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Full Length Research Paper

Performance Analysis of the Consumer Disputes Redressal Agencies in India

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This study details the effectiveness and performance of the consumer redressal agencies in India. It shows that the agencies are working professionally and trying to redress the grievances of consumers at the earliest. The performance is analysed based on the number of cases disposed at the National commission, State commission and the District forums. It is evident from the analysis that the district forums performance is better compared to others and the National Commission and State Commissions have to review their working so that the pending cases can be disposed at a fast rate which will bring the smoothness to give justice to consumers on the right time.

Keywords: Consumer Grievances, Consumer Forums, Justice

INTRODUCTION

Consumer Protection has its roots in the rich soil of our civilization. Human values and ethical practices were given great importance in ancient India. The need for consumer protection is recognized by law makers in India in ancient times. It was a very well realized that a consumer is prone to exploitation on the part of providers of goods and services. It is the duty of every organisation to satisfy consumer by providing quality goods and services at right place, time and in right quantity at a fair price. For fifty-five years, the Sale of Goods Act of 1930 (SGA) was the main source of consumer protection in India. The SGA was the exclusive consumer legislation until 1986, with the passage of the Consumer Protection Act of 1986, designed to supplement the remedies already provided under the SGA. Consumer protection was also provided within India's criminal justice system.

Customers, the end users of the products, are being challenged in many ways. The sayings, "caveat vendor" is only an illusion. Customers are exploited in any many ways like adulteration, hoarding, unfair trade practices,

etc. Consumers must be aware about their rights and responsibilities and the legal protection available to them. The Government of India has a most important dependability to protect the consumers' welfare and privileges through suitable policy measures, lawful structures and organizational structure. The relationship between a seller and the buyer in the olden days was based on the principle of "Caveat emptor" which means "let the buyers beware". It was the buyers' responsibility to choose the correct and quality goods. The maxim relieved the seller of the obligation to make disclosure about the quality of the product. But with the growth of trade and its globalization the rule no more holds true. The development of the consumer protection movement has started with the industrialization. In today's social formation, that is also called the information society, the consumer is obliged to monitor and analyse the continuous and dense flow of information like a computer. The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 seeks to protect the interests of consumers and safeguards against various

Table A

Particulars	National Commission		State Commissions		District Forums	
	No. of Cases	%	No. of Cases	%	No. of Cases	%
Cases disposed of since inception	72955	87.37	525919	85.25	3068805	92.15
Cases pending	10543	12.63	91017	14.75	261281	7.85
Total cases filed since inception	83498	100	616936	100	3330086	100

Table B

Sl. No.	Name of State	Cases filed since inception	Cases disposed of since inception	% of Disposal
1	Andhra Pradesh	194783	189270	97.17
2	A & N Islands	330	301	91.21
3	Arunachal Pradesh	404	340	84.16
4	Assam	13704	11976	87.39
5	Bihar	85763	74587	86.97
6	Chandigarh	47756	46635	97.65
7	Chattisgarh	38436	35163	91.48
8	Daman & Diu and DNH	162	144	88.89
9	Delhi	249505	234740	94.08
10	Goa	6522	6020	92.30
11	Gujarat	179965	168945	93.88
12	Haryana	225803	209130	92.62
13	Himachal Pradesh	58272	54839	94.11
14	Jammu & Kashmir	20792	18855	90.68
15	Jharkhand	34689	31209	89.97
16	Karnataka	159605	154804	96.99
17	Kerala	184601	175875	95.27
18	Lakshadweep	77	65	84.42
19	Madhya Pradesh	191125	176183	92.18
20	Maharashtra	265476	241398	90.93
21	Manipur	1037	1012	97.59
22	Meghalaya	847	750	88.55
23	Mizoram	3466	2819	81.33
24	Nagaland	290	266	91.72
25	Odisha	95436	88188	92.41
26	Puducherry	2956	2714	91.81
27	Punjab	158946	153479	96.56
28	Rajasthan	302826	272183	89.88
29	Sikkim	296	280	94.59
30	Tamil Nadu	104990	98719	94.03
31	Tripura	2925	2776	94.91
32	Uttar Pradesh	576466	500509	86.82
33	Uttarakhand	35726	33321	93.27
34	West Bengal	86109[1]	81310	94.43
	TOTAL	3330086	3068805	92.15

forms of exploitation. It has setup three-tier machinery which consists of District Forums, State Commissions and the National Commission along with consumer protection councils in every District, State and at the apex level to protect and promote the consumers' interest through speedy redressal of their grievances. National commission is set up by the Central Government, the State Commissions and the District Forums are set up, in

each state and District, respectively, by the concerned State Government

Statement of Problem

The interdependence of the world economy and global character of several company practices have contributed

Table C

Particulars	No. of Cases	%
Cases disposed of since inception	3667679	90.99
Cases pending	362841	9.01
Total cases filed since inception	4030520	100

to the development of worldwide consequence on consumer rights safeguard and encouragement. Consumers, clients and customer's world over, are challenging value for money in the form of quality goods and better services. Scientific developments have no doubt made a great blow on the value, accessibility and security of goods and services. As consumers are ignorant and unorganized, they need protection also. But the fact is that the consumers are unaware about the protection which is legally available to them.

Objectives

- To analyse the number of cases filed/disposed of at various redressal forums
- To compare the performance of the various redressal agencies

METHODOLOGY

The study which is investigative in nature attempts to examine the effective presentation of Consumer disputes redressal agencies functioning at National, State and District level of India. The objective is to analyse the number of cases filed/disposed and to compare the performance of efficiency of various consumer dispute Redressal agencies working at national, state and district levels. The secondary data have been collected from Annual reports, bulletins and journals published by the voluntary consumer organisation in India, e-journals, websites, Articles and news related to consumer protection.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Analysis of Cases filed/disposed at Various Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission as on 28.10.13

The Table A shows the total number of cases filed in the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission of India till 28.10.2013 is 83498. The table clearly exhibits that 87% of the cases filed since inception of NCDRC of India have been disposed off and only 13% is pending. It is evident that the commission is trying its best to effectively redress the grievances of the consumers at the national level. Further, the total number of cases filed

in the State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission of India till 28.10.2013 is 616936. 85% of the cases filed since inception of NCDRC of India have been disposed off and 15% is pending. It is evident that the commission is trying their level best to sort out all the issues but the percentage of disposed cases is less when compared to the national level. The Table shows the total number of cases filed in the District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission of India till 28.10.2013 is 3330086 and exhibits that 92% of the cases filed since inception of NCDRC of India have been disposed off and only 8% is pending. It can be seen that the District Forums performance is better.

Analysis of Cases filed and disposed of at the District Consumer Disputes Redressal Forums

It can be observed from Table B that Chandigarh stood first with 97.65 % and Mizoram stood last with 81.33% on the basis of disposal rate of the cases. When considering the overall performance of various redressal agencies in India, it gives a clear picture that the performance is relatively good as the disposal rate of cases is 91% which is exhibited in Table C.

Analysis of Cases filed/disposed at all the three tier agencies as on 28.10.2013

SUGGESTIONS

- Establish relations through Universities, Schools, etc to highlight the requirement of consumer education in the program of study
- Encourage and support universal alertness of the rights of the consumer by cheering consumer education
- Motivational campaigns for prospective customers both in urban and rural areas should be performed.
- Arrange seminars and workshops and offer a proposal for worn argument of the issues and develop suitable corrective action.

CONCLUSION

Consumer protection is always a matter of great concern. From the analysis of performance with regard to the disposal rate of cases of various Consumer Disputes Redressal Agencies in India, it is found that the agencies at the district level are on the top followed by national

level and state level it is observed that district level agencies are working efficiently than the national and state level agencies. There is still need of agencies functioning at state and national level to dispose of the pending cases as early as possible by creating supplementary benches as per the provisions of Consumer Protection Act, 1986.

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