

Awareness among rural school students about consumer protection act

SHREEDEVI B MUGALKHOD and RENUKA S SALUNKE

**Department of Family Resource Management, College of Rural Home Science
University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad 580005 Karnataka, India**

Email for correspondence: mugalkhod.shreedevi@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The present study was aimed at determining the level of awareness of consumer protection act among high school students. The total sample size was 150 students from 5 high schools located in villages of Dharwad Taluka. The results emphasized that students of Amminabhavi village had higher knowledge on various aspects of consumer protection act with boys having a mean value of 10.25 and girls 6.62. Nigadi village high school students had high knowledge with mean value of 6.75 of boys and 4.75 of girls followed by Managundi and Hebballi and least knowledge was in the students of Tadakod. The educational intervention methods viz folders and lecture cum demonstrations were found to be effective to impart the knowledge among the high school students latter being better than the former.

Keywords: Awareness; consumer protection act; students

INTRODUCTION

India is one of the biggest rural consumer markets in the world. Indian market has been witnessing several changes following globalization, liberalization and privatization and a large scale entry of multinational company is a major outcome of new economic order. The consumer has every right to reject any product or service rendered by any manufacturer in the market and can mould them to produce goods of their choice.

A large number of Indian consumers are still ignorant, illiterate and do not know

the role of consumption vis a vis economic system as well as quality of life. As they are ignorant of their rights they cannot know their responsibilities as consumers. Consumers in the market find themselves deceived by wrong weights and measures and adulterated and substandard products causing great damages to health. At present the consumer movement in India is in its infancy. Vast majority of the people are not even aware of consumerism as a movement closely connected with the protection of their interests. Many constitutional provisions have been made by government to protect the consumers. Until and unless these provisions are availed of by the

consumers the protection of consumers become inevitable. The current investigation has been undertaken to assess the awareness of high school students regarding consumer protection act.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in Dharwad Taluka. Five villages in the Taluka were selected with one government high school from each village and 30 students both boys and girls selected randomly from the 9th standard. The total sample comprised 150 students. Of these 30 students were selected who had scored less knowledge among the selected schools. The folders and lecture cum demonstration methods were introduced to impart the knowledge on consumer protection act to them. Data regarding awareness of consumer protection act were elicited through the structured questionnaire; the collected data were analyzed with the help of percentage, frequency and mean values.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Socio-demographic characteristics of the high school students

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic background information of the selected students. The age of mothers of majority of the students (71.33%) was between 31 to 50 years and the age of fathers of 53.33 per cent students was between 31 to 50 years. Majority (71.33%) of the students were Hindus followed by

Christians (16.66%) and Muslims (12%). Majority of the students (64.66%) were from nuclear families and remaining 35.33 per cent from joint families. The mothers of 29.33 per cent of respondents were illiterate followed by mothers having primary school education (24.66%). Only 6 per cent of the mothers of the students had done graduation. The fathers of 38 per cent respondents were primary pass followed by 27.33 per cent being illiterate. About 82.66 per cent parents of selected students were involved in agricultural profession. About 38.66 per cent of the students were from small families with the size less than 4 members followed by medium size (31.33%) and large size (30%) families.

The family income of majority of the students (62%) was medium between the range of Rs 60000 to 120000.

Knowledge of students about consumers protection act

Table 2 shows the knowledge of selected high school students about consumer protection act. In overall boys had better knowledge of consumer protection act with mean value of 23.37 as compared to girls having mean value of 18.00. The students of Amminabhavi village had higher knowledge on various aspects of the act with boys having a mean value of 10.25 and girls having 6.62. More girls (53.33%) than boys (46.66%) had better knowledge of weights and measurements act; more boys (30.66%) than girls

Table 1. Socio-demographic profile of the selected respondents (n= 150)

Parameter	I (Hebballi) (n= 30)	II (Nigdi) (n= 30)	III (Tadakod) (n= 30)	IV (Aminbhavi) (n= 30)	V (Managundi) (n= 30)	Total (n= 150)
Age of mother						
Young (<30years)	5 (16.67)	5 (16.67)	5 (16.67)	7 (23.33)	11 (36.67)	33 (22.00)
Middle (31-50years)	23 (76.67)	25 (83.33)	22 (73.33)	20 (66.67)	17 (56.67)	107 (71.33)
Old (>50years)	2 (6.67)	-	3 (10.00)	3 (10.00)	2 (6.67)	10 (6.66)
Age of father						
Young (<30years)	15 (50.00)	10 (33.33)	11 (36.67)	10 (33.33)	12 (40.00)	58 (38.66)
Middle (31-50years)	12 (40.00)	18 (60.00)	15 (50.00)	19 (63.33)	16 (53.33)	80 (53.33)
Old (>50years)	3 (10.00)	2 (6.67)	4 (13.33)	1 (3.33)	2 (6.67)	12 (8.00)
Religion						
Hindu	20 (66.66)	17 (56.66)	23 (76.66)	22 (73.33)	25 (83.33)	107 (71.33)
Muslim	6 (20.00)	3 (10.00)	4 (13.33)	2 (6.66)	3 (10.00)	18 (12.00)
Christianity	4 (13.33)	10 (33.33)	3 (10.00)	6 (20.00)	2 (6.66)	25 (16.66)
Type of family						
Nuclear	23 (76.67)	22 (73.33)	10 (33.33)	20 (66.67)	22 (73.33)	97 (64.66)
Joint	7 (23.33)	8 (26.67)	20 (66.67)	10 (33.33)	8 (26.67)	53 (35.33)
Education of mother						
Illiterate	10 (33.33)	13 (43.33)	12 (40.00)	14 (33.33)	10 (26.67)	59 (39.33)
Primary school (1 st to 4 th)	5 (16.66)	10 (33.33)	7 (23.33)	9 (30.00)	7 (20.00)	38 (25.33)
Middle school (5 th -7 th)	5 (16.66)	3 (10.00)	3 (10.00)	4 (13.33)	10 (33.33)	25 (16.66)
High school (8 th -10 th)	5 (16.66)	4 (13.33)	4 (13.33)	3 (10.00)	3 (10.00)	19 (63.33)

PUC	5 (16.66)	-	4 (13.33)	-	-	9 (30.00)
Graduate and above	-	-	-	-	-	-
Education of father						
Illiterate	6 (20.00)	10 (33.33)	8 (26.67)	7 (23.33)	10 (33.33)	41 (27.33)
Primary school (1 st to 4 th)	12 (40.00)	8 (26.67)	12 (40.00)	10 (33.33)	15 (50.00)	57 (38.00)
Middle school (5 th -7 th)	3 (10.00)	4 (26.66)	4 (26.66)	5 (33.33)	2 (13.33)	18 (12.00)
High school (8 th -10 th)	4 (26.66)	6 (40.00)	3 (10.00)	5 (33.33)	1 (6.66)	19 (12.66)
PUC	3 (10.00)	2 (6.67)	3 (10.00)	3 (10.00)	2 (6.67)	13 (8.66)
Graduate and above	2 (6.67)	-	-	-	-	2 (1.33)
Occupation of parents						
Agriculture	24 (80.00)	20 (66.67)	27 (90.00)	20 (66.67)	33 (110.00)	124 (82.66)
Teacher	5 (16.66)	-	-	-	-	5 (3.33)
Driver	2 (6.67)	4 (13.33)	2 (6.67)	2 (6.67)	1 (3.33)	11 (7.33)
Carpentry	1 (3.33)	6 (20.00)	1 (3.33)	2 (6.67)	-	10 (6.66)
Family size						
Small (<4)	10 (33.33)	11 (36.67)	2 (6.67)	19 (63.33)	16 (53.33)	58 (38.66)
Medium (5-7)	13 (43.33)	12 (40.00)	10 (33.33)	7 (23.33)	5 (16.67)	47 (31.33)
Large (>7)	7 (23.33)	7 (23.33)	18 (60.00)	4 (13.33)	9 (30.00)	45 (30.00)
Annual income (Rs)						
Low income (<60000)	5 (16.67)	9 (30.00)	16 (53.33)	2 (6.67)	-	32 (21.33)
Medium (60000-120000)	19 (63.33)	21 (70.00)	11 (36.66)	12 (40.00)	30 (100.00)	93 (62.00)
High (>120000)	6 (20.00)	-	3 (10.00)	16 (53.33)	-	25 (16.66)

Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages

Table 2. Distribution of students based on knowledge regarding consumer protection act (n= 150)

Parameter	Hebballi (n= 30)		Nigdi (n= 30)		Tadakod (n= 30)		Aminbhavi (n= 30)		Managundi (n= 30)		Total (n= 150)	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Weights and measurements act	13 (86.66)	1 (6.66)	7 (46.66)	12 (80.00)	-	1 (6.66)	13 (86.66)	14 (93.33)	7 (46.66)	7 (46.66)	40 (53.33)	35 (46.66)
The consumer protection act	-	-	2 (13.33)	9 (60.00)	-	1 (6.66)	4 (26.66)	4 (26.66)	2 (13.33)	9 (60.00)	8 (10.66)	23 (30.66)
The drug and cosmetics act	4 (26.66)	4 (26.66)	2 (13.33)	5 (33.33)	-	1 (6.66)	5 (33.33)	10 (66.66)	2 (13.33)	5 (33.33)	13 (17.33)	25 (33.33)
Prevention of food adulteration act	3 (20.000)	3 (20.000)	12 (80.000)	12 (80.00)	-	-	1 (6.66)	13 (86.66)	3 (20.00)	7 (46.66)	19 (25.33)	35 (46.66)
Fruit product order	-	-	1 (6.66)	4 (26.66)	-	-	3 (20.00)	13 (86.66)	1 (6.66)	4 (26.66)	5 (6.66)	21 (28.00)
Agriculture products grading and marketing	2 (13.33)	1 (6.66)	5 (33.33)	4 (26.66)	-	-	13 (86.66)	14 (93.33)	5 (33.33)	7 (46.66)	25 (33.33)	26 (34.66)
Bureau of Indian Standard	2 (13.33)	2 (13.33)	9 (60.00)	8 (53.33)	-	-	14 (93.33)	14 (93.33)	7 (46.66)	6 (40.00)	32 (42.66)	30 (40.00)
Right to information act	1 (6.66)	1 (6.66)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2 (2.66)	-
Mean	3.12	1.50	4.75	6.75	-	0.375	6.62	10.25	3.37	7.00	18.00	23.37

Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages, Equal number of boys and girls were taken from each village

Table 3. Distribution of students on the basis of knowledge about the consumer protection act before and after educational intervention programme (n= 30)

Act	Pre-test			Post-test		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Folder		Lecture cum demonstration
				Girls	Boys	
Weights and measurements acts	7 (46.66)	7 (46.66)	14 (46.66)	10 (66.66)	13 (86.66)	23 (76.66)
The consumer protection act	2 (13.33)	9 (60.00)	11 (36.67)	5 (33.33)	11 (73.33)	16 (53.33)
The drug and cosmetics act	2 (13.33)	5 (33.33)	7 (23.33)	7 (46.66)	9 (60.00)	16 (53.33)
Prevention of food adulteration act	3 (20.00)	7 (46.66)	10 (33.33)	8 (53.33)	11 (73.33)	19 (63.33)
Fruit product order act	1 (6.66)	4 (26.66)	5 (16.67)	6 (40.00)	8 (53.33)	14 (46.66)
Agriculture products grading and marketing act	5 (33.33)	7 (46.66)	12 (40.00)	10 (66.66)	13 (86.66)	23 (76.66)
Bureau of Indian Standard act	7 (46.66)	6 (40.00)	13 (43.33)	9 (60.00)	11 (73.33)	20 (66.66)
Rights to information act	-	-	-	5 (33.33)	10 (66.66)	15 (50.00)
Mean	3.37	5.63	9.00	7.50	10.75	18.25
					12.63	23.00

Figure in the parentheses indicate percentages, Equal number of boys and girls were taken from each village

Awareness about consumer protection act

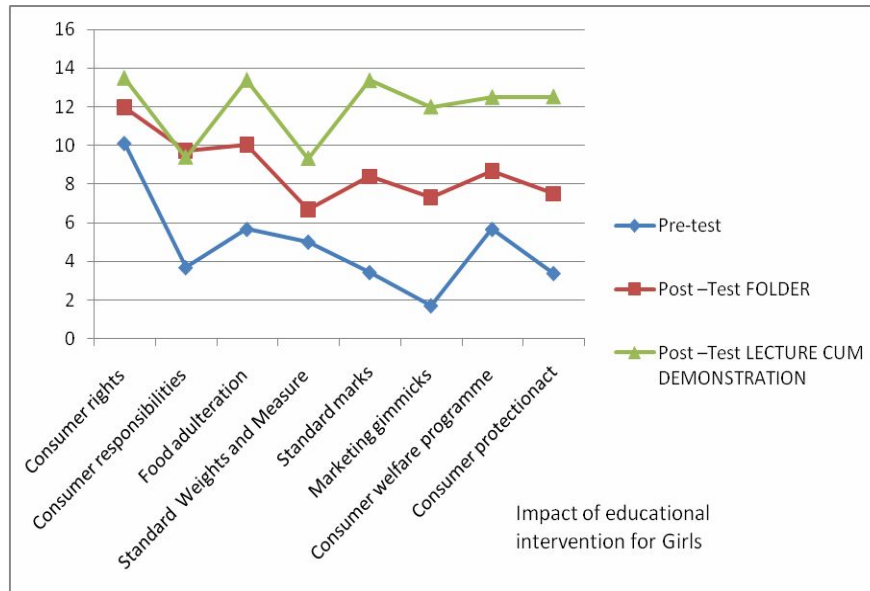


Fig 1. Impact of educational intervention on girls

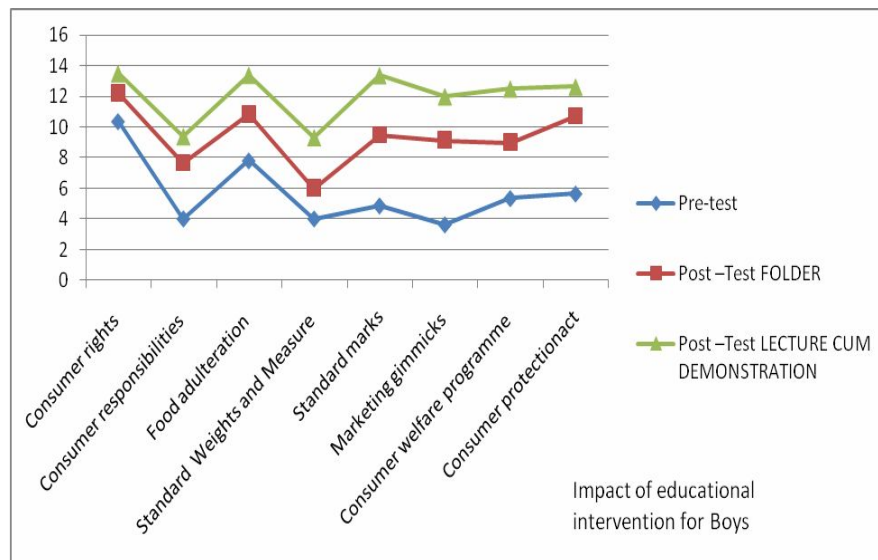


Fig 2. Impact of educational intervention on boys

(10.66%) had better knowledge of consumer protection act; more boys (33.33%) than girls (17.33%) had better knowledge of the drug and cosmetics act; more boys (46.66%) than girls (25.33%) had better knowledge of prevention of food adulteration act; more boys (28.00%) than girls (6.66%) had better knowledge of fruit product order; more boys (34.66%) than girls (33.33%) had better knowledge of agriculture products grading and marketing; more girls (42.66%) than boys (40.00%) had better knowledge of bureau of Indian standards. Earlier Sawarkar and Giram (1996) reported that higher awareness was among graduate respondents than non-graduates regarding consumer protection act. Yallawwa and Sumangala (2009) reported that rural consumers were being exploited due to lack of awareness about consumer protection act.

Impact of creation of awareness about consumer protection act on the knowledge of students

There was a significant increase in the knowledge level of respondents when subjected to folders and lecture cum demonstration methods of awareness creating. In total the mean value due to lecture cum demonstration increased to 23.00 and due to folders to 18.25 as

compared to 9.00 before the intervention. Both the methods of awareness creation proved beneficial but the lecture cum demonstration method proved better than the folder (Table 3, Figs 1 and 2).

CONCLUSION

The high school students of rural area can be trained regarding consumerism to have an awareness to overcome exploitation. It can be concluded from the study that the educational intervention methods viz folders and lecture cum demonstrations were found to be effective to impart the knowledge among the high school students however lecture cum demonstration method was found to be superior than the folders developed for imparting the knowledge regarding selected aspects of consumerism.

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