

# A PROJECT REPORT ON CONSUMER RIGHTS AWARENESS

Dipak Thakur

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## INTRODUCTION

India today is at a crossroad. Post 1991, this nation of a billion people has seen a lot of developments in terms of economic prosperity. India today boasts of one of the world's largest middle class population and an ever increasing consumer class. According to a McKinsey report, India currently is world's 12<sup>th</sup> Largest Consumer market. By 2025, India is expected to overtake Germany to become world's 5<sup>th</sup> largest consumer market. However everything is not so hunky-dory, there is a flip side to the story. On one hand, we have done exceptionally well on few parameters, we are still faced with a situation where there is a deep divide between the urban and rural development. India still possess world's largest population of Poor, Illiterates, Malnourished Kids, Slum Dwellers, Open defecators, Unavailability of safe & clean drinking water, Exceptionally high level of corruption, Degrading environment etc. In short, without taking any credit away from India for what it has achieved so far, there is much more to do in order to truly change the face of India.

However, each of us must appreciate the fact that Indian democracy despite all the odds continues to be one of the most vibrant and open democracies. India is learning and evolving from its own mistakes. The goals so far achieved are truly remarkable for a relatively younger democracy like India compared to mature democracies like Norway or the US. In order to wipe every tear from every eye, there is just a need to calibrate the efforts so that all those people who have been left behind are taken care of and an India which is truly developed and prosperous could be created.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This subject as the name suggests, is all about taking up projects that would have some sort of an impact on our society and helps in the nation building effort.. The projects that were suggested by Prof. Shivendra Mathur included building a rain water harvesting model, safe drinking water project and one involving an NGO working for creating awareness among consumers and fighting for the consumer rights.

### Brief about the Project

After detailed discussion with my Professor, I chose to take up the project concerned with an NGO, fighting for the consumer rights.

The NGO, Consumer Conexion is headed by Mr. Bejon Misra, a well known consumer rights activist.

**Goal**

Through this project, we aim to understand the way an NGO functions and eventually replicate the model adopted by Mr. Misra's organization to form a Consumer Rights Forum in social world in future.

**Meeting with the Mentor**

On 25<sup>th</sup> January 2013, we went to meet Mr. Bejon Misra. In our two and a half hour long meeting, we learnt a lot of new things, particularly about the functioning of the organization. Mr. Misra explained how their organization is involved in helping out consumers seeking redressal of their grievances. He shared his experience about his journey so far and expressed his intent to continue the fight until an effective and powerful system is put in place to help out distressed consumers.

Towards the end of the meeting, we sought his advice on how to proceed and replicate a similar model in the social world. Based on his advice and guidance, we decided to carry out a survey first, then share the result and finding's of the survey with Mr. Bejon Misra and then proceed further.

**Activities & Progress**

- The entire project plan and the steps has been finalized and approved by Prof. Mathur, the project incharge.
- Responses to the questions have already been captured.
- There have been enough discussions among the team members about the steps that have to be taken in order to firmly complete this project.
- Although there have been some initial hiccups & delays, but nonetheless the progress has been smooth and satisfactory.

**OUTPUTS, OUTCOMES & DESIRABLES**

Outputs so far are:

- The responses from the fellow colleagues was taken and recorded
- Since almost all of the responses were captured in the presence of the group members, this helped in allaying any apprehensions & doubts as group members were able to explain properly the entire merit behind carrying out the survey
- While the numbers of respondents were small, the survey conducted produced some very interesting initial feedback that certainly will help in structuring and designing any future clubs/ forums.
- I planned to prepare a PowerPoint presentation in order to briefly explain the outcomes of the survey.

- *Although our team has done a commendable job in capturing feedback from the respondents, however the team caution against relying too much on a relatively small sample.*

### **Dissemination**

- The team met Mr. Bejon Misra, a Consumer Rights Activist to gain an insight into the world of the NGOs particularly the NGOs working in the area of protecting the consumer rights.
- Prof. Shivendra Mathur explained to the team the entire rationale behind having this project. The team members have been in touch with Prof. Mathur in order to remain focused towards the larger goal of this project.

### **EVALUATION**

- There have been outline discussions among the team members. Moreover, the team is in touch with Mr. Piyush Misra.
- I was in the process of trying to evaluate the elements/ questions asked in the questionnaire.

### **ISSUES & CHALLENGES**

- There has been an issue with some of the questions mentioned in the questionnaire. We are following up the suggestions put forth by the respondents to try to tackle some issues raised by them.
- During the get together function, a lot of questionnaires were distributed among the students. Unfortunately, hardly 27% of the questionnaires distributed could be recovered. This did delay the entire process significantly. For that matter, we ensured that the response sheets were filled in by the respondents in the presence of the team members.
- It was a bonus to be able to conduct the survey on this scale as the team was able to interact with a lot of students and helped in understanding their perceptions towards the other related issues.
- We are well aware of the need to see this project reach its desired conclusion by inculcating all the suggestions put forth and at the same time to complete it within the given time. For that matter, the team plans to take help from distinguished members in order to fully understand the results of the survey.

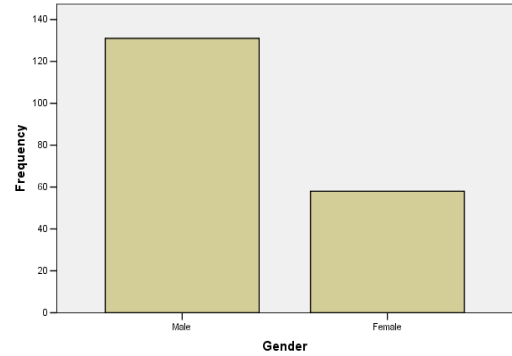
### **SUPPORT**

- Prof. Shivendra Mathur outlined the broad steps the team would take for this project.
- The team met Mr. Bejon Misra, who provided the much needed information about the functioning of an NGO.
- All the three team members were present during all the discussions & presentations.

**SURVEY OUTPUT:**

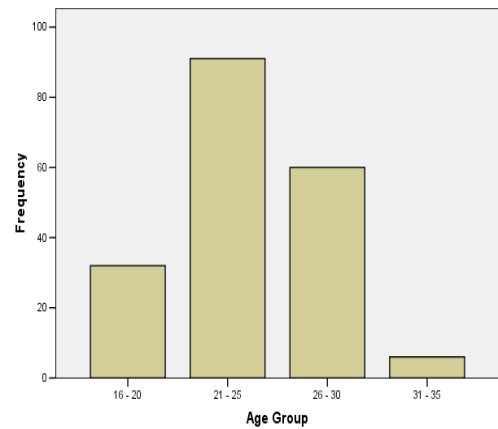
**Gender**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	131	69.3	69.3	69.3
Female	58	30.7	30.7	100.0
Total	189	100.0	100.0	



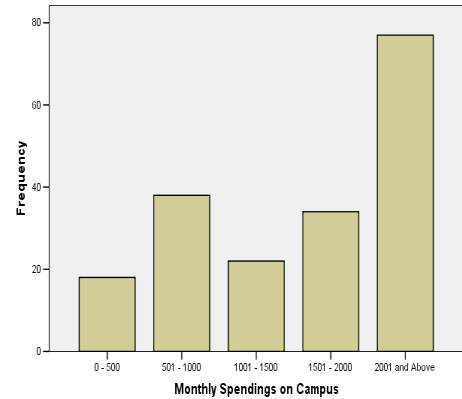
**Age Group**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 16 - 20	32	16.9	16.9	16.9
21 - 25	91	48.1	48.1	65.1
26 - 30	60	31.7	31.7	96.8
31 - 35	6	3.2	3.2	100.0
Total	189	100.0	100.0	



**Monthly Spending's on Campus**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0 - 500	18	9.5	9.5	9.5
501 - 1000	38	20.1	20.1	29.6
1001 - 1500	22	11.6	11.6	41.3
1501 - 2000	34	18.0	18.0	59.3
2001 and Above	77	40.7	40.7	100.0
Total	189	100.0	100.0	



**Statistics**

	Most common products purchased by students on campus	Have you ever found the defects	complained to	Was Response satisfactory
N	189	189	105	105
Valid				
Missing	0	0	84	84

**Frequency Table****Most common products purchased by students on campus**

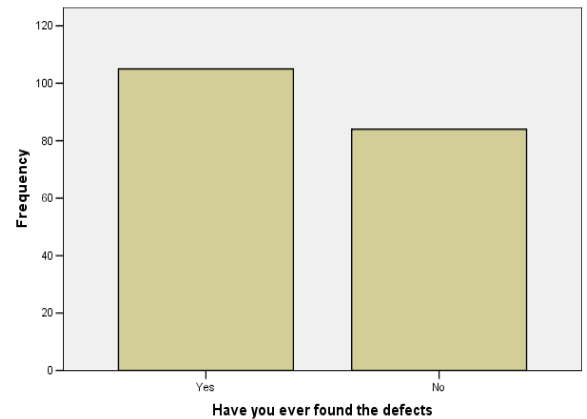
	Frequenc y	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid BFK,TU CK	1	.5	.5	.5
Books, F	4	2.1	2.1	2.6
Books, S	4	2.1	2.1	4.8
books,on	1	.5	.5	5.3
chicken,	2	1.1	1.1	6.3
chips,pa	1	.5	.5	6.9
chocolate	2	1.1	1.1	7.9
cloths,f	1	.5	.5	8.5
cold dri	3	1.6	1.6	10.1
Confecti	2	1.1	1.1	11.1
cosmetic	3	1.6	1.6	12.7
Cosmetic	2	1.1	1.1	13.8
deodrant	1	.5	.5	14.3
Eatable	2	1.1	1.1	15.3
Fastfood	2	1.1	1.1	16.4
FMCG,C ab	1	.5	.5	16.9
FMCG,T RA	1	.5	.5	17.5
food	2	1.1	1.1	18.5
Food	1	.5	.5	19.0
Food ,Re	1	.5	.5	19.6
Food Ite	1	.5	.5	20.1
Food onl	2	1.1	1.1	21.2
Food pro	2	1.1	1.1	22.2
food rec	1	.5	.5	22.8
Food Rec	1	.5	.5	23.3
food shi	1	.5	.5	23.8
food sta	1	.5	.5	24.3
Food Sta	1	.5	.5	24.9
food, bo	1	.5	.5	25.4
Food, Cl	2	1.1	1.1	26.5

Food, Co	1	.5	.5	27.0
Food, Da	2	1.1	1.1	28.0
Food, On	3	1.6	1.6	29.6
food, re	2	1.1	1.1	30.7
Food, Re	3	1.6	1.6	32.3
Food, Sh	5	2.6	2.6	34.9
food, st	1	.5	.5	35.4
Food, St	10	5.3	5.3	40.7
Food, Tr	2	1.1	1.1	41.8
food,boo	4	2.1	2.1	43.9
Food,cab	1	.5	.5	44.4
food,col	2	1.1	1.1	45.5
food,cos	2	1.1	1.1	46.6
food,gro	2	1.1	1.1	47.6
food,mil	2	1.1	1.1	48.7
food,rec	3	1.6	1.6	50.3
Food,Rec	2	1.1	1.1	51.3
food,sta	2	1.1	1.1	52.4
foods sn	2	1.1	1.1	53.4
juice,re	1	.5	.5	54.0
Maggie,t	1	.5	.5	54.5
mobile r	1	.5	.5	55.0
Mobile r	5	2.6	2.6	57.7
noodles,	2	1.1	1.1	58.7
online s	8	4.2	4.2	63.0
Online s	5	2.6	2.6	65.6
Online S	3	1.6	1.6	67.2
recharge	6	3.2	3.2	70.4
Recharge	17	9.0	9.0	79.4
sanitatr	2	1.1	1.1	80.4
shampoo,	1	.5	.5	81.0
Shopping	2	1.1	1.1	82.0
Snacks,	11	5.8	5.8	87.8
snacks,s	4	2.1	2.1	89.9
snacks,T	1	.5	.5	90.5
Soap,det	1	.5	.5	91.0
soap,oil	2	1.1	1.1	92.1
softdrink	2	1.1	1.1	93.1
Stationary	5	2.6	2.6	95.8

Stationary	2	1.1	1.1	96.8
tea,cata	2	1.1	1.1	97.9
toileter	2	1.1	1.1	98.9
Travelli	2	1.1	1.1	100.0
Total	189	100.0	100.0	

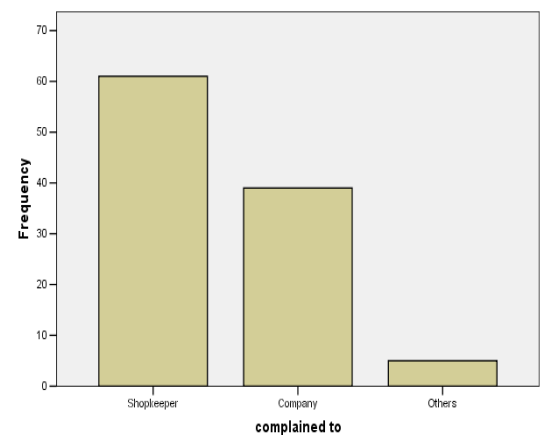
**Have you ever found the defects**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	105	55.6	55.6	55.6
No	84	44.4	44.4	100.0
Total	189	100.0	100.0	



**complained to**

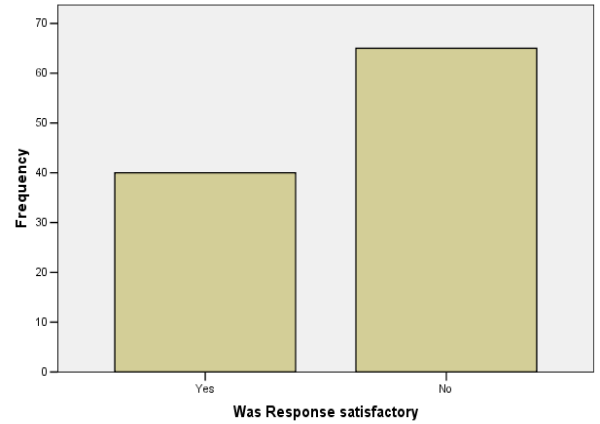
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Shopkeeper	61	32.3	58.1	58.1
Company	39	20.6	37.1	95.2
Others	5	2.6	4.8	100.0
Total	105	55.6	100.0	
Missing System	84	44.4		
Total	189	100.0		





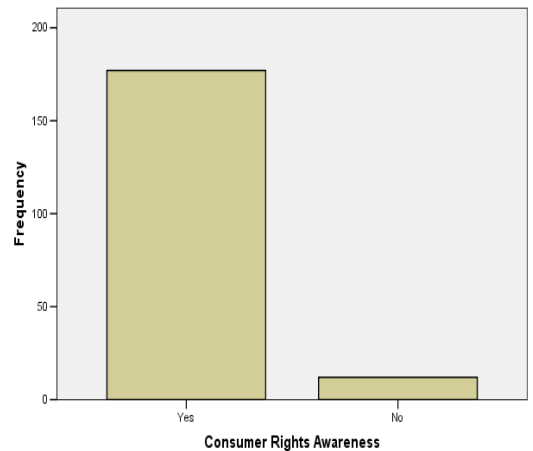
**Was Response satisfactory**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	40	21.2	38.1	38.1
	No	65	34.4	61.9	100.0
	Total	105	55.6	100.0	
Missing	System	84	44.4		
Total		189	100.0		



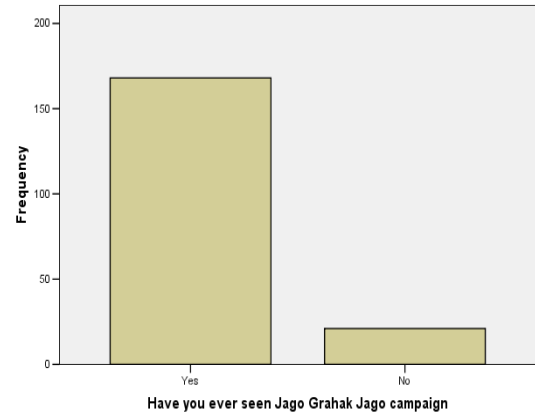
**Consumer Rights Awareness**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	177	93.7	93.7	93.7
	No	12	6.3	6.3	100.0
	Total	189	100.0	100.0	



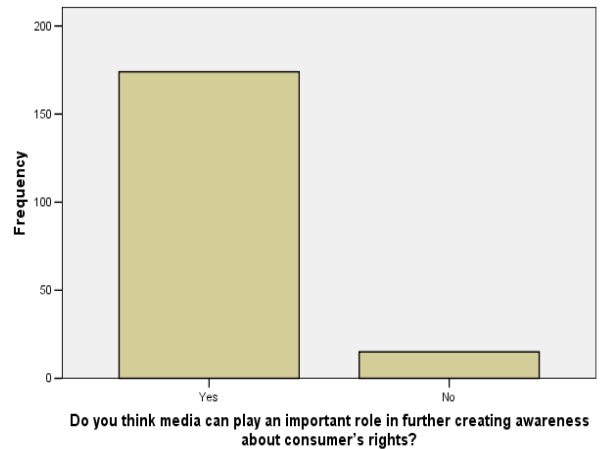
**Have you ever seen Jago Grahak Jago campaign**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	168	88.9	88.9	88.9
No	21	11.1	11.1	100.0
Total	189	100.0	100.0	



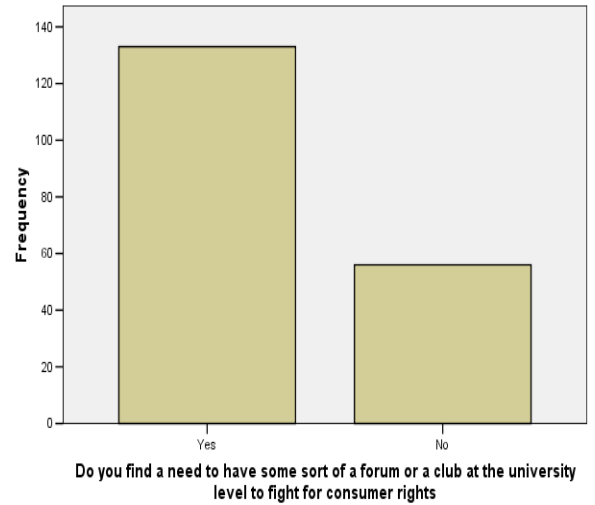
**Do you think media can play an important role in further creating awareness about consumer's rights?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	174	92.1	92.1	92.1
No	15	7.9	7.9	100.0
Total	189	100.0	100.0	



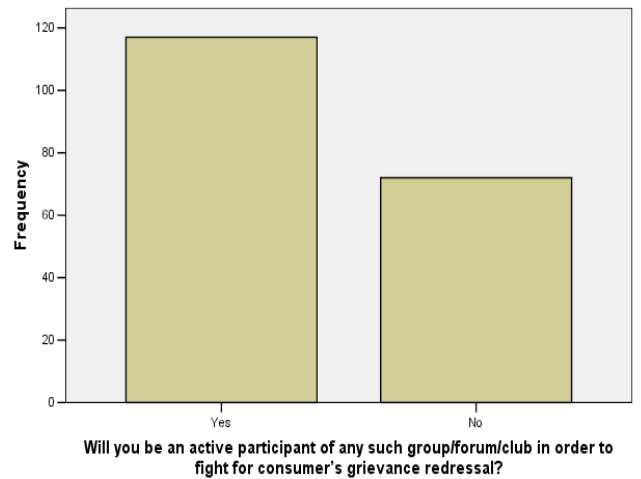
**Do you find a need to have some sort of a forum or a club at the university level to fight for consumer rights**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	133	70.4	70.4	70.4
	No	56	29.6	29.6	100.0
	Total	189	100.0	100.0	



**Will you be an active participant of any such group/forum/club in order to fight for consumer's grievance redressal?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	117	61.9	61.9	61.9
	No	72	38.1	38.1	100.0
	Total	189	100.0	100.0	



## **CONCLUSION:**

- In general, students living at a university campus would spend mostly on food and stationery items, which is quite evident from our findings.
- Food items, due to their perishable nature are at a greater risk of defection.
- Nearly half of the products purchased from the campus are found to be defected (44% to be precise), which is quite a high figure considering the fact that vendors supplying to universities are expected to strictly focus on their quality standards.
- Over 61% consumer grievance redressals were found to be dissatisfactory which presses the need for a consumer rights forum within the university
- Moreover 70% of the students are in favor of having a platform to share their grievances and seek timely and effective redressal, be it a club or a forum. To add to that, approx 62% students would like to be a part of such an initiative
- It is refreshing to note that over 92% students are aware about their rights as a consumer
- With the rise in social media and its extensive reach, a majority of students are of the opinion that social media campaigns, like the 'Jaago Grahak Jaago' campaign are effective ways to create consumer rights awareness

To sum it up, we have had an enriching experience while working on this project which was focused on one of the most critical social concerns in today's world i.e. consumer rights awareness. The results of our research and analysis have been extremely positive and support the idea of having a consumer rights forum within universities and society. I hope that our work forms the base for starting such a forum within the society and institutions of similar nature.