than western and northern zone.

Study concluded that middle zone respondents used number of purchase outlet frequently in comparison of western zone and northern zone respondents. Even north zone respondents had shown interested to purchase by retail shop and poorly shown interest in other outlet.

Study concluded that majority of the respondents liked company of husband while purchasing household goods. Middle zone respondents were less liked company of elders and friends. Northern zone respondents enjoying purchasing with husband, friend, alone and elders respectively where as western zone respondents purchase goods a company with husband and elders rather than alone and friend.

- **Assessment of level of consumerism**

This section deals with assessment of level regarding awareness of consumerism. The level of assessment was measured on the basis of Pre tested data and was categorized in three categories viz: poor, fair and good amongst the respondents in each areas of consumerism.

Data shows level of awareness regarding consumerism, in which 21.83 percent, 18.16 percent and 22.33 percent respondents were fairly aware about general information regarding consumerism in western zone, middle zone and northern zone respectively.

Data expressed the level of awareness regarding consumer protection act among the female. The knowledge of consumer protection act showed 25.16 percent, 26.50 percent and 23.33 percent respondents had fairly aware in western, north and middle zone respectively. Poor awareness regarding consumer protection showed 5.33 percent in western zone respondents.

Data expressed knowledge regarding redressal mechanism among the respondents. Study concluded that redressal mechanism process was poorly shown in western zone and northern zone respondents than middle zone respondents.

Data expressed the level of awareness regarding advertising gimmicks. Majority respondents 15.66 percent, 17.16 percent and 21.33 percent had fair awareness in western, north and middle zone respectively. Poor awareness showed in specific area by western and northern zone respondents.

From the all zones respondents showed fairly aware of advertisement gimmicks.

Data revealed the awareness regarding certification marks on house hold products. Majority 23.00 percent, 20.83 percent and 25.66 percent respondents had fair awareness

regarding certification mark on house hold goods in western, northern and middle zone respondents respectively.

Intervention programme was prepared for need based respondents of all three zones in which redressal mechanism, advertisement gimmicks and buying practices of respondents.

- **DEVELOPMENT OF INTERVENTION PROGRAMME**

The application oriented educational programme aimed at creating overall awareness and logical training on **basis** of consumerism.

The fourteen days training programme held in western, north and middle zone of Gujarat were pre survey was taken and need based respondents were found. The mode of training programme was purely non formal.

Assessment of enhancement in level of awareness regarding consumerism among the Respondents

This section deals with enhancement of level awareness among respondents. Enhancement level of awareness through need based intervention programme was found out by Post test. Pre test was considered for finding out poor level people in different area of consumerism. Post test was applied after intervention programme among poorly aware respondents.

Data depicted the enhancement level of awareness after intervention. Present study shows a level of awareness by comparing mean score before and after intervention in different areas of consumerism. The mean score increased after intervention in each area of the consumerism, but the difference found between ranges was of 2 to 15 mean scores. It showed that intervention programme influenced knowledge and awareness of the respondents regarding consumerism and was successful.

Testing of Hypothesis:

To find out statically significant difference between the enhancement level of awareness regarding consumerism between the different groups (places of residence, occupation of the despondence, type of family , age, education and family monthly income) the level of

significance was found by t- test and analysis of variances(one way ANOVA). For findings of significant difference the null Hypothesis were formulated. The following pages discuss the results of hypothesis:

Data shows the level of significance with association of different variables and buying behavior of house hold goods. 't' test was applied to find out significant difference between variables with purchase behavior It was found significant with all variables because calculated 't' value was greater than tabulated 't' and thus the hypothesis was rejected. Occupation and type of family of the respondents moderately influenced purchasing behavior.

Data expresses the significant level of buying behavior with respect to age, education and monthly family income of the respondents. "F" value found greater than tabulated "F" value and so Hypothesis was rejected. It proved that all variables were highly associated with buying practices. Present study expressed that age of the respondents works for mature decisions and education for right choice, Quality goods and informative practice and monthly family income direct the person for managing the buying within the budget.

Data shows the 't' value for null hypothesis "There will be no significant association between occupation of respondent and Consumer awareness about consumer goods". The calculated't' value was found 0.59. It was less than tabulated't' at 0.1 and 0.5 level. It showed that occupation of the respondents was not associated with consumerism. 't' value was found for consumer protection acts, which was 2.70. It was greater than tabulated t value. The hypothesis was rejected and result was significant.

For awareness regarding redressal mechanisms the calculated't' value was found to be3.03. It was greater than tabulated't' value and result was significant. It was proved that occupation had more influence on awareness regarding redressal mechanism for consumer awareness.

Awareness regarding advertisement gimmicks t value was found 7.14 It was greater than tabulated t and result was highly significant and proved that occupation of the respondent affected awareness towards advertisement gimmicks. For area of awareness regarding qualitative marks on house hold products t value was found 1.47 it was less than tabulated t, so Hypothesis was rejected for particular area and result was insignificant.

The occupation of the respondent significantly play role in awareness regarding consumer protection act, redressal mechanism and advertisement gimmicks but not significant for consumer awareness and qualitative marks on house hold products.

Data expressed the 't' value for judging hypothesis "There will be no significant relationship between types of family and awareness of consumer". 't' value was found 2.98. So it was greeter then tabulated 't' so the hypothesis was rejected. It was proved that types of family were affected on general knowledge of awareness regarding buying and result shown significant.

Here for consumer protection act 't' value was found 2.44. It was greater than tabulated 't' value at 0.1 & 0.5 level. So hypothesis was rejected and concluded that types of family was concerned with knowledge of consumer protection acts.

The concern matter of awareness regarding redressal mechanism 't' value was found 2.56. It was greater than tabulated 't' 0.1 and 0.5 significant level so the hypothesis was rejected and proved that types of family influenced redressal mechanism for consumer.

Here data revealed that 't' value for awareness regarding advertisement gimmicks was found 5.58. It was greater than tabulated 't' at 0.1 and 0.5 levels. So the hypothesis was rejected and proved that types of family were highly significant on knowledge of advertisement gimmicks.

The 't' value was found 4.17 for awareness regarding qualitative marks. It was greater than tabulated t and hypothesis was rejected and proved that types of family plays significant role on knowledge of qualitative marks. The result shows that joint family was more significantly plays role on knowledge of qualitative marks on products because the Pearson found more space for conversation with people and got knowledge and information from others even joint family members found more time and they might be utilized their time for obtaining information regarding it.

Data indicate the "f" value of consumerism in different areas. The calculated "f" value was shown greater than tabulated "f" in all areas and result shown was significant so Hypothesis was rejected and it proved that places of residence highly influenced on awareness regarding consumerism. All three zones differ from each other in way of culture of people, lifestyle,

facility wise, and area wise and different locality wise. So the difference of significant level was shown highly influencing on awareness of consumerisms.

Urban area was differ from rural area in each zone in way of culture of people, lifestyle, facility wise, and area wise and different locality wise. So the difference of significant level was shown highly influencing on awareness of consumerisms.

Association of Age of respondents on different areas of consumer awareness regarding household goods.

Data revealed the 'F' value about null hypothesis "There was no significant relation between age of the respondents and consumer awareness regarding consumer goods among the respondent". The 'F' value was found 415.13 to be greater than tabulated 'F' value so the null hypothesis was rejected and, it was proved that age was responsible variable for consumer awareness about consumer goods.

The 'F' value was calculated for consumer protection act and was 341.32. It was greater than tabulated value so the hypothesis was rejected and was proved that age significantly played an important role for influencing knowledge regarding protection acts.

The table expressed the 'F' value of knowledge regarding redressal mechanism of the respondents. The 'F' value was 595.82, it was greater than tabulated 'F' value and the hypothesis "There will be no significant relation between age of respondents and knowledge of redressal mechanism of consumer awareness" was rejected so it concluded the age reacts with the process of redressal mechanism.

The 'F' value was calculated for advertisement gimmicks, and was 297.07. It was greater than tabulated 'F' value, so hypothesis was rejected and proved that age was influenced awareness regarding advertisement gimmicks.

Table shows 'F' value of knowledge regarding qualitative marks on consumer products. The calculated F value was 748.65 It was greater than tabulated 'F' value so the hypothesis was rejected and result found was insignificant.

Influence of education of respondents on different areas of consumer awareness regarding household goods.

Data expressed the consumer awareness 'F' value found was 40.27. It was greater than tabulated 'F' value at 0.1 and 0.5 levels so the hypothesis was rejected and proved that education showed the effect on knowledge of redressal mechanism.

The 'F' value found for consumer protection act, and it was 82.91. It was greater than tabulated 'F' value so it showed that the hypothesis was rejected and proved that education had not played the role significantly on awareness of advertisement gimmicks on respondents.

For redressal mechanism and advertisement gimmicks f value was found between 37.82 and 48.58 it was greater than tabulated f and result shown significant, it proved that education adversely affected awareness regarding redressal mechanism and advertisement gimmicks.

"F" value found for qualitative marks was 15.69. It was significant result shown at 0.1 and 0.5 levels. So hypothesis was rejected and result concludes that education and knowledge of qualitative marks of products found definite relationship with each other.

Effect of monthly family income of respondents on different areas of consumer awareness regarding household goods.

Data expressed that 'F' value was seen 48.94. The 'F' value was greater than tabulated 'F' value so the hypothesis was rejected. So the variable income was highly significant on awareness regarding consumer goods.

Here data expressed that 'F' value was seen 39.63. The 'F' value was greater than tabulated 'F' value so the hypothesis was rejected; So the variable income was significant on general knowledge regarding consumer protection act.

The 'F' value found for awareness regarding redressal mechanism was 59.7. The 'F' value was greater than tabulated 'F' value at 0.1 and 0.5 level so the hypothesis was rejected and proved that income was not responsible for awareness and knowledge regarding redressal mechanism.

The 'F' value found for awareness regarding advertisement gimmicks and it was 228.6. The 'F' value was greater than tabulated 'F' value at 0.1 and 0.5 levels so the hypothesis was rejected and proved that income was responsible for awareness and knowledge regarding advertisement gimmicks.

The result showed for qualitative marks on house hold products 'F' value was 241.94 and It was very much greater than tabulated 'F' value so conclusion was null hypothesis was rejected and drew the result that variable income was not more effective on knowledge of qualitative marks symbols on consumer products.

The present study concluded that monthly family income had high influence on each area of consumerism.

Effect of intervention programme of respondents on different areas of consumer awareness regarding household goods.

Data depicted that the need based intervention program for the respondents showed progressive report in awareness as pre test and post test data indicated its significance.. and proved that definitely intervention programme will bring desirable change in awareness of consumerism.

5.7 Conclusion:

Every one of us goes to the market and buys our requirements. Our dependence on a trader or manufacturer increases in proportion to the place of progress. It is not very long ago that we used to grind masalas in the house rather than purchase them in ground form women used to spin yarn themselves give it to the weaver for making into cloth and sew the family clothes themselves. Today most of us depend on the market for all these goods. The purity and quality of items available in the market depend on the honesty of the trader and a manufacturer. As we all know a trader runs a shop to make money and the manufacturer sets up a factory to get rich. If their conduct remains unchecked and unsupervised, the desire to make money is sure to get the better of consideration as against morality, reputation and social responsibility and commercial ethics. The inducement is all the greater if, as in our country, prices keep raising and there is a general shortage of products in the market. Such a state of affair leads to unfair trade practices like sale of substandard and spurious goods, short weight & measurement and adulterated food stuffs.

The consumer purchases fall in to two categories. Some items are consumed daily and these have to be replenished by frequent purchases, e.g. vegetables, milk provisions,

bulbs, stationery etc. These are called consumer soft and are generally speaking cheap. Than, there are goods which are purchased after long gaps and are long lasting e.g. electric iron, gas cylinders, stoves, refrigerators etc. These are called consumer durables. A survey has shown that in case of purchases of consumer soft, women are the sale decision makers. In case of consumer durables husband and wife jointly decide about the purchase. Women therefore are the most important buyer in all purchases. It is they who fill the market places for purchases and are in frequent contact with all types of trade practices fair and unfair.

Traders and other economic groups are generally well organized, have strong associations, which come to the aid of their members who may be threatened. With enforcement of the law favoring consumers. Unless consumers also unite and exert an equally strong pressure to effectively counter the influence of trade associations, they will continue to be exploited.

Daily purchases of consumer soft account for more than 70% of the budget of an average family. If the wife is a careful and a discerning buyer, she can make both ends meet even in an economy where prices rise constantly. But if she is not calculating and careful, or purchases something for its beauty rather than its utility or is led away by high pressure sales advertisements, or buys on impulse, her purchases can spell economic difficulty and disaster for the entire family. If women are not careful buyers or do not protest to traders about the bad quality of his wares or patronize traders who are known for their unfair practices or do not assess the real utility of products as against the advertised value, there will be no check on the doings of commercial classes and market will be flooded. With useless products and unfair trade practices will become the order of the day. A housewife therefore is the backbone of consumer consciousness and an effective check against unfair trade practices.

The best way of organizing housewives is by ascertaining common consumer problems. Let us suppose that a particular shopkeeper weighs less, a group of housewives of the area can get together and compare notes, if they find that the particular shopkeeper weighs less habitually then they can warn him orally or write to him asking him to mend his ways as they are aware of his tricks. They can also threaten to stop purchasing from

his shop. If he persists with his unfair practice, the housewives can take a decision to boycott his shop and decide not to purchase anything from him effectively carried out, such a step will result in fall of sales and the trader will realize his vulnerability. A sustained boycott by the housewives will ensure that the shopkeeper approaches the group and assures proper conduct in future. If the housewives so like, they can also make a complain to the weights and measures authorities against the trader and subject him to penal action. They can also take him to the consumers courts formed under the consumer protection act and ask for compensation for short weighed articles. (Seetharman P. & Sethi M. 2002)

A consumer is anyone who buys or uses any kind of products. Home makers are consumers in an economic and marketing system. They create a demand for a variety of materials needed at home such as food products, clothing, furniture, household equipment and so on. Resources available in the market are directed towards are satisfying human requirements. Purchasing is often a daily routine for home makers depending mostly on common sense and experience. However, some basic knowledge of economic principles, guidelines for the selection of products and awareness of consumer rights are both useful and necessary for the home – maker. This will help her to play her role more satisfactorily and responsibly. There is in our country an urgent need for consumer education.

The present study concluded that women play an important role for buying house hold goods because findings shows that women had responsibility to purchase house hold goods like grocery, cloths for self, children's and some time for mail person also. Mostly women were not engaging buying of land, house and gold because for all this things their husbands or head of the house male person were involved and prior decisions were taken by male only. The house hold equipments also shared responsibility of women and men.

Findings of the study was also focused that most of the women use variety of purchase outlets but retail shop was most suitable for purchasing house hold goods. The mall was used for seeking verities, some attractive promotional sales and enjoyment of self selection of goods. The middle zone women were used mall purchasing but very few

women of western and northern zone used mall for purchase. Tele shopping, e buying and phone order purchasing were not referred by the majority of the respondents.

The present study was concluded that buying practices of women was remarkably changed with today's time and women as a consumer seeking varieties in goods, change in buying habits, planning according to budget, requirement and so on.

There are certain things that every consumer should know about the process of purchasing. Firstly she must know why she wants to buy a particular product. Is it really needed? Will it add to her pleasure or raise the standard of living of the family? Is it being bought out of necessity or because she has been impressed by a skillful newspaper or television advertisement? Once the consumer has determined that she needs a particular product, she should know how to buy it wisely. Before shopping she should have clear idea of the services she would like the product to perform. By making up her mind in advance she could save herself becoming a victim of clever salesmanship. By analyzing and studying the costs and quality of various brands of the product she will be in a better position to make her choice and to get the best value for the price she pays.

Decision making on the part of the consumer while purchasing goods depends on various factors. Firstly, it is a question of handling money and spending it usefully and systematically. It is necessary to plan what is necessary to be bought in order to avoid waste and to get the most of the money spent. Most people run in their homes with tight budgets. Shopping wisely or unwisely can make a vast difference under such condition. It is often said that one should shop as efficiently as possible. Efficiency means wise use of money, time and energy. It is certainly not efficient to spend half a day shopping to save a rupee on a purchase of provisions or vegetables. If one is buying curtains and draperies for a new house or selecting electrical fixtures, buying equipment costing several hundreds of rupees, one should spend enough time on making proper selections.

Very often during the course of a week, the consumer is faced with the problem of choosing one or many of the available commodities which will be used in the satisfaction of her personal wants. Her desires may be many, but the money available is limited. She is therefore, faced with the task of deciding what should be bought with her restricted

purchasing power. she should make choices in such a way that the items selected give maximum utility and satisfaction.

Before making an important purchase the home-maker should follow a few simple steps. She should know the standards of the goods she wants to buy and then find out where to buy them at the best price. She should make sure that she is not misled by the dealers. Finally she should go to the dealer who is reliable and willing to take full responsibility for the quality of the product. It is essential for expensive items. A wise buyer should be informed and alert, even in the purchase of items of daily use. Her knowledge and care in shopping can help her save and eventually perhaps have a large amount available for purchase of a luxury item.

The main purpose of consumer education is to give a better standard of living to all citizens. With constant improvement in working conditions and employment opportunities, income-levels rise. Hence people have more money and a desire to buy a wide variety of products. There is a growing awareness of the need to teach consumers how to use their money wisely in order to live well. In other words, consumers education is a preparation for everyday living because it helps people to make intelligent choices. When consumers have proper knowledge and information, they are able to buy wisely, use money intelligently and get greater satisfaction from their efforts.

Present study analysis showed that geographical consideration, personal factors and socio economic variables highly influenced on buying behaviour and areas of consumer awareness such as consumer protection acts, redressal mechanism, advertisement gimmicks and qualitative marks on house hold products.

The educational programme as an intervention of need base respondents enhanced the level of awareness and proved that education given for thrust area to satisfied hunger of the need base respondents also help to improve their awareness.

5.8 Recommendation for further studies:

- Consumer education is important at every stage of human life. The consumer study has been applied for secondary education, higher secondary education and college going students to check their level of awareness regarding consumerism.
- This similar study could be applied to male person their consumer awareness and buying practices of goods and services related land, housing, share and stocks and services like transportation, communication and recreation.
- The investigator recommended that this similar study was applied on rural women and to asset their awareness and buying practices of house hold goods.
- This similar study could be applied to with different professional women's for their buying practices and consumer awareness.
- The investigator recommended that consumer club should be developed in residential societies of the town or cities for educating people and facilities available near by the residence.
- This study could be applied to working and non working women to find out their level of awareness regarding buying practices.
- Another recommendation for study that consumer awareness as a case study, the person who sufferers or beneficial by redressal mechanism of the consumer.
- A longitudinal study could be designed to know the influence of media on buying practices of women.
- The study could be designed for preparing teaching modules and their effect on buying and promotion of sale.
- Study could be designed for influence of type of market and attitude of consumer towards market.