Impact Analysis of Developed Information Package for Consumers

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A B S T R A C T

The research entitled "Impact Analysis of Developed Information Package for Consumers" was carried out in various schools and among group of consumers through exhibitions followed by lectures, interactive sessions and skits. A survey among randomly selected school students and adult consumers (100 each) was conducted before introducing an information package to consumers and after 8 to 10 days gap of intervention programme to assess the impact of information package on awareness of consumers regarding selected aspects of consumerism. Feedback of selected consumers on utility perception of the developed consumer information package and different modes of dissemination adopted were studied after intervention programme. Statistical analysis with the help of 'Z' test was carried out for testing the significance of information package to consumers. It is concluded from the study that the information package containing informative charts, small skits, lectures and street shows on consumer issues was effective in creating awareness among consumers. Retention of information was more among school children. Consumers perceived that the consumer information package was informative, useful, effective, self-explanatory and easy to understand. Exhibition in combination of lecture and interactive session were expressed as best mode of instruction for disseminating information on consumer issues by school children and adult consumers.

Keywords
Consumer, Information package, Awareness, Impact analysis

Article Info
Accepted: 14 January 2021
Available Online: 10 February 2021

Introduction

Any person who buys or uses goods and services is a consumer. Every person is a consumer in one or the other way. According to Dhillon et al., (1997), the consumer is the final buyer and user of goods and services for the satisfaction of his or her wants. Consumer is a person who buys goods and services to be used or consumed by herself or by someone else on behalf of the buyer. Goods may include both consumable items and durable consumer goods. A consumer is anyone who buys or uses any kind of product or services. He/she creates a demand for a variety of goods and services. Swami Vivekananda believed that the consumer is the king of the market who can purchase anything from anywhere (Seetharaman and Sethi, 2002).

Indian market have been witnessing several changes with an increase in variety of goods and commodities. With the immense competition and high technology development there are many products before the consumer which demands knowledge.
With the advancement in science and technology, the market is flooded with variety of products and selling schemes to attract the buyers that makes the decision making process difficult for the consumer to buy a product from the market. They face problems regarding quality, product range, and prices of the goods available in the market (Singh and Gandhi, 2009).

The consumer needs and demands continuously change and development of technology has given rise to multiplicity of brands. The consumer may not be aware of all of them and also finds it difficult to evaluate every possible alternative and therefore, considers only a limited subset of all elements. (Mukherjee and Ghosh, 1996). At this situation there is a strong need of consumer education regarding various aspects of consumerism. Majority of the consumers in remote areas and rural areas are exploited by unlawful trade practices of the marketers due to poor knowledge and lack of education (Devi and Kalita, 2020). A study conducted by Sundaram and Balaramlingam (2012) indicated that women consumers from Vellore city showed low level of awareness about consumer rights. The main reason was their low education and socioeconomic status. A consumer must take certain precautions during purchase of the product. Whenever there is some defect in goods the traders and manufacturers blame each other but none of them provides any relief to consumers. a protective mechanism is operative for consumers but consumer do not have exact knowledge. This scenario necessitates that education and awareness regarding various aspects related to consumerism must be inculcated among all consumers. Consumer awareness is a need of present day. Hence an attempt in this study was made to develop an information package for consumers and assessing the impact of developed package in creating awareness among consumers.

**Materials and Methods**

**Sample selection**

A sample for the research entitled "Impact Analysis of Developed Information Package for Consumers" comprised 200 consumers from Parbhani town 100 each of school going students and adult consumers involved in buying activity.

**Interview schedule**

A pre structured interview schedule was used to collect the information about demographic variables and existing buying practices followed by selected school children and adult consumers.

**Assessment of consumer awareness**

Awareness of consumers regarding selected aspects of consumerism was assessed on consumer awareness scale developed by Murali et al., (2006). The scale consisted 5 aspects of consumerism such as Food Adulteration, Deceptive and Misleading Advertisements, Consumer Rights and Responsibilities, Sales Promotion Techniques and Legal Protection. The scale comprised 10 questions with options of wrong and correct answers under each aspect of consumerism. Rating of wrong answer was zero and correct answer was one. Assigned awareness score was sum of total responses rated under each aspect of consumerism. This information was collected by administering these scales to selected group of consumers to know the existing level of consumer awareness on these aspects.

**Developing an information package for consumers**

After assessing the existing awareness score of selected consumers a need based
information package consisting set of informative charts, folders and skits on various consumer issues was developed.

**Impact analysis of developed information package**

Developed information package was disseminated through exhibitions followed by lectures, skits and interactive sessions in various schools and among the selected group of consumers.

A survey of selected school students and adult consumers with same scales was conducted after 8 to 10 days gap of intervention programme to assess the impact of information package on awareness of consumers.

**Feedback of consumers**

Feedback of selected consumers on utility perception of the developed consumer information package and different modes of instruction methodologies adopted were studied after intervention programme.

**Statistical analysis**

Statistical analysis with the help of 'Z' test was carried out to find out the variations of two distinct population, i.e. School children and adult consumers involved in buying, and testing the significance of information package in creating consumer awareness. (Sharma, 2005).

\[
Z = \frac{P_1 - P_2}{\sqrt{\frac{P_1(1-P_1)}{n_1} + \frac{P_2(1-P_2)}{n_2}}}
\]

Where, 

- \(P_1\) is percentage of sample 1
- \(P_2\) is percentage of sample 2
- \(n_1\) is total number of sample 1
- \(n_2\) is total number of sample 2

Following formula was used to assess the significance of information package on awareness of selected consumers.

\[
Z = \frac{M_1 - M_2}{\sqrt{SD_1^2 + SD_2^2/n}}
\]

Where,

- \(M_1\) = Mean value of group 1
- \(M_2\) = Mean value of group 2
- \(SD_1\) = Standard deviation of group 1
- \(SD_2\) = Standard deviation of group 2
- \(n\) = Sample size

**Results and Discussion**

General information of selected consumers is presented in table 1. It is clear from the table that all school children were between the age group of 13 and 15 years (100%), whereas majority of the adult consumers (65%) were between the age of 20 and 30 years. More than 60 per cent of school children (60%) and adult consumers (68%) were belonging to nuclear type of family having 1-4 members in family (80 & 68%). The monthly family income was reported as more than Rs. 30,000 by 60 per cent adult consumers whereas 40 per cent of school children and adult consumer's family income was between Rs. 20,000 and 30,000 per month. Hundred percent school children were in high school stage and adult consumers were college educated (84%).

Table 2 denotes the buying practices followed by school children and adult consumers. It is clear from the table that in majority of the school children families the purchasing was carried out by the head of the family (60%) followed by their own participation for their need (30%). In case of adult consumers the
purchasing was carried out equally by person in need of the product and with joint involvement (40%). More than 50 percent of the school children (60%) were purchasing the items from nearby shops. The percentage of adult consumers buying the products from acquainted shops was more (50%) as compared to school children (40%). Advertisements and friends as an influential element for purchases were notified by 60 and 40 percent of school children respectively, whereas 40 percent of adult consumers reported information as an influencing factor for their purchases. Credit and cash payment method for purchasing was reported by equal percentage of school children and adult consumers respectively (44%). The installment method of purchasing was reported by 16 per cent of adult consumers that too for big purchases. Majority of the school children (90%) were not demanding any kind of receipt for the purchases made by them. The percentage of adult consumers demanding bill in rough format and fair format was 50 and 40 respectively. The written account of purchases was maintained by 22 and 64 percent of school children and adult consumers respectively. Majority of the school children (86%) were buying the goods just by inspection and adult consumers (60%) were selecting the goods by reading the labels. Statistical analysis revealed significant differences between majority of buying practices followed by school children and adult consumers.

**Table.1 General Information of selected consumers**

| Consumers | School children | Adult consumers |
|-----------|----------------|-----------------|
| **Attributes** | **Frequency & Percentages** | |
| **Age(Yrs)** | | |
| 13-15 | 100 | - |
| 20-30 | - | 65 |
| 30-40 | - | 35 |
| **Type of family** | | |
| Joint | 40 | 32 |
| Nuclear | 60 | 68 |
| **Family income(Rs)** | | |
| <20,000 | 40 | - |
| 20,000-30,000 | 40 | 40 |
| >30,000 | 20 | 60 |
| **Education** | | |
| School | 100 | 16 |
| College | - | 84 |
| **Family Size(Number)** | | |
| 1-4 | 80 | 68 |
| 5-8 | 20 | 32 |
**Table.2** Buying practices followed by selected school children and adult consumers

| Buying practices                          | Frequency and % of consumers | 'Z' Value |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|
|                                           | School Children | Adult consumers |           |
| Person responsible for purchase           |                |                  |           |
| Person in need of the product             | 30             | 40              | 1.49NS    |
| Head of the family                        | 60             | 20              | 6.32**    |
| Group                                     | 10             | 40              | 5.22**    |
| Selection of shop                         |                |                  |           |
| Nearby                                    | 60             | 40              | 2.88**    |
| Acquainted                                | 40             | 50              | 4.47**    |
| Market survey                             | --             | 40              | 3.33**    |
| Influential element for purchase          |                |                  |           |
| Friends                                   | 40             | 30              | 1.49NS    |
| Advertisement                             | 60             | 30              | 4.47**    |
| Information                               | --             | 40              | 8.00**    |
| Mode of Payment                           |                |                  |           |
| Cash                                      | 56             | 44              | 1.71NS    |
| Credit                                    | 44             | 40              | 0.57NS    |
| Installment                               | --             | 16              | 4.0**     |
| Receipt after purchase                    |                |                  |           |
| Rough format                              | 10             | 50              | 6.85**    |
| Fair form                                 | -              | 40              | 8.00**    |
| No receipt                                | 90             | 10              | 18.85**   |
| Maintenance of account                    |                |                  |           |
| Written                                   | 22             | 64              | 6.62**    |
| Selection of item                         |                |                  |           |
| Mere inspection                           | 86             | 40              | 7.66**    |
| Reading labels                            | 14             | 60              | 7.66**    |

**Significant at 1 per cent level of significance NS Non significant

**Table.3** Awareness of selected consumers regarding selected aspects of consumerism before and after intervention

| Consumers                        | Mean Awareness score (Mean ± SD) |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|                                   | School Children | Adult Consumers |           |
|                                   | Before Intervention | After Intervention | 'Z' Value | Before Intervention | After Intervention | 'Z' Value |
| Food Adulteration                 | 4.5 ± 1.2       | 6 ± TM           | 5.50**    | 6 ± 1.31           | 8.0 ± 1.61         | 6.81**     |
| Advertisement                     | 5.0 ± 1.5       | 8 ± 1.22         | 10.97**   | 7 ± 1.26           | 10.0 ± 1.45        | 11.04**    |
| Consumer rights and responsibilities| 3.0 ± 1.3       | 7 ± 1.41         | 15.65**   | 5 ± 1.32           | 8.0 ± 1.62         | 10.15**    |
| Sales promotion techniques        | 3.0 ± 1.21      | 7 ± 1.35         | 15.60**   | 6 ± 1.41           | 9.0 ± 1.31         | 11.02**    |
| Legal protection                  | 4.0 ± 1.26      | 6 ± 1.22         | 11.40**   | 3 ± 1.13           | 8.0 ± 1.25         | 20.98**    |

** Significant at 1 per cent level of significance
Table 4 Comparative assessment of awareness score of school children and adult consumers after intervention programme

| Consumers Aspects of consumerism                              | Mean Awareness score (Mean ± SD) | 'Z' Value |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|
|                                                               | School Children                  | Adult Consumers |       |
| Food Adulteration                                             | 6 ±1.51                          | 8.0 ±1.61     | 9.06** |
| Advertisement                                                 | 8 ±1.51                          | 10.0 ±1.45    | 10.55**|
| Consumer rights and responsibilities                         | 7 ±1.41                          | 8.0 ±1.62     | 4.65** |
| Sales promotion techniques                                   | 7 ±1.35                          | 9.0 ± 1.31    | 10.63**|
| Legal protection                                              | 6 ± 1.22                         | 8.0 ± 1.25    | 11.45**|

** Significant at 1 per cent level of significance

Table 5 Comparative assessment of Percent retention of information by school children and adult consumers after intervention programme

| Consumers Aspects of consumerism                              | % Retention of Information | 'Z' Value |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|
|                                                               | School Children             | Adult Consumers |       |
| Food Adulteration                                             | 82 ± 7.2                   | 70 ±5.9     | 12.89**|
| Advertisement                                                 | 90 ±6.5                    | 80 ±7.1     | 10.39**|
| Consumer rights and responsibilities                         | 79 ± 4.9                   | 70 ±4.9     | 12.99**|
| Sales promotion techniques                                   | 85 ±5.8                    | 65 ± 6.01   | 23.94**|
| Legal protection                                              | 50 ±6.11                   | 80 ±7.2     | 31.77**|

** Significant at 1 per cent level of significance

Table 6 Utility perception of information package as reported by selected consumers

| Consumers Utility Parameters                  | Frequency and % of consumers & Perception score (Mean ± SD) | 'Z' Value |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
|                                                               | School Children                  | Adult Consumers |       |
| Informative                                                  | 85 (2.95 ± 0.6)                | 90 (2.98 ±0.22) | 1.07NS |
| Usefulness                                                   | 100 (3 ±0.00)                  | 100 (3 ±0.00)  | NS      |
| Effective                                                    | 89 (2.96 ±0.56)                | 85 (2.95 ±0.58)| 0.84NS  |
| Self-explanatory                                             | 75 (2.50 ±0.58)                | 95 (2.99 ±0.1 2)| 4.12** |
| Easy to understand                                           | 100 (3.00 ±0.00)               | 100 (3.00 ±0.00)| NS      |

** Significant at 1 per cent level of significance
NS Non significant
Table 7 Feedback of selected consumers regarding mode of dissemination of consumer information package

| Mode of dissemination       | Frequency and % of consumers | ‘Z’ Value |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|
|                             | School Children | Adult Consumers |           |
| Exhibition                  | 75              | 78             | 0.5NS     |
| Lecture                     | 40              | 65             | 3.65**    |
| Interactive session         | 56              | 55             | 0.14NS    |
| Skits & Street plays        | 78              | 70             | 1.29NS    |
| Exhibition & lecture        | 75              | 90             | 2.84**    |
| Exhibition & Skits          | 89              | 79             | 1.95NS    |
| Exhibition & Interactive session | 80        | 80             | NS        |

** Significant at 1 per cent level of significance  
NS Non significant

Awareness of selected consumers regarding selected aspects of consumerism before and after intervention is given in table 3. It was observed from the table that the awareness score of school children regarding selected aspects of consumerism after the intervention of information package was higher than the awareness score before intervention programme. Statistical analysis with ‘Z’ test indicated significant improvement in the knowledge of school children regarding various consumer issues after conducting an intervention programme.

The awareness of adult consumers regarding various aspects of consumerism was more than the awareness before introducing the information package. Statistically the difference between awareness score before and after intervention was significant (P<0.01) indicating that the adult consumers could improve the awareness level due to the intervention through information package. Statistically the results showed significant increase in awareness level of adult consumers after the intervention.

Comparative assessment of awareness score of school children and adult consumers after introducing the information package is presented in table 4. It is clear from the table that the awareness score of adult consumers was more for food adulteration(S.O); advertisement (10); consumer rights and responsibilities (8); sales promotion techniques(9,0) and legal protection(8.0) as compared to school children. The statistical results indicated significantly low level of awareness among school children than adult consumers (p<0.01).

Comparative assessment of Percent retention of information by school children and adult consumers after intervention programme is noted in table 5. It is observed from the table that per cent retention of disseminated knowledge regarding selected consumer issues was more in school children (79-90%) as compared to adult consumers except for legal protective measures which was more in adult consumers (80%) than school children (50%). Statistically the difference in retention percentage of information by school children was significantly higher in majority of the aspects of consumerism except the aspect of legal protection as compared to adult consumers (p<0.01).

Utility perception of consumer information package by school children and adult
consumers is reported in table 6. It was reported by more than 75 per cent school children and more than 85 per cent adult consumers that the consumer information package was informative (85 & 90%), useful (100%), effective (89 & 85%), self-explanatory (75 & 95%) and easy to understand (100%). Table 7 denotes the feedback of selected consumers regarding mode of dissemination of consumer information package. It is clear from the table that higher percentage of school children felt that the combination of exhibition and skit (89%) was more effective for giving information followed by the combination of exhibition and interactive session.

Whereas most of the adult consumers felt combination of exhibition and lecture (90%) and combination of exhibition and interactive session (80%) as the best medium for giving the information on consumer issues. Statistical results indicated that significantly more adult consumers expressed lecture and exhibition with lecture were the best methods to give knowledge on consumer issues as compared to school children. For rest of the modes the reactions of adult consumers and school children were at par.

It is concluded from the study that the information package containing informative charts, small skits, lectures and street shows on consumer issues was effective in creating awareness among consumers. Retention of information was more among school children. Consumers perceived that the consumer information package was informative, useful, effective, self-explanatory and easy to understand. Exhibition in combination of lecture and interactive session were expressed as the best mode of instruction by the adult consumers and exhibition in combination of skits and interactive session was preferred by school children.

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How to cite this article:

Madhuri Kulkarni and Veena Bhalerao. 2021. Impact Analysis of Developed Information Package for Consumers. *Int.J.Curr.Microbiol.App.Sci.* 10(02): 352-366.
doi: [https://doi.org/10.20546/ijcmas.2021.1002.042](https://doi.org/10.20546/ijcmas.2021.1002.042)