Preface

In recent years, it has increasingly been realized that consumption level of society has increased manifold. Mass media has revolutionized the role of marketeers through advertisements. Instead of providing satisfaction to public at large, the business marketeers tend to ignore the basic rights of the consumers. They are indulging in various types of mal-practices which show their shortsightedness in market place. Sometimes they resort to self-regulation but it remains a myth in the eyes of public.

Beside this, government is providing a major part of services to public through running public utilities. But it is not without charge. Its monopolistic power has proved to be detrimental to public. The legislative measures have proved to be inadequate.

Against this backdrop, it is noted that no agency is perfect in protecting the interests of consumers. Only consumers have to take care of themselves. In the light of this, the role of Consumer Organisations (COs) has been studied. COs are providing yeoman services to the public at large. These organisations are running on democratic philosophy, which means that it is the organisation of the people, by the people and for the people.

The functions of COs can broadly be grouped under into five categories such as consumer awareness and education, product appraisal, networking with other organisations, complaints settlements and consumer research. But most of the consumer organisations are providing one or two services at a time.

In this investigation an attempt has been made to study the activities of various consumer organisations into lime-light. In addition to this opinions of various groups i.e. Business Organisations, COs, and consumers toward the role of COs have been evaluated.

This study has been arranged in seven chapters. First chapter deals with consumer exploitation, marketing development vis-a-vis consumerism, concept of consumerism, marketing practices in India, the world consumer movement, development of consumer movement in India, and role of government and business in consumer protection.
Chapter second presents review of literature which is grouped under two heads viz. consumer movement in India and consumer organisation.

Chapter third outlines the methodology of research after tracing out the need for present endeavour and objectives of the study, research methodology has been explained in the relevant details.

Chapter four deals with development of consumer organisations in India.

Under chapter five activities of COs have been discussed in details. Various activities of consumer organisations have been divided into six sections including profile of consumer organisations. First section includes with profile of consumer organisations, second and third sections deal with consumer awareness and education and product appraisal respectively. Section four deals with institutional relationships whereas fifth and sixth sections deal with complaints settlement and consumer research respectively.

Chapter six presents the opinion of consumers toward the role of consumer organisations viz. publication of magazines, membership, utility of information imparted by the publications, nature of cases undertaken for settlement and response of consumers towards various organisations as well as complaints handling procedure.

Chapter seven includes the analysis comparative opinion of different groups i.e consumers, consumer organisations and business organisations about the role performed by COs in consumer protection.

Last chapter presents the summary of findings, suggestions and areas of future research.