CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
The primary idea of consumer movement was provided by the writings of R.H. Tawney’s ‘The Acquisitive Society’. ‘The Theory of the Leisure Class’ by T. Veblen further added to the idea of consumer movement. The concept of wide spread consumer discontent crystallized by the joint work to Stuart Chase and F.J. Schlink’s ‘Your Money’s Worth’.

In 1960, there was emergence of the third wave of consumerism. E.B. Weiss (1967) and others observed that this period had attributed consumer unrest to rising public standards of business conduct and social responsibility brought about by increasing education and sophistication. Reinforcing and interacting with current consumer unrest, a number of books Galbraith’s ‘The Affluent Society’, Jessica Mitford’s ‘American Way of Death’ and ‘Silent Spring’ by Rachel Carson’s brought out contents related to environmental pollutions and use of chemical in food items.

Ralph Nader, a charismatic consumer champion had emerged in late 1960’s as ‘Father of Consumer Movement’. His efforts coupled with an increasing public awareness of consumer problems, led the consumer movement to the present state as a growing social, economic and potential force. Ralph Nader’s book ‘Unsafe at any Speed’ (1965) brought the consumer safety issue to the fire.

Consumer protection received a great attention in India with enactment of CPA, 1986. Immediately after enactment of this Act; some good articles were published in 1987 in newspapers and in some leading journals. In late 1990, the first book having literature exclusively related to CPA, 1986 appeared in India. Most of the books published after that are in the form of legal commentaries on the CPA, 1986. The reporting of the case laws started only in January, 1991. Since then a lot of literature has been published in form of books, journals and articles in the newspapers. A number of consumer law reporters are also instrumental today where one can find abundant evidence of a large number of complaint petitions filed throughout India.

Review of literature is concerned with reviewing the available stock of literature related to the area of study. Through review of literature, the researcher made an attempt to understand the problem in a better way and tried to find out gap in the existing studies. This literature was available in the form of book, journals, periodicals, press reports, annual reports, booklets, pamphlets etc.

Thus, in the present chapter, literature related to this study was reviewed to gain knowledge on the related aspects of the research problem to make the research study move to right
direction. A lot of research work was done by various scholars on different aspects of consumer protection like consumer awareness, consumer complaining behavior, and functioning of consumer courts etc. Some of the significant work done on various aspects of consumer protection has been discussed in this chapter.

**Munshi (1972)** in his article 'Time to Protect the Consumer' examined the plight of consumer movement in the U.S., U.K and Japan and came to the conclusion that the U.S model consumerism is not suitable for India because our market economy cannot be compared with that of the U.S and suggested the adoption of the British or Scandinavian model because our market economy is more suitable to that of Scandinavian countries. He enlightened us stating that the U.S Congress formulated regulatory agencies of government as early as 1872. With the multifarious activities of the Inter-State Commerce Commission, Federal Power Commission, Federal Trade Commission and National Bureau of standards and other regulatory agencies the U.S government tried to protect consumers.

**Day and Bodur (1978)** presented some of the results from a broader study of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction and post-dissatisfaction response. A comprehensive study of consumer services, using the data from a probability sample of 125 households in a single Midwestern city was carried by them. It was found that in more than 20% of the instances of expressed dissatisfaction, no action was taken and that 46.5% of reported actions were of a private nature, such as boycotting the supplier or warning friends.

**Saxena (1978)** made a comprehensive study on consumerism. He analyzed and compared the Indian and western consumerism. He concluded that major causes for consumerism in India were: soaring prices, poor and sub-standard products and service performance, inadequate production, gross adulteration, arbitrary weight and measures, deceptive advertising and publicity campaign.

**Khamesra (1980)** dealt with consumer protection in India. He stressed on the need of Indian consumer to be educated about his rights. This practice had already been successfully adopted in USA consumer protection. The same can be made possible in India also. In order to achieve the target of effective enforcement by legislation and a sustained drive to educate the citizens is necessary.

**Sahu (1981)** wrote that everybody is a consumer of some kind or the other of goods/services so consumerism is concerned with the entire society. He presented a wide picture of consumer problems and concluded that the primary problems of consumers in India were: over charge, under weight, adulteration, imitation, defective packing and bad services by fraudulent, deceptive, unethical and unscrupulous businessmen. Illiteracy, ignorance and lack
of awareness of the majority of Indian consumers about their rights further accentuated the problems. Consumers can be provided with the solution of this menacing problem, if both the government and general public join hands with all sincerity.

A penetrating insight into the issues involved in the consumer protection movement was being offered by Chaudhary (1982). He emphasized that the government, business and society should find it useful in enlightening themselves of the emerging forces emanating from the buying side of business and understanding the social, political, economic and psychological aspects of Indian consumer’s movements.

Sarwate (1982) alerted the consumer community against exploitation by black marketing, adulteration, short-weight etc. He has called consumers to shed their passivity and tolerance and assume a degree of militancy to bring the offending producers and retailers on their knees in India.

Subramanyam (1982) conducted a study in Gwatur district of Andhra Pradesh to elicit the opinion of educated consumers. He found that a large majority of persons became aware of the terms such as ‘consumer’, ‘consumer protection’ and ‘consumer movement’ quite late. Newspapers and magazines were the primary source of information in this regard. About a quarter of the respondents came to know about these terms during their casual discussions with their friends.

Singh (1983) conducted a study in the Union Territory of Chandigarh to found the awareness level and opinion of consumers. He observed that 51.6 percent of the consumers were fully aware of the existence of a District Forum in the city, while a good number of consumers 28.1 percent were not at all aware of it. Of these who were aware, 50 percent were found to be members of some consumer organizations. However, the rest of the respondents said that although they felt the need, they did not have the time to approach the District Forum. In their opinion, it was useless to become a member of consumer organization.

Verma (1985) on "AGMARK for Consumer Protection" had dealt with the adulteration, labeling, testing, packing etc. He has cautioned about the susceptibility of edible oils to adulteration, emphasizing the need for AGMARK certification followed by a review of testing methods and sealing procedures so that the grading systems can be made fool-proof.

Narain (1987) deliberated on various legislative measures enacted for consumer protection. The main thrust of the article was to suggest the improvements for the effective implementation of the CPA, 1986 and the need for a strong, effective and popular consumer movement.
Sastry (1987) strongly expressed his views that as a tax payer, citizen and as a buyer, the consumer should have the right to expect that he will get the right type of goods, of right quality, at the right time and at the right price. He detailed the legislative measures for consumer protection enacted in India. As a citizen consumer has the right to invoke the provisions of Articles 32 and 226 of the Constitution of India to approach the Supreme Court or the High Court by filing writ petitions for protection. He mentioned that, in spite of the many regulations, the Indian consumer continued to suffer because as a consumer he has failed to develop consciousness and organize himself to fight against the exploitations.

Garg (1988) expressed that quality goods at a fair price in right quantity and clean environment are the fundamental rights of every citizen; but these rights are infringed upon by the traders by supplying adulterated and substandard quality of goods. He has opined that the government had enacted the CPA, 1986 and amended the MRTP Act in 1986 for protecting consumer interests. Further, a fool-proof self-regulating mechanism will have to be evolved by the businessmen to save the consumer from being fleeced at the hands of the unscrupulous traders.

Malhotra (1988) in his prize winning article has brought out the following reasons for the failure of administrative machinery in our county. Grievance officers merely acted as a passive agency and considerable time was taken to provide redress. The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances which was set up by the government had received around 10-11 lakhs complaints and disposed around 9 to 10 lakhs leaving at least over one lakh of people every year dissatisfied just on account on non-disposal of their complaints.

Cochin University of Science and Technology has conducted a seminar on consumerism on March 18, 1989. In the seminar, "Consumer Protection: Evolving Norms and Institutions" (1989), the orators recommended the following:

1. Setting up of long- awaited Consumer Grievance Redressal Forums without delay.
2. Need for the state's assistance for VCOs preferably through a statutory autonomous corporation.
3. Setting up of Consumer Assistance and Service Centers in rural areas.
4. Review of the role of state-owned public utility services in the national economy, rate fixation, safety measures and dispute settlement etc. to make them more responsive to the needs of the public.
5. The review of inadequacies in the existing law, Sale of Goods Act, 1930 which requires the consumer to prove negligence.
Dhyani (1989) conducted a study of the two north-west urban towns of Uttar Pradesh. He found that product discontentment among consumers was quite high, that only 50% of the dissatisfied consumers filed complaints and out of these only 30% were provided with any relief. Where virtually no relief was provided, the consumer did not pursue the complaint any further and none at all went to the courts. This study also revealed that the consumer awareness regarding consumer protection laws was disappointingly low.

Bijlani (1990) gave a noteworthy contribution in the field of consumer movement in India. He assessed the potential of mass media and their limitations. He defined consumer education and explained its significance; spell out the consumer rights and responsibilities, discussed consumer movements abroad and in India; deliberated on the use of mass media for consumer purposes and explore the possible constraints in the process. It was suggested that consumer groups need to maintain close liaison with media; provide factual, unbiased information for public interest; and take advantage of public service advertising over TV and AIR. He asserted that consumer groups and the mass media must work hand in hand, appreciably their common interests and respective constraints.

Dhyani, Saklani and Thakur (1990) established that over 60 per cent consumers were dissatisfied with present day standards of durable and non-durable goods and only about half of them actually complained to retailers concerned. Of those, who complained, a little over 50 per cent managed to obtain relief by way of product exchange or price refund. The authors pointed out that the faith of the people in the nation's judicial machinery was not strong because of the delay in disposing of complaints.

Himachalam and Jayachandra (1990) pointed out that legislation alone could not safeguard the interest of consumers. There has been a strong need of awareness, education, understanding and realization of the rights and privileges on the part of consumers. More than anything else a strong organization would really help in building up effective consumerism in our country.

Krishnamurthy (1990) gave an overview of the CPA, 1986 and other legal remedies for the aggrieved consumers. Accordingly, the remedies available to an aggrieved consumer under any other laws have not been affected by the CPA. The remedy of buyer and seller under the Sale of Goods Act, 1930 and the liability for compensation and damages under the Indian Contract Act were not affected by virtue of the commencement of the CPA. Any buyer, even though he is a consumer, has always been entitled to seek remedy against seller for defective goods, deficient quality of goods under the Sale of Goods Act, Indian Contract Act or under the CPA. He further highlighted the fact that since the MRTP Commission functions at Delhi
only, consumer grievances of smaller importance can be solved easily after the enactment of CPA. Critically evaluating the Act, the author stated that the Act could not be considered as a comprehensive piece of legislation because of the room for uncertainties and vagueness and lack of powers to pass interim orders for preventing the trader from selling, distributing or otherwise disposing goods, about which the dispute relates and is pending in the Forum.

**Kumar and Batra (1990)** conducted a survey in small cities to assess the consumer’s rights awareness and actions. The study indicates that most of the consumers were well aware of their rights, but only a few consumers exercised them. This practice was prevalent not because consumers were lethargic or inactive or important, but the real cause for not availing consumer rights was the unsatisfactory response of their voice and actions.

**Singh (1990)** evaluated CPA as an effective tool to deal with those manufacturers and traders who indulge in malpractices in their trade. He pointed out that Indian consumers were cheated to the tune of Rs. 20,000/- million a year by way of poor quality, quantity or overpricing. A survey conducted by the CGSI in collaboration with the Bombay Municipal Corporation's health department revealed that almost half the samples of groundnut oil collected from various parts of the city were adulterated. Another study revealed that 20 to 35 per cent of the food stuffs sold in the market were adulterated. The author stressed the need for awakening the consumer to make the CPA successful by fighting against the deceitful vendors, traders and manufacturers.

**Subramanyam and Narayana (1990)** made an effort to identify the efforts and loopholes in the administrative machinery, weakness of cooperatives towards enforcement of CPA. They appraised the efforts of some of the voluntary organizations and suggested the ways and means to strengthen them.

**Bhatnagar (1991)** explained the problems of the consumers and highlighted the consumer protection strategies.

**Eradi (1991)** dealt with consumer protection in India. He made suggestions for making people aware of their rights as a consumer.

**George (1992a)** arrived at the following analytical findings in his research work. 58% of the consumer organizations engaged advocates while 50% favoured to ban the advocates. When 68% respondents appointed advocates to argue their cases, only 25% of consumers appointed advocates. 84% of the forum members were against banning advocates. His findings regarding the time taken for disposal of complaints revealed that 58% of cases filed by consumer organizations and 69% filed by the consumers took more than 6 months for disposal where as 5% of the forum members stated that it would take more than 6 months for
disposal. Other findings include that 66% of the consumers interested to approach the Forum again in future while 18% were reluctant to approach the Forum. 39% of the consumers had specific complaints about the functioning of the State Commissions. 68% of the Forum members and 83% of VCOs felt the need for inclusion of free services within the purview of the Act.

George (1992b) stated that the existence of legislation to protect consumer will not in itself ensure enforcement of the same and protect consumers. A vigorous consumer education is strongly needed to make the consumer aware of his rights and other protective measures. There should be mass consciousness about consumer’s role and rights in society.

Panigrahi (1992) thought that in spite of the many measures, legislative and administrative, consumer protection still remained a myth. The consumers were exploited quite often. He has been helpless and an easy prey to the commercial and industrial leviathans wielding economic and political power. In a society like ours, with the bulk of illiterate people still suffering from abject poverty, the battle for consumer protection has to be fought on different fronts. The effectiveness of the consumer protection legislation would be diminished, if the consumers were not aware of their rights and remedies. So, education of consumers through the mass media is very much necessary to make them conscious of their rights and of the legislative measures.

Sastry (1992) said that in the midst of his day-to-day consumer problems the consumer was bewildered. He did like ‘Alice in the Wonder Land’ not know which way to turn and from whom to seek counsel. Many of the victims of adulteration reached their grave in silence, even though specific laws were there to protect them. At this juncture, there is dire need for voluntary organizations to play a vital role in helping and rendering assistance to the ill-fated consumer in protecting his rights.

Singh, Yadav, Sangwan and Gandhi (1992) conducted a study in Hissar district of Haryana for measuring the consumer awareness among 50 women randomly selected. It was found that 10% of rural and 78% urban respondents were aware of ISI marks. It was really disturbing to note that about 90% of the rural respondents were ignorant about all their rights as a consumer and only around 60% of urban respondents were aware of their rights as consumers. The results of the survey revealed that nearly most of the rural respondents and 90% of the urban respondents have never heard of consumer protection laws, while 2% of the rural and 10% of the urban respondents were aware of the CPA, 1986. The authors suggested that there is an urgent need to educate consumers as to their rights and responsibilities through simple and effective means of communication.
Thakur (1992) observed that executives recognized business failings in the area of advertisements, complaint processing and pricing, but felt that government intervention was necessary in order to protect consumers. Students seemed to be more concerned about consumer problems like inadequate product information and adulteration besides complaint redressal; however, they were not favorably inclined towards the idea of government regulations i.e. business. Instead they seemed to prefer self-regulation, thus upholding the marketing concept.

Lizzy (1993) studied the efficacy of the consumer redressal agencies in Kerala. He found that the literacy levels were correlated to the filing of complaints in the district forums. The study revealed that the number of complaints received by the redressal agencies was high, where the literacy rate was high or almost equal to the state average literacy rate of 89.81 percent. The study was confined to the redressal agencies and consumers of Kerala state.

Parkashvir (1993) conducted a study on regulations of unfair trade practices in India. Unfair trade practices were also a major concern of consumers. He conducted, inter alia, a survey of consumer opinion about the effectiveness of various district consumer forums, set up under the act. The survey revealed that very few consumers (11.7 percent) viewed them as very effective, whereas 13.8 percent of them had found the forum quite effective. Also the number of consumers approaching the district forums for the redressal of their grievances was found to be more than those approaching the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Commission. It provided a useful data for comparative analysis among two acts.

Singh (1993) evaluated the present state of business self-regulation in India. The author critically examined the ‘Codes of Ethics’ announced by some sections of the business community in India. He cited a few recent cases argued before the Consumer Forums, more particularly by the consumers' associations, where instead of resorting to protracted legal battles, industry reconciled itself to consumers' demands. He showed that how the CP Act propelled the corporate sector to resort to self-regulation. The author concluded that in order to achieve the much-cherished goal of social change in India, much still remains to be accomplished and that there is a need for a co-ordinated approach to solve the problem of consumer protection as law alone may not be effective.

Chandra and Janki (1994) carried a study in the city of Baroda, Gujrat. The results revealed that the awareness among students about consumer protection laws was found to be generally low. However, the awareness among the second and third year students was found to be on an almost equal footing but higher than the first year students. The study also pointed out that even student with legal educational background were found to be unaware of consumer rights
but the legal awareness among undergraduate students was fair inadequate and extra efforts were needed to increase the awareness.

**Kumar (1994)** attempted to define voluntary organizations. He said VCOs denote an organization, whether its workers are paid or unpaid, which is initiated and governed by its own members without external control. According to the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development, a voluntary organization is often interpreted as an "organized entity set up by a group of persons on their own initiative or partly on outside motivation to promote social welfare and also help the people of a locality to undertake activities in a self-reliant manner, partially or wholly, to satisfy their felt needs and also to bring them and the public sector extension services closer to one another for more equitable and effective development of various sections of the rural poor".

**Pinjarkar (1994)** pointed out that the Indian consumer has always been neglected in our economy and exploited because of his lack of literacy and education. In order to protect the consumer from all malpractices, consumers should be awakened, organized and educated to avoid victimization.

**Shastry (1994)** clearly explained consumer protection under the MRTP Act and repeated what many others have already said that the consumer is exploited in a number of ways because of his literacy and ignorance. He has hardly any bargaining power and is least conscious about his rights.

**Singh and Balachandran (1994)** conducted a study about the effectiveness of the implementation of CPA, 1986 as amended in 1993. The main objective of study was to have a detailed examination of cases filed by consumers before district forums and state commissions with a view to ascertain the different categories of consumers who availed of the facilities of the consumer grievance redressal machinery established under Act and were benefited by its decisions. Two districts from each of the following 5 states namely Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal were selected. Four set of questionnaires were prepared to collect information from different segments of respondents i.e. state officials, functionaries of state commission, functionaries of district forums and consumers. A sample of consumers belonging to different income levels who have not so far availed of the facilities of consumer courts was also drawn and their awareness about the rights and remedies under CPA was assessed through personal interviews and questionnaire. The extent of role played by government and other agencies in spreading consumer awareness was also studied through personal interviews, discussions and questionnaires. It was found in survey that majority of the consumers both in urban and rural areas have not
filed the cases under the Act mainly due to lack of awareness of their rights and remedies available to them under the Act. Awareness about the Act and redressal agencies varied positively with the increase in the income and literacy level of consumers. Absence of proper guidance and assistance from voluntary organizations in filing complaints and the fear of exploitation by advocates were also mentioned as some of the reasons for not approaching the consumer courts. It was surprising to note that facilities provided by redressal agencies were mostly availed of by the richer strata of the society. The poorer section of society was not found of making the use of facility to get their grievance redressed in respect of defective supply of essential commodities.

Verma & Sharma (1994) argued that the new middle class represents essentially 20 per cent of the population, constituting an effective market for high priced and high quality goods. They examined the role of consumer organizations in consumer protection (CO). It was observed that COs did not employ more person on full time basis. Most of COs were interested in both individual as well as public cases. The incidents of exploitation were more pronounced due to weights and measures, food adulteration, poor quality, after sale services, hoarding, black marketing and abuse of monopoly position as compared to other types of exploitation. COs depended for finances more on donations as to subscriptions. Apart from this, the average financial aid from state government was less than the central government grants. It was inferred that most of consumer organizations were not getting grants either from central government or state govt. This showed that most of the organizations had limited means for running their day to day activities. Seminars/ conferences and workshops were preferred to other activities such as TV. interviews/ serials, competition and audio-visual aids for improving consumer awareness and educational programmes. COs utilized the services of different types of experts in designing awareness programmes. A majority of COs found easy availability of experts. The impact of consumer education was observed to be high on the issues of 'responsiveness to consumer needs' and 'improving business practices' by 26 percent and 20 percent COs respectively. Majority of COs (84.62 per cent) were unsatisfied with the product rating, testing and pricing activity. They strongly felt for cooperation on the part of government, improvement in the legislation and strict implementation of regulations. The main recourses sought in case of product testing, product rating and product pricing were replacement of product, injunction and warning/ precaution respectively. Majority of COs (83.33 per cent) opined that consumers utilized the information regarding product rating/ testing and pricing "only to some extent". Among government agencies, COs had given priorities for establishing relationships with Consumer Protection
Councils, and Weights and Measures department, ISI and government laboratories. The most preferred methods for the settlement of the complaints were ‘cautioning the defaulting party’, ‘approaching the relevant agencies’ and ‘filing petition in the court’. Whereas ‘pressurizing the defaulters through public boycott’ and ‘organizing public campaign’ were the remote alternatives. One fourth of consumer organizations opined that most of the time consumers were ignorant about redressal mechanism and feared from litigation. The majority of COs felt that the main cause of consumer movement in India was lack of govt. enforcement of consumer laws and exploitation by business class. Other factors were apathy of consumers, lack of national character and poverty, illiteracy among the masses and lack of consumer education. Consumers felt a pressing need for undertaking consumer awareness activities by COs for helping the consumer. Consumer organizations helped the consumers to file petitions in the court or undertook other activities to safeguard their interest. But different groups differed significantly in their opinion towards the acceptance of this fact.

**Arora (1995)** described that consumers are confronted with numerous problems due to lack of knowledge or awareness of their rights and legislations made by the governments. They did not exercise their rights as consumers. To eradicate such ignorance and make the consumer a better buyer and safeguard his interest against the malpractices of businessmen, no measure can be more effective than consumer education. She stressed that it is the first right and duty of business, consumers and every citizen to protect the fundamental rights of consumers.

**Kar (1995)** executed a comparative study on the working of Delhi and Dhankanal district forums. Particularly in Delhi, it was observed that the rate of case disposal was tardy and the backlog of the cases was on the increase. He suggested, inter alia, wider participation of consumer associations in the forums. Further, he also emphasized on imparting of consumer education by the government to consumers. The present study had its limitations for being confined to the district forums of Delhi and Dhankanal.

**Sharma (1995)** investigated the role of consumer organizations in consumer protection. The objective of this study was to appraise the performance of consumer organizations. He analyzed the attitude of complainants towards various activities of consumer organization, besides, the perception of consumers, consumer organizations, business organizations towards role of consumer organization in consumer protection. For the above purpose, the researcher collected the primary data from consumer organizations, business organizations and consumers through questionnaires. A sample size of 110 consumer organization throughout India was surveyed. Consumers of five big consumer organizations were surveyed
for collecting data of consumers and business organizations, 80 complainants and 58 business organizations responded to the survey from the list supplied by consumer organizations. He found that the consumer exploitation is rampant. The concept of consumerism has changed over different years. The practices in Indian market are not conducive to consumer welfare. The various legislations enacted by GoI found to be imperfect in protecting consumers. Consumer organizations didn’t have their own accommodation (75%). Most of these organizations operate in urban areas (62%). The consumer organizations have employees ranging from 1-4 (50%). It was found that almost all the consumer organizations give equal importance to public as well as individual cases. Mostly, they deal with services rather than consumer goods. Most of the organizations have limited finances for running their day to day activities. Consumer organizations educate the consumers through seminar/ workshops/conferences, face to face interaction etc. Majority of consumer organizations (89.23%) have easy availability of experts but fail to avail their services due to many reasons. It is surprising to note that most of the COs did not have adequate knowledge about the various laws pertaining to product rating/ testing and pricing. Majority of organizations lacked initiatives in involving other consumer organizations in designing collective campaigns. 54.55% of consumer organizations received 0-20 complaints per month but few receive more than 100 complaints. Most of the complaints were settled by consumer organizations within 3 months and in some cases they took 9 months and in extreme cases it might extend up to 2 years. Only 31% of consumer organizations were actively involved in research work that is also at local level only. 85% of consumers know about local consumer organizations but only highly educated consumers utilized consumer organization’s services. 70 % of respondents filed on an average 2 complaints with consumer organizations. Illiterate, unemployed consumers were also found satisfied with the support and encouragement received from consumer organizations whenever required.

Singh (1995a) suggested that the significance of social litigation vis-a-vis consumer protection need to be visualized appreciated and encouraged. Promotion of social litigation can make the dream of consumer protection a reality for the ordinary Indian consumer. A study about Trade Mark/ Brand duplication and level of consumer dissonance was carried out by Grover (1996). The study revealed that a majority of respondents (92.2%) did not litigate in court of law and 80.2% respondents did not formally complain to manufacturers’ association. A substantial majority of respondents never lodged a complaint with any government agency. In case of public action against Trade Mark/ Brand duplication, formal complaint to retailer was given the highest priority. It was followed by a complaint to
newspaper and manufacturer. The study revealed that the time, cost, legal procedure involved and the perceptions of consumers like ‘who listens’, ‘others don’t support’ and duplication as normal business practice were primary factors which discourage consumers to take action. It was concluded in the study that in case of duplication people prefer to take private action. Factor Analysis had been done for four Factors- First Clusters included – Attitude of co-consumers (nothing special to you, no gain to you), Self constraining perception (why should I initiate), Self rationalization by consumer (insignificant amount involved). Second cluster was procedural problems (i.e. time, cost and legal procedure involved). Third cluster was concerned with seller’s might (i.e. money and muscle power of seller). Fourth cluster was concerned with allied procedural problems which signify the surrounding environment discouraging consumers from reacting to duplication. Factor analysis showed that consumers’ indifference to duplication was directly affected by seller’s might and seller’s might in turn negatively changed the allied procedural problems. In case of consumers’ indifference to duplication; factor analysis revealed that consumers’ sex, age, earning status and education don’t have paramount importance to their self-restraint (why should I initiate) behavior. In case of procedural problems that discourage a consumer reaction factor analysis revealed that age, earning status and financial standing of consumers considerably affect the importance of procedural problems. Factor analysis about allied procedural problems, the consumer perceived that he didn’t take the action against duplication because co-consumer didn’t support, or he didn’t think necessary to keep on hanging on to the complaint because there was no one to listen him, or there is nothing that is new in it because the practice is considered as normal or there is no gain to the society at large. It was found in the study that earning status of a consumer affects the consumer reaction because of procedural problems. The intervening effect of rule of law, influence pattern of disputing and litigating, perceived outcome of actual dispute plays an important role in providing different dimensions to consumer grievances.

**Giram and Savarkar (1996)** conducted a study in Marathwada region of Maharashtra State. He found that a majority of the respondents i.e. 51.33% were totally ignorant of the CPA’s measures. 49.12% of the respondents were unaware of the District Forum’s set-up under the act. 54.38% percent of the respondents did not know how to file a complaint. It has also been observed that 36.84% respondents did not insist on a purchase receipt. The dissatisfied consumers did not file any complaint before any District Forums because of lack of awareness about the CPA’s provisions. The absence of purchase document was found to be another reason for not complaining.
Singh (1996) stressed that media can play a vital role in molding public opinion. It can be used as a potent tool for consumer education. Due to its wider reach and great impact factor, media can make long strides in the area of consumer protection.

Goel (1997) conducted a doctoral study on media support to reduce knowledge gap on consumer protection among rural women. He found that majority of consumers were not utilizing their rights as consumers.

Jindal (1997) pointed that consumers did not wish to go to consumer forums because they felt that it was the wastage of time and money in the courts. The study elicited that the level of awareness of consumer rights was not very good. Similar findings were reported by Joshi (1993) who carried out post graduation research work about the food purchase habits and consumer awareness of rural and urban housewives in Dharwad district of Karnataka state.

Singh’s (1997) book “Law of Consumer Protection: Principles & Justice”, is a study of CPA, 1986 as a new instrument of justice. He has examined the basic concepts and definitions as used by act in general terms in the context of established legal principles and also their applied version. The book deals with different kinds of consumer goods and services and analyses them subject wise on the basis of decisions delivered by the National Commission and State Commission. Some practice notes for enabling readers and practitioners were provided to understand the way in which different consumer disputes redressal commissions and forums are to be approached for the purpose of filing complaint and appeals and for getting their orders executed.

Arora (1998) traced that consumer movement is like a triangle. The coordinated activities of the voluntary consumer organizations, government and business created the triangle of the consumer movement. Arora opined that the voluntary consumer organization has to play the key role in this triangle for better consumer protection.

Bajracharya (1998) conducted a study of consumers in India and Nepal. He observed that consumers in India were more organized than in Nepal and hence the number of consumer organization here was much larger. Moreover, Nepalese consumers were not aware enough to get united for class action. His study also revealed that the factors which discourage consumers from remedial action were mainly of a legal nature and pertaining to consumer’s self constraining behavior. The most prominent factors among these were consumers’ indifferent attitude 74%, lack of faith in legislative measures 73.6%, avoiding involvement in disputes 72.8%, lack of time 68% and consumer lethargy 56.6%.

Bhajantari (1998) explained that consumer protection is nothing but to provide safeguard against the rights of consumers. A four pronged strategy needed to be adopted and suggested
for consumer protection. He stresses that government is ambivalent due to its confused role as a protection of democracy and vote catcher.

Krishna (1998) stated that the people on a large scale are unaware of their rights, powers and the laws enacted by the government. In spite of presence of various laws and measures, consumer protection and service could not be ensured. It was because of illiteracy and low levels of incomes of consumers that consumerism has not been developed into a strong force as in developed nations like U.S.A.

Venkatesan (1998) expressed that an alert consumer is a protected consumer. It is the need of the hour to make consumer alert. He made an attempt to explain the whole procedure of the CPA. He stressed upon the need of spreading consumer awareness for consumer protection.

Awasthi (1999) described the complete procedure of the CPA and he stresses that consumer guidance is vital for the protection of the consumers. The CPA is a milestone in the history of socio-economic legislations in India.

Bajaj (1999) conducted a study to analyze the consumerism in Haryana. The researcher analyzed the role of different interest groups viz. consumers, business organizations and voluntary consumer organizations in consumer movement and protection. 300 consumers, 40 business organizations and 6 voluntary consumer organizations were taken as samples. The researcher made an attempt to check the awareness level of consumers in regard to consumer rights, various consumer related legislations and quality marks. A survey was made among above respondents to find the factors that can strengthen the consumer movement in Haryana. Business organizations were assessed about their awareness regarding various legislations applicable on businesses. The researcher attempted to analyze the businessmen’s attitude towards consumerism. Voluntary consumer organizations were asked about their activities related to consumer awareness and protection. The various actions taken to improve the effectiveness of consumer awareness programme were assessed in the study. It was found that consumer protection and consumerism is not proving to be effective as it ought to be after the enactment of Consumer Protection Act, 1986.

Chandra (1999) highlighted an important myth about consumer. Consumer in reality is not the ‘king’ of market because he is mostly at the mercy of market forces and advertising hype. An average consumer is gullible easily by the market forces.

Girimaji (1999a) in her book “Consumer Rights for Everyone” provided an exclusive insight into the functioning of consumer courts and the invaluable service rendered by them to redress consumers’ grievances. The author has cautioned the aggrieved consumer by offering
advice on the pitfalls to be avoided while making a complaint in consumer forums. It addressed certain basic questions which all of us have asked at one time or the other. Initially, the author has tried to answer the questions about the constitution of the consumer courts, who can file complaint in these courts, what kind of complaints can be redressed by these courts and also pecuniary, territorial and appellate jurisdiction of these courts. Later, the author explained the functioning of the courts, the procedure followed by them and the relief that can be extended to the aggrieved consumers. Lastly, the author has highlighted various problems in consumer protection like low level of consumer awareness, absence of consumer guidance bureaus in consumer courts, lack of effective implementation of Weights and Measures Act and absence of alternative complaint redressal mechanism etc.

Girimaji (1999b) a famous newspaper columnist and consumer right activist dealt with the complicated issues on food safety vis-à-vis new technologies like genetically modified food and irradiated food. She concluded that consumer protection was more complex than before.

Jain (1999) studied the appraisal of district consumer disputes redressal forums in Haryana. He carried out a survey on functioning of 5 district forums of Haryana taking the data of 1993-1997. The study involved the different interest groups in relation to district forums. He suggested the various measures for improving the functioning of district forums. He suggested that frequent adjournment must be discouraged to achieve the purpose of justice. On adjournment issue, the policy should be not to grant adjournment for more than one time unless justified. Moreover, adjournment may be made a rare exception and not the rule. He further suggested establishing consumer forums at sub division level by amending CPA for speedy disposal of cases & justice at the doorstep. He suggested to increase the number of district forums where the pendency of cases are very large and to be brought within reasonable limits. For de-politicization of consumer forums, he advocated to include one member from registered consumer organizations in operation for more than 10 years. Besides above, many suggestions regarding staffing, infrastructure, library, consumer awareness campaign, research etc. are also included in his study.

Jayaraj (1999) critically reacted on the definition of ‘consumer’ under CPA. Consumer forums have repeatedly held the payment of price or consideration for goods or service to determine a consumer. Jayaraj reported it as a critical aspect of CPA. Therefore, many public utilities like non-maintenance of waiting rooms at railway stations, the non-provision of streetlights, poor road infrastructure or municipal services, despite being deficient services, cannot be taken up before the consumer forum. This narrow definition has let several service
providers continue to provide shabby and poor service to consumers. A wider interpretation of the act is required to remedy this situation.

Sriwijayan (1999) explained consumerism in India. He viewed that every consumer in his own interest has to realize his role and importance in the right perspective. In a competitive economic environment, the consumer had to exercise his choice either in favour or against the goods and services.

Bhashyam (2000) examined the working of District Forums in Andhra Pradesh and the extent of consumer awareness about the provisions of the CPA. The study revealed that among the urban respondents, 82% were aware about the provisions of the CPA and the remaining 18% did not have any awareness about the consumer protection legislation. Among the 295 rural respondents, 68% of the respondents were found to be aware about the act and 32% of were found to be aware of their rights as consumers. Income wise analysis of the respondents showed that the respondents from very low income group got to know about the CPA from the television, people from the middle income and the high income group got the relevant information about the CPA from newspapers and magazines. Among the illiterate groups, 50% people come to know about the act through radio, neighbors and friends.

Ghosh (2000) traced the consumer rights of the consumer. He stressed that consumer education is a powerful tool that can take consumers from the current disadvantages position in the market place to one of strength. An educated consumer can become the real king of the market.

Kaul (2000) discussed about the contribution of consumer courts to the development of consumer laws in her doctoral research work. The output in terms of redressal decisions delivered by the authorities under the act has far exceeded the expectations.

Mathew (2000) highlighted that market has emerged as a big force in controlling the life style and thought process of people of all age groups, irrespective of their socio-economic background. No one seems to have escaped from the clutches of commercialization.

Verma and Israney (2000) in their article ‘Consumer attitude towards advertisement Messages’ found that consumers are exposed to a deluge of advertisement messages in a variety of media. It revealed that the general attitude of the majority of consumers is favorable towards advertisement messages. They also pointed out that it is not easy for advertisers to persuade adult consumers to shift their brand preferences based on product advertisement alone. In the middle of this space and or time battle amongst various advertisement messages in crowded communication environment, consumers prefer to switch
the channel rather than stick to regular commercial breaks in between interesting radio and television programmes and that only a slim majority of consumers (58 percentages) had a favorable attitude towards advertisement messages.

**Panta (2001)** studied the functioning of District Consumer Forums (DCF) of Nellore and Ranga Reddy District and State Commission of Andhra Pradesh on the basis of complaint disposal time, difficulties in filling complaint, number of appearances before DCF, the level of education of consumers, the bribes paid to the consumer forums and engagement of lawyer. For this purpose, a total number of 320 cases were chosen by stratified random sampling method. 75 cases were chosen from Ranga Reddy district, 100 were chosen from Nellore, 100 cases were chosen from state commission and 45 cases were chosen from National Commission. Six lawyers were randomly selected. The members and presidents of Ranga Reddy district forum and State Commission were also taken for the study; out of 6 members/presidents 5 were interviewed. Out of 50 consumers who approached the CDRAs were chosen, only 32 could be interviewed. In an oral interview, members of State Commission and DCF of Ranga Reddy expressed that there was no biased judgment and prevalence of bribes in the functioning of the consumer forums. But the multiple regression analysis showed that the bribes can influence the court’s effectiveness. The analysis also indicated that the effectiveness is purely based on the case facts and not on the engagement of lawyers by the complainant or by the educational background of the complainant. The members of State Commission were of the view that delay in disposal of cases was caused mainly by delay in notices served, postal delay, delay in appointment of members and adjournments because either of the party was absent. The members also opined that granting of adjournment liberally (whenever the government department was involved as opposite party) has also been the cause of delay in disposal of cases. The members suggested that permanent appointment of members should not be there in consumer forums. Some of members viewed that engagement of lawyers is not necessary unless the cases are complicated. They expressed that there was no problem in filing cases with the consumer forums and they negated the use of bribery in the forums. The members also felt that environment of the consumer forums is friendly and there are no problems in the implementation of orders. It was found in the study that several cases were dismissed by DCF not because of filed case is out of the preview of the CPA but simply because of the filed case was complex in nature or it needs a detailed investigation or enquiry making it impossible to provide redressal within the time limit stipulated in CPA. Further, it was observed by the consumers that certain amount of corruption did play a role in deciding the cases in favour of
consumers. The complainant—consumers who bribed the members of consumer forums were supposed to have better chances of winning their cases. Therefore, majority of consumers were against the permanent appointment of the members of Consumer Disputes Redressal Agencies (CDRAs) because of possibility of corruption. Majority of consumers stressed the importance of consumer awareness programmes and the establishment of local level consumer forums. On lawyers’ issue, majority of the lawyers expressed that involvement of lawyers is advantageous to the consumers, particularly, when there is a complication involved due to lack of knowledge. However, a couple of lawyers felt that the involvement of lawyer was not necessary because there were no procedural difficulties and the opposite parties may engage a lawyer who may not only cause delay in disposal of cases but causing difficulties in arguing his case.

**Parigi (2001)** discussed all the rights to basic need and consumer rights. Regarding right to consumer education he stated that at present, there is no clear cut policy in India with respect to consumer education. But the Union and State Government have accepted the introduction of consumer education in school curriculum. Despite various measures taken by the government and several consumer organizations, the majority of the consumers were still found not fully aware of all the consumer protection legislations and its implementation mechanism. It was attributed to having a low ratio of literacy, high incidence of poverty. Even the well to do consumers did not appear to be very concerned about consumer protection laws and as such for their need to fight for their rights. The author explained that it was because of many reasons like lack of faith in the system whether judicial or administrative and most important reason being lack of awareness about consumer issues

**Singh (2001)** dealt with the consumer protection in the developing and developed nations. In the developed nations, the role of media was found to be widespread and extremely effective and potent tool of consumer protection. Media played a major role in consumer education and consumer protection. On the contrary, in the developing nations, a large chunk of consumers belonged to low income bracket. They were found to be facing the problems of non-availability of essential commodities and price escalation. Hence, egalitarian consumerism was required there to overcome the consumers’ grievances.

**Sivaprakasam and Rajamohan (2001)** conducted a study which covers the awareness and attitude of rural and urban consumers, an appraisal of legal measures taken by the Govt. for consumer protection, the role of VCOs and the profile and perception of beneficiaries in relation to the decision made by the District Consumer Redressal Forum (DCDRF). The study was conducted at Tamilnadu. An interview schedule was prepared for finding out the
awareness of consumer in rural and urban areas with a sample size of 400 respondents. Separate interview schedule was prepared to study profile of selected sample of DCDRF. Quota sampling method was used for different areas of Tamilnadu. They found that the area of residence of consumers and level of awareness of consumer protection measures were associated. It revealed that the urban consumers have more awareness than rural consumers.

Among the eight recognized consumer rights, a few rights are known to the majority of the urban consumers. The socio-economic factors like sex, marital status, age, educational qualifications, occupation and income have different role to play in relation to consumer awareness. The survey revealed that the majority of the district forums do not function continuosly because of non-appointment of members. A sizable portion of the selected forum settles the cases within 90 days. About 62% of respondents opined that the consumer forums had taken more than 180 days to redress their grievances. Hence it was inferred that forums were not able to dispose of cases as specified in CPA. In the study it was found that a sizable portions of the respondents felt that the lack of response of the staff members of the forum and lack of knowledge on part of consumers were the principal problems in filing complaint initiation. With respect of VCO, it was found that the numbers of organization were increasing from year to year. The cases filed through these organizations have also increased due to increasing awareness of consumers. The researchers have suggested various ways to improve the awareness of consumers, effective implementation of CPA, effective performance of CPA and effective functioning of VCOs. Nearly 60% of the respondents engaged lawyers and only 20.8% field their cases directly.

Amin (2002) emphasized that the success of consumer movement mainly depends on the level of consumer awareness around the country. The government can only play the role of a catalyst or facilitator. The growth of consumer movement was a voluntary effort involving the participation of one and all. Only alert consumers can protect themselves and the society. Consumer movement must be made into a powerful social force. She has suggested consumer education, setting up of consumer association at every town without political affiliation, financial and other kind of help by the government for popularizing the consumer movement in India. She said consumer movement has a potential to bring economic revolution in the country in a democratic and peaceful manner.

Mudgil (2002) narrated that consumer movement was in a nascent stage in Haryana. He depicted a wide picture of this socio-economic movement and made suggestions for the fruition of consumer movement in India, especially Haryana.
Nagendra (2002) conducted a survey in Agra to examine the working system of Consumer Forum and to study the impact of incorporation of consumer forum on sellers as well on buyers. 200 complainant consumers of the consumer forum were asked some specific questions. Majority of Complainants asked for actual expenses, interests and compensation, but nothing was provided to them. Majority of respondents expressed normal satisfaction with procedure of filling a case followed by smooth procedure and only 9.22% expressed dissatisfaction with adopted procedure of filling a case. Majority of complainants reported that their cases were settled within 1 to 3 years; only 2.3% said that their cases were settled within stipulated time. Majority of Complainants received part of their claim followed by full claim (13%) and rests of them did not get any claim.

Sharma (2002) conducted a study of about 500 cases decided by various consumer courts- District forums, State Commission, National Commission and the Supreme Court of India. The focus of the research was to examine the extent of relief provided, time taken in disposal of cases, nature and pattern of complaints and types of product and services involved in the complaints. Her major findings were as follows. In vast majority of cases decided by District Forums, State Commission and National Commission , the order was passed in favour of the complainant – consumer. The study revealed that a large majority of cases before the National Commission and State Commission were filed in form of appeals only. In these appeal cases, more than 50% of the cases were instituted by opposite party rather than by original complainant. It was found that a relatively large number of cases handled by the consumer forums at all three level were pertained to the deficiency in services belonged to the public sector. As far as time taken in disposal of cases was concerned, the maximum number of cases by the entire forum was disposed of in longer period of time i.e. more than 3 years.

In his study, Verma (2002) surveyed the developments in the field of consumer protection in India since 1984. Among the developments described in the paper was the strengthening of provisions for consumer protection through amendments to the act. Public-sector undertakings and co-operative societies were brought within the purview of the act. Other developments included the establishment of a separate Department of Consumer Affairs in the union government and the setting up of a consumer product testing laboratory.

Kaur (2003) conducted a study in Ludhiana city to know the buying behavior of women consumers, problems experienced by them in making purchases, their awareness regarding Consumer Protection Rights, Acts, Consumer Protection Services, role of consumer protection organizations in empowering women consumers and to prepare guidelines (booklet) for empowerment of consumers. More than 80% of women were not aware of
various consumer rights. Very few respondents sought justice for their grievances by approaching consumer courts. Awareness regarding various consumer protection laws was also very less. Nearly all the respondents (98.0%) were not aware of relief provided to consumers under CPA, 1986, 90.8% had no knowledge about essential documents required for filing complaints in consumer courts. The membership in various consumer protection organizations was quite less and frequency of various awareness programmes was also not sufficient to educate vast stream of consumers in Ludhiana city.

Chazhoor (2004) conducted a study on working of consumer protection and guidance societies (CP&G) in Kerala as part of his doctoral research work. It was concluded that the CP&G Societies in Kerala were facing the problem of limited resources to meet recurring expenses. Not even a single CP&G Society in Kerala received grant from the government. The Societies used simple methods such as lectures and seminars for consumer education, but tougher methods such as demonstration and workshops and moot courts were neglected by majority. The majority of CP&G societies focused only on one area of consumer guidance i.e. false weights and measures. Not much importance was given in consumer guidance with regard to much sought after area i.e. adulteration and misbranding. The areas such as false advertisement and hazardous products were not at all given any importance in consumer guidance. With regard to consumer protection programmes, majority of CP&G Societies focused only on one area i.e. out of court settlement. These societies observed that the consumers were indifferent and ignorant of the consumer rights that lead to their exploitation.

Kaptan and Khan (2004) tried to analyze the existing role played by media in the Indian context in consumer protection. It also tried to analyze the response of readers towards consumer columns and news items published in print media. For the study, the researcher analyzed the response of 205 consumers who were also the reader of different newspapers. The sample was drawn from urban lead area. The respondents were mainly middle class, literate, ‘white collar’ category, awakened readers. The data was collected through questionnaires. It was observed that majority of newspapers consider consumer exploitation as a social evil & publish matters pertaining to this. Legal decisions, consumer columns are regular feature of some newspapers. But most of newspapers don’t engage themselves in any special activity to promote consumer movement. They had not yet come forward in a clear and open manner to protect the cause of consumer. It was found that majority of readers do read the articles of consumer interest. The readership of these articles is limited & irregular which indicate lukewarm interest of consumers. Most of the consumers do not find it interesting to read matters related with unfair trade practices & consumer rights. Most of
consumers feel that these articles do help them to know about consumer rights & about consumer movement. There is a general feeling of appreciation about the role of media toward consumer protection as these articles, columns provide awakening to large masses. Most of the respondents had been found the habit of local newspaper rather than national dailies. Lead stories, main headlines were given due attention by readers while reading. It was found that a very few newspaper provide different opportunities and undertake activities that will promote and protect local and regional consumer association.

**Kaptan (2004)** made an empirical study to find the status of consumer protection among rural consumers. Considering the different aspects of the consumers, he collected the data among rural consumers. It was observed that rural consumers mostly purchases unbranded good as price is the key deciding factor found in purchasing decision followed by the quality. Rural consumers were found to be facing various problems like lack of information, overpricing, forced buying, non-availability of substitute, non-availability of desired product, short supply etc. In many cases, consumers were found to be at the mercy of the sellers and depend on the condition & terms laid down by them. Among the 355 respondents surveyed, most of the consumers demand the replacement (92) or demand compensation to meet the losses. Only 34 consumers have reported to file a complaint in the forum. When respondents were asked that ‘can consumer association/ grievance redressal forum give you the desired justice’? Only 90 respondents answered and 58 felt that these bodies cannot come to their rescue. The disinterest of consumers to lodge complaints is mainly due to difficulties faced like not issuing invoice, not mentioning of sales tax & registration no. on bill, fear of being threatened or harassed by the trader, no assured success if complaint is lodged, no warranty card, no proper information about filing complaint, no assistance from consumer association.

With respect to the CPA, it revealed with there is limited awareness about the COPRA. Out of 242 respondents, 81 were aware, 115 were unaware & 46 cannot say about the awareness of various provisions of CPA, 1986. 52 respondents were firm that this legislation can help to protect the consumers but 79 said ‘no’ & 110 said ‘cannot say’. The most prominent problem among rural consumers was that they don’t know the sufficient procedure to file a complaint & lack of sufficient knowledge about rights & duties of consumers.

**Kishtvaria, Sharma, Vyas and Sharma (2004)** concluded that the main source of information regarding consumer organizations and legislations for the male was printed media and for the females it is friends and neighbors. Out of all CPAs, most of the male and female respondents knew about weights and measures act and were least aware about household electric appliances order and display of price order respectively. More percentage
of male respondents knew about consumer forum and more aware about the organizations working at national level than female respondents. The main reason considered by female respondents regarding the unawareness of legislation and consumer organization was high degree of illiteracy, but it was not so for male respondents.

**Arora (2005)** studied about type of action taken by consumer for dissatisfaction of day-to-day products. Results showed that consumers in general, did not complain due to lack of time. For the study, 175 respondents were chosen from south Delhi district. 55% always took action on finding fault as compared to only 29% never and 16% occasionally taking action. The action further indicated that percentage of female consumers taking action is always more than males this is in contrast of the complaints at district forum where males dominated females in registering their complaints. 60% percent respondents highlighted shortage of time for not taking any action despite their dissatisfaction. Whereas nearly 79% respondents from business class did not complain because the loss suffered was not significant. The study revealed that out of 175 complainants, 70% approached the forum due to non-cooperation from the opposite party and 58% expressed that their confidence in consumer forum motivated them to take action, 28% got encouraged from their friends, 12% went to forum as there was no option left for them. Only 4% were guided by consumer organization to approach the forum. The most common action taken was to boycott the store (50%). The percentage of female consumers went to retailer on his poor response to their complaint was maximum as compared to only 22% of male consumers involved in this act, 5% respondents was found getting legal advice and writing to the news papers in this regard. Findings indicated that nearly 50% of the complainants had reported that the opposite party showed indifferent attitude and even in some cases misbehaved with them. Only 3% respondents directly approached the forum without giving any notice to the party. It was found that about 66% of action taking complainants was from service class and 41% were from business class. Where as, 41% non-action taking complainants were from business class and 21% from service class. With regard to working of forum, the analysis showed that 50% cases were disposed within 1 to 2 years, 18% were disposed in more than 2 years and only 2.8% cases were decided within 90 days. In 94% cases, the number of hearing ranges from 4 to 6 and only in 2% cases no adjournment was given in only 2% cases. The basic reasons found responsible for delayed disposal were incomplete documents, irregularity in appearance before the forum by opposite party and engagement of lawyers by both the parties (as it was found that lawyers were unnecessary raising technical objections). It was interesting to note that services of the advocates were used more by the opposite parties rather than the
complainant himself. With regard to disposal rate, 60% of cases were disposed and out of the disposed cases 84% of the cases were decided in favour of the complainants. As far as satisfaction of complainants is concerned, the complainants were equally divided. 74% of the dissatisfied complainants blamed the judge for favoring the opposite party, 25% were dissatisfied for getting unsatisfactory compensation and 37% were dissatisfied for more number of adjournments was given. Complainants suggested that lawyers should be debarred from courts. In case of assistance from Consumer Organizations, only 3% of complainants approached by Voluntary Consumer Organization before lodging complaints and 72% were not even aware about the existence of voluntary consumer organizations.

Kaur, Dhillon and Batish (2005) conducted a study to know the awareness of urban women regarding consumer protection legislations, services rendered by consumer welfare organizations and extent of utilization of these services by women. The total sample for the study comprised 250 women consumers of Ludhiana city. The results indicates that more than 80 per cent of women were ignorant about consumer rights. Only 9.6 per cent of respondents were aware of CPA and District Consumer Forums, whereas just 3.2 per cent could tell about various non-government consumer protection organizations working in Ludhiana city. Women consumers were indifferent and inactive in utilization of services of consumer forums for seeking redressal for the purchase related problems.

In report published by National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (2005), some new measures were incorporated regarding arrangement of consumer forums, dress code, hearing hours, cause list, scrutiny of complaints, nomenclature of complaints, appeals and revised petition, issue of notice, adjournment, hearing of benches, arguments, limitations, appearance of voluntary consumer organizations, ex-parte interim order, final order, certified copy, inspection of records, filing of criminal complaints, practice directions, parcha yad-dast, preservation of records. It is further emphasized that every state commission and every district forum shall take steps for its computerization and networking.

Pathak (2005) while dealing with the problem of unfair trade practices has investigated the scope of MRTP Amendment Act, 1984, The CPA, 1986 and The Competition Act, 2002. He observes that a consumer needs protection not only from being supplied with defective goods and deficient services, but also from unfair trade practices. The law makes provision for compensating the party for ‘loss of business and profit’. The courts, however, have found computing losses to be not free from ‘complications and complexities’. Thus, courts have not been awarding compensation. All these factors together have left the field of comparative advertisement effectively unregulated. Not only the consumers but even the firms need
adequate law against unfair trade practices to have some rules of the game for competing among themselves. But, within the structure of the CPA, competing firms cannot be ‘consumers’ to approach a consumer forum. Further, he described that within the CPA, a ‘consumer’ cannot take up a case of unfair trade practice before a consumer forum. It can only be taken up by a consumer association, central government or the state governments. Thus, within the existing law, a manufacturer whose product is disparaged has no *locus standi* to seek a remedy. The only option was to bring it to the notice of consumer associations or represent the case to the central government and state governments. These were only oblique routes of seeking justice.

**Agrawal, Agrawal and Babita (2006)** pointed out that consumers in India and perhaps in other developing countries too, were facing a wide range of problems in their day-to-day dealings with traders and various organizations, engaged in providing goods and services. These problems may be the result of scarcity, varying incomes, product development, environmental changes or social structure. They also gave an account of the problems faced by the consumers in markets, banks, government and private offices, hospitals, schools, public distribution agencies and while availing other services in the hope that the awareness of consumers will be increased and they will be ready to recognize and overcome them intelligently when faced with such situations.

**Gupta (2006)** conducted a descriptive cum conclusive study on consumer rights awareness. Students across different field were the sampling units for this study. The study pointed out that majority of the consumers did not have a good level of awareness about the various consumer rights provided by the legislation. There are many laws in India to protect consumers but majority of respondents of this study failed to name even a single law to protect consumers.

**Himachalam (2006)** conducted a comprehensive study of consumer protection in India with reference to the state of Andhra Pradesh. He examined the extent of awareness among consumer respondents regarding their rights as consumers, grievance redressal mechanism and their involvement in consumer movement. Further, he analyzed the nature and severity of problem faced by consumers while buying. He also assessed the effectiveness of consumer protection measures to safeguard the interest of working of various Govt. agencies. The study used the multistage sampling & quota sampling for collection of data. Sample size up to the total of 1500 consumer was taken. In addition, Govt. departments, VCO, Mfrs., Advt. agencies were also consulted. The data was collected through pre designed & pretested schedules prepared separately for consumers, Govt. departments, VCO, Mfrs., Advt. agencies
and mass media. 58.3% of consumers complained that shopkeepers do not provide them any purchase bills. Only 26.33% respondents have the habit of demanding bill. 53.47% of consumers were not satisfied with the services extended during warranty period for consumer durables. 80% consumers are dissatisfied with fair price shop dealers. Only 25.47% consumers had the habit of checking the quality, weight and other relevant aspect of products regularly. 76% of the consumers were found aware of malpractices in the market. It is ironic to say that only 30.67% have chosen to complain the malpractices to the respective authorities. The reasons cited by consumers were many viz. no time, no big complaint, matter of one’s fate etc. 57% of consumers were aware of all aspect of consumer rights through various medias. But 55% of respondents were found unaware about other legislations. A majority of respondents were totally aware about CP Act but surprising, only a small %age of them have total awareness about redressal procedures. The main reason cited for unawareness were no time to spare followed by no interest, no mechanism to disseminate the information etc. Only 28% of total respondents have filed cases. Only 10% of consumers have membership in some consumer organization. It was suggested to improve the literacy level, proper personal checking at time of purchase and steps should be taken to improve the knowledge of consumer about various legislations and involvement of consumers in consumer organizations.

**Kishtwaria and Sharma (2006)** examined the level of awareness between males and females regarding consumer protection laws in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. Sample size for the study was 120. The findings of the study revealed that 35% of the respondents had high level of awareness about consumers’ terms, 23.30% of them had partial knowledge and 41.6 % of them had low level of awareness. Majority of the respondents were aware about laws for protecting the consumers i.e. 90% males and 86.6% female. 53.3% male and 66.6% female respondents found aware about the terms AGMARK, ISI and ISO. Majority of respondents selected T.V. as a major source of information followed by radio, newspapers and magazines. Significant difference existed between two classes of respondents regarding awareness of consumer’s terminology and consumer protection laws.

**Manjura (2006)** expressed that CPA, 1986 is a result of consumer movement. When this Act came into force already there were some 40-42 Acts in existence relating to weights and measures, adulteration, drugs and medicines, black-marketing etc. But the main difference which came with CPA, 1986 is that earlier consumers were not compensated if they faced any problem but CPA, 1986 makes it compulsory that the aggrieved consumer must also get the compensation.
Planning Commission of India (2006) conducted a study in Maharashtra to know the awareness among consumers regarding CPA and effectiveness of mechanism put in place under act by the Central and State government to promote and protect the interests of consumers. 500 respondents were included in this study. Findings of the report exhibits that 66% of the Consumers were not aware about the rights and 82% of them found unaware about act. Nearly 49% of the aware consumers had come to know about the Act in last four years. Overall, only 13% of the consumers found aware about dispute redressal mechanism under act. A majority of complainants came to know about Consumer Forum through electronic and print media, NGOs were not popular source of awareness as only 4.9% of the complainants attributed their awareness to the work of NGOs. It was also revealed by study that 78% of respondents were carrying a negative opinion of the endeavors made by the government or had not any idea about the same.

Seshadri (2006) examined the consumerism with reference to selected home appliances in Chennai city of Tamilnadu as part of her doctoral thesis. Outcome of the study showed that most of the consumers were aware of various rights and legal remedies open to them against deficiency of service and defective products. While it was seen that majority respondents preferred to file complaints in consumer court, negligible of them actually did so. The study revealed that maximum respondents compared the prices and features of similar brands of products before purchasing the same, checked the maximum retail prices while making payment. A sizeable number of respondents (69%) boycotted the goods produced by industries causing environmental pollution. Education was found to have significant bearing on consumer awareness. A substantial number of consumers were found to have relied on friends, neighbors, and advertisements while choosing to buy a particular brand of product, especially consumer durables. The awareness of using internet as a source of product information was very low. Majority of consumers were found to be vigilant and careful while purchasing the product. They generally found to always read printed information on the package, checked the maximum retail price, insisted for demonstration, and read the terms and conditions of warranty. The conclusion is that majority of the consumers did take advantage of incentives offered by sellers during festival/seasonal sales but were not induced to buy 'discounts' or 'seconds' or export rejected sales. It was found that only 2% of the respondent consumers in Chennai had become members of voluntary consumer organizations. The study revealed that majority of consumers was quality conscious and were particular about ISI mark on the products.

Shekhar (2006) studied the awareness of consumer protection measures in the state of
Andhra Pradesh. The research concluded that female respondents were lagging behind in awareness about the place of lodging the complaint. Most of the educated consumers were aware of the existence of consumer forums and they know clearly about the place for lodging a complaint. Gender played an important role regarding the awareness of the CPA and there was no significant relationship between age and awareness. It can be stated from the study that newspapers and magazines were playing an important role in creating awareness among the respondents. Very few respondents were aware of all rights of the consumers. Most of the respondents reported that they were not aware of the three-tier redressal machinery. Illiteracy was one of the major reasons for unawareness of consumer protection measures taken by the government. Many respondents stated that lack of interest and paucity of time was major reasons for unawareness. Meager 3.5 percent respondents actually complained to the redressal machinery and the majority of them were males. More than one-half of the sample respondents were satisfied to a large extent with the settlements of the cases in redressal agencies. Most of the respondents from urban areas were satisfied with the existing consumer protection measures. Majority of the respondents agreed strongly that business ethics were deteriorating day by day. Only 1.5 percent respondents were members of consumer organization and nearly two-third of them were males.

Special Correspondent (2006) of ‘The Hindu’ newspaper published a report that CPA was not effective. The 48,732 consumers surveyed in 138 districts in different States said the redress mechanism was simple but not very speedy and economical. It was reported that eighty two percent of the consumers were not aware of the CPA and 66 percent of consumer rights. Whopping 78 percent consumers felt the government was not making efforts for safeguarding consumer rights and delayed in redressing consumers' grievances. Consumers spend huge on lawyers’ fees in consumer courts. Most were not aware that they could represent themselves in consumer courts through a simple complaint. The NGOs had failed to put up a consumer movement in the country. Funds remained unutilized in the Consumer Welfare Fund in the absence of any specific schemes formulated by the Union Department of Consumer Affairs. Another fund of Rs 6.63 crores meant for increasing consumer awareness and empowerment was also unutilized. It was stated that there was no documented policy outlining the priorities of the Centre for creation and strengthening the adjudication mechanism. The Consumer Protection Councils at the district, state and national levels were not functioning well and follow up action was not monitored centrally. The Department of Consumer Affairs had released Rs 9.35 crores to NGOs and VCOs of 26 States in 10 years till the end of March 2005. Of these only organizations in Meghalaya had utilized the funds
fully while those in Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala and Chandigarh had used the funds partially. The Ministry had no mechanism to assess the impact of expenditure incurred through NGOs and VCOs.

**Agarwal and Agarwal (2007)** pointed out though the government has taken various measures to protect the rights of the consumers yet also there was a need of attitudinal change by consumers and they should be cautious themselves about their rights. They should make a strong stand against the manufacturers, service providers and businessmen who came in their way. Actually, consumers are ignorant and unaware of the procedures of the CPA. They also mentioned that most consumers have a little training in how to shop wisely and that result in unexpected and unknowledgeable consumer decisions. Hence, there are several benefits of consumer education to individuals, business and society.

**Bedi (2007)** discussed of consumer protection through product knowledge in his study and revealed that, not to talk of the illiterate and semi-illiterate consumers, even highly educated consumers have little knowledge about the products they actually buy and in their purchase decision they go by the reputation of the brands and claims made by the manufacturing companies in their advertisements. Even for a large variety of common and simple products, consumers woefully lack even the basic knowledge. He further added that most consumers are found unable to distinguish between the original and the fake trade marks to identify the product.

**Das (2007)** in her study discovered that among factors responsible for legislation to protect consumer rights in India, one is the level of sophistication in marketing and selling practices in advertising and other forms of production. India has to go a long way to go before it really adopts stringent regulation and standards especially with regards to food product. She also has investigated the possible effects of advertising on young people and children. She highlights the very important need for strict regulation and standards for products of a questionable nature especially if they are targeted to a vulnerable segment of the society like the youth and children. There is an urgent need to spread awareness about the negative effects of such advertising and organizations representing consumers, teachers, dental health professionals, medical charities, public-health groups and children should join in the growing movement calling for restrictions or a ban on the advertising of products of a questionable nature.

**Gambhir (2007a)** made an attempt to find out the problems relating to the organization and working of consumer grievance redressal agencies. The researcher has conducted informal interviews with the president and members of the selected consumer forums on various
aspects like nature of complaints, complaint disposal time, and type of relief granted. An observation of the state commission and district forum was continuously made for twenty days to study their working. A random sample of 50 burnt out cases each from the district forum and state commission of Chandigarh were taken for intensive study. The complainants and opposite parties involved in these cases were interviewed to testify the complaints received by the state commission and district forums. An opinion survey of all the employees of these forums were also conducted to find out if they are satisfied with the recourses of the organization. A quota sample of 300 consumers was selected to study the perceptions of the consumers regarding functioning of redressal agencies. The major findings of the study were as follows viz: regarding sources of awareness, 62% complainants got information through a daily newspaper. About 25% respondents heard through T.V./Radio and 14% respondents read in the magazines. It was evident that news-paper can play an important role in consumer awareness. In relation to technical assistance for filing a complaint, 60% respondents tend to engage lawyers and about 25% respondents acted upon the advice of their friends and relatives who have legal knowledge and 14% went by the Act and published material. Out of those who were engaged, 34.21% asserted that technicalities involved were not easy to understand by complainants, 26.31% don’t have time to follow the case, 18% have a friend or relative as a lawyer, 21% had other reasons like opposite party had engaged lawyer, lack of confidence for litigation and lack of knowledge about complaint procedure. Regarding time taken for the settlement, the data showed that only 2% complaints were settled within 3 months, 12% were settled within six months, 10% were decided in 9 months. Overall, a large number of complaints (44%) were decided in less than a year and 26% complaints were disposed in more than one year. Regarding reasons of delay, 40% respondents reported adjournments as the cause of delay, 20% expressed delay due to lawyers, 14% expressed the long procedure and 16% thought that increase in number of cases was responsible for delay. In case of relief granted by district forum, the study revealed that 22% complaints were given full relief for the loss incurred, 18% cases ordered for repair and replacement, about 12% cases sorted out through consent between parties, 10% got partial relief and 38% cases were dismissed pleading as complainant could not provide the evidence of deficiency in service. It was found in the study that at State Commission of Chandigarh about two-thirds (66%) cases were in form of appeals. With respect to opinion of opposite parties about the Act, 36% respondents thought that Act is biased towards consumers and protect their interest only, while 28% of the respondents believe that it did justice to both the consumers and the sellers, 24% stated that the consumer protection law is technically misused by consumers and 12%
asserted that the Act was in favour of sellers as it brings in competition and improves quality. Regarding awareness about the redressal agencies amongst consumer 57.8% respondents were not aware about the existence of redressal agencies and about 37.24% were aware about the objectives of these agencies. Regarding reasons cited for non-complaint by consumers, 28% respondents stated that the matter involved a small amount while 18% didn’t get any opportunity to approach consumer courts. Other reasons stated by respondents were; wastage of money (17.64%), involves a lot of time (13.33%), didn’t know the location of the forum (5%) and few of them doubted if justice would be done. The study revealed that only a small number of aggrieved consumers who approach the forum didn’t opine that these agencies have become similar to the courts that are marred by delay and wastage of time and money. The study revealed that a large number of officials of the agencies were not clear about the goals expected to be pursued by these bodies. It was also observed that about 50.38% respondents were either dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied. The study highlighted that majority of the members were of legal background and the kind of experience they have acquired during their long innings in the courts as judges/ advocates leave their imprints of procedural complexities of ordinary courts on working of these tiny judicial agencies. Regarding the tenure of presidents and members, the study showed that only 54.05% incumbents could complete their tenure of five years as prescribed under the Act. 21.62% left within two years and 5.40% left after 4 years. The study indicates that about 66.6% employees disliked the presence of deputationists in their organization, 83% respondents opined that deputationists have joined their organization with a single motive of getting financial benefits. It was also found that intervention of lawyers delays the process. Lawyers try to prolong the complaints on the one pretext or the other. It was seen that more than half (76%) of the complainants approached the lawyer due to technicalities involved as stated by more than one third (34.21%) of respondents. 

Gambhir (2007b) brought out some useful facts about consumer protection administration. The study was carried out in Chandigarh. The researcher concluded that advertisement did not provide much help in buying products. Sellers took the action on consumer grievances after threatening him of consumer courts. Some of sellers responded on time to consumer grievances. Consumers did not prefer and not have much interest to go to consumer forums even if her grievances were not taken up by sellers. They felt that it was wastage of time to go to courts. Poor faith was reposed by consumers in consumer forums. The consumers were reported to be not much aware about consumer rights and CPA. It revealed that newspapers were the best source of information about consumer rights. Consumers preferred to hire
advocates to fight in the consumer forums. Majority of consumers felt that the justice was not delivered within time limits specified but it was always delayed. The specified reasons of delay were adjournments and advocates. Even then, the consumers hired advocates because they felt that advocates can defend the case more effectively. Defendants under study were not found aware about CPA and not satisfied with the kind of judgments provided at forums. 

Girimaji (2007) in her article discussed about functioning of consumer courts and cited an analysis done by the ministry of consumer affairs. The ministry has analyzed the reasons for poor functioning of these consumer courts and found the following reasons responsible for ineffective functioning of consumer forums.

- Delay in appointment of presidents and members of the court.
- Inadequate budgetary provision for the courts.
- Poor pay and facilities to members.
- Lack of infrastructure facilities in consumer courts.
- Inadequate interaction between the state commission and the district forums for monitoring the disposal of cases.
- Inadequate and inexperienced secretarial staff.
- Absence of additional Forum to tackle increasing load, frequent and long adjournments.
- Lack of drive to liquidate pendency.
- Failure to hold ‘Sitting’ on all working days and full working hours.
- Delay in issuing show cause notice to opposite party.
- Delay in passing orders after completion of hearing.

Gokilavani and Nageswari (2007) conducted a comprehensive research on awareness of consumer rights among the women consumers. The research was based on the primary data collected from the women of Tamilnadu state in India. The researchers concluded that majority of women consumers were not found aware about consumer rights.

Gupta (2007) attempted to bring to light the awareness of consumers in rural as well as urban areas about consumer rights, adulteration, consumer problems, CPA, consumer redressal machinery and so on. For this study, 150 respondents were selected from rural and urban areas (equal representation). It had been found that 82% of the respondents were aware about their rights. The urban consumers had better awareness than rural consumers. The main source of awareness of consumer rights for rural consumers was found to be newspaper (33%) while for the urban consumers, the main source of awareness was newspaper &
television. Radio, TV, Films and newspapers were the main media found to influence the choice of product among majority of respondents. About 65% of the consumers were found to be aware about the legislation to protect the consumers. The urban consumers had higher awareness than rural consumers. It is interesting to note that majority of urban consumers had good knowledge of redressal machinery but rural consumers were lacking behind it. About 44% of respondents were about the existence of VCO in their area. 48% were found to know nothing about existence of such organizations. Amongst the 150 people survey, fragmented opinion was found among them to create awareness about consumer protection legislation. They have opined of including consumer education as part of curriculum, extension lectures, advertisement campaigns, newspapers, TV, magazines and books as a major tools to create awareness about these legislations.

A survey was conducted by Priyanka and Zeenia (2007) among the educated and uneducated respondents to know the awareness about consumer rights. 200 educated people and 200 uneducated people were taken as sample of study. Of the 400 respondents selected, 68 from the uneducated people and 34 from the educated people were found to be not aware about their rights as consumer. The major reason described by the researcher for unawareness were lack of consumer education, unaware about rights, cunning producers, variety of products, lack of time, improper response of salesman, lack of awareness by Govt. and poverty. Ten purchase and awareness related aspects were tested with respect to educated consumers. 20 educated persons were surveyed to check the variables. After the observation, it was concluded that only 45.5% educated people were aware and rest of 54.5% were unaware about their rights as consumers. Researcher provided various suggestions to inform educated consumers viz: consumer education, part of study, role of media, role of consumer organization, center for consumer protection at University level, market conditions, efforts by Govt., awareness about consumer legislation, self-help and join consumer cooperatives voluntarily.

Rani (2007) carried a study regarding consumer’s response to consumer protection in Haryana. She studied the awareness level of consumers about their basic rights, the pattern of making complaints by consumers with respect to defective goods and services, the outcome of complaints and observe the further efforts made by consumers for the redressal of their complaints. A sample size of 540 consumers (225 males & 315 females) was taken to study and questionnaire was administered to them. She concluded that the majority of respondents felt the need for consumer protection against malpractices like duplicity in products, low quality, higher prices, absence of after sales service and non-compliance with guarantee/
warrantee etc. Further, it was observed that the awareness level of consumers is quite low, not much difference was observed in level of awareness of males and females. Most of the consumers found to be known about right to choose and for other rights; the awareness level was found to be quite poor. It was surprising to observe that the consumers are not much interested in resolving their complaints. The main reason found is low level of awareness among the consumers. Even unsatisfactory experience with lodging the complaints and no complaint was resolved to the satisfaction of respondents also seen in this study. The study found that the pace of growth of consumerism is also quite slow.

Ruchita (2007) studied the role of consumer organizations in the protection and promotion of consumer interests. The study concluded that it can be said that credit for the development, though retarded, of the consumer movement must go to voluntary organizations. Theirs had not been an easy task. For a long time it looked as if they were in maze, coming up against dead-ends at every turn, public criticism, government indifference, hostility from business houses, and a crippling lack of funds and manpower. Yet they presumed earning some notable achievements to the credit.

A study by Sharma, Kaur and Gupta (2007) was conducted with the objective to analyze whether consumers feel cheated, misled or exploited by the seller; to analyze about CPA, consumer rights, consumer legislation and behavior of consumer about denial of their rights; to study perception about consumer disputes redressal agencies and ways and means of protecting consumers. A survey was conducted of 374 consumers belonging to various strata of society through structured questionnaire. The study revealed that 95% of people felt exploited by seller at one time or other 70% of the people were aware of the Act and 30% were not aware of the Act. It was surprising to note that even sample consists of educated graduates and post graduates from prominent city like Jalandhar, the awareness level is not 100%. Males (80%) were found to be more aware than females (60%). 37% of the sample had little knowledge, 25% had full knowledge and 38% were ignorant about the content of the CPA. The sample which was having the full knowledge, the male percentage was high (35%) and females very low (13%). It revealed that age and occupation shown no distinct trend regarding awareness though business class among of males was more aware of it. Housewives were found to be much aware about CPA and consumer rights. No person in the sample found to approach the courts even if exploited because most of the person felt that the legal process is time consuming and cumbersome. Many did not know the proper procedure of it. The emphatic conclusion from the whole study is that the level of awareness among educated urbanites is not satisfactory and especially in case of women. The situation is
unimaginable among ruralites who have low level of literacy, ignorance and economic inequality and therefore the consumers are not able to assert and protect themselves.  

Singh (2007) carried out a study to know the extent of consumer awareness in rural markets of Haryana. The survey was intended to seek information about the buying experience of those rural consumers who were widely purchasing goods & services. Ten villages from district Hisar was selected for this study. 200 respondents viz. agriculturist, businessmen, professionals and housewives were participated in the survey. With respect to consumer movements, it was found that 26% of respondents were aware about CP Act, 29% of respondents were aware about consumer rights, 14% were aware about consumer protection. Only 5 respondents were found to approach & lodge complaints and only 2 respondents were found to be taking membership in Consumer Protection Councils. Majority of the consumers were found to be aware about banking services of rural areas in Haryana. It revealed that majority of the consumers were more conscious towards medicines (55%) and ever aware of the expiry date (46%). Food products were purchased regularly by the respondents. Quality (52%) and information (62%) were preferred by most of the respondents but very few were found going for complaining. Majority of the consumers were found to be aware about consuming items like shampoo & toothpaste and even, after sale service concept was known by many of the respondents. It had been concluded that awareness of rural consumers about consumer movement & protection were not adequate.  

Taneja (2007) conducted a study to find out the awareness level and attitude of educated consumers of Ludhiana city in Punjab State towards CPA and other related acts for the protection of consumers. A descriptive study was designed selecting 500 educated consumers as the sample. 72% of the respondents were found aware about CPA. Most of the awaked respondents i.e. 47% were just aware about CPA and 17% were fully aware of the Act. Print media was the most effective measure (83.33%) to spread awareness regarding CPA followed by electronic media (55.56%). It was shocking to observe that in a big city like Ludhiana, VCOs had completely failed in spreading awareness about Consumer Awareness Act. Fewer efforts on the consumer education were reported as the main reason for lack of awareness regarding CPA. Lack of advertisements and less efforts on the part of Govt. was the other major impediments reported in popularity of CPA. Awareness regarding other Acts was also reported to be poor. It revealed that consumers of Ludhiana were highly aware of their right to be protected and right to be informed. But the right to consumer education and claim for compensation had low awareness level. It was notable that very few consumers (24%) were aware about the redressal mechanism for settling consumer disputes. It indicates that only
34% were aware of the fact that there is any of relief is available. The consumer had a strong feeling that the Govt. should set the minimum standards of quality for all the products & services sold.

**Uppal and Kaur (2007)** asserted that all the government agencies, consumer forums, consumer rights protecting laws can be brought to benefit consumers only when consumers will realize their supreme veto powers of refusing a sub-standard products and exercise their rights to get the best and not by compromising on sub-standard products sold by traders, manufacturers and salesmen. They suggested that Department of Consumer Affairs, Government of India should make a comprehensive research regarding consumer problems and their possible solutions.

**Babu (2008)** revealed that consumerism should be strengthened in our country so that the tendency to push up the prices could be curbed and the quality of the services and products ensured. Consumer problems must be reduced by making them good buyers through education and implementing various Acts. The consumers have to protect themselves through powerful consumerism.

**Dhanalakshmi (2008)** included in her study that CPA specifies, consumer cases are to be judged within 90 days from the date of complaint. But in reality more than 98% of the consumer cases exceeds 90 days and some are kept pending for years together. Many unscrupulous businessmen and business organizations, are bribing the members to get judgment in their favour, or keeping the case pending for years together which in turn frustrate the complainant either to withdraw the case or to give up the case.

**Girimaji (2008)** in the article entitled “Not in the right spirit” tried to examine the performance of consumer courts in relation to the procedure followed in complaint disposal. She has cited various cases and occasions where National Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission (NCDRC) has emphasized the fact that consumer courts should follow simple procedure while deciding cases rather than adopting procedures prescribed under Civil Procedure Code. The author has cited an incident where the apex consumer court was forced to remind the lower consumer court that they are not civil courts, bound by the civil procedure code. This remark came after when consumer courts at district and state level in Gujarat had dismissed a complaint merely on the ground that parents of the consumer had filed the case. The author has expressed dissatisfaction by stating that “even two decades later after passing CPA-1986, consumer courts have to be reminded about the procedure that they ought to or ought not to follow.
Jenefa and Kavitha (2008) concluded in their paper that television was the main media for both the male and female respondents. It showed that majority of males and females were aware about the laws to protect consumers against adulteration, weights, deceitful packaging. There were significant difference in the awareness level of male and females.

Checking the awareness of the consumers, Kalpana and Natarajan (2008) found that even though people are aware of consumer protection measures available in India but the usage of the measures is poor. The reason that was found out is public are basically not comfortable with law, rules, courts etc. it is the time now that we are supposed to revamp the system and see that it reaches the public in a smooth manner. Further, it is observed that too much formality to reach the needed is there in our system.

A recent study on consumerism by Muruganantham and Radhakrishnan (2008) concluded that consumerism should not be considered as consumers’ war against business. It is a collective consciousness on the part of consumers, business, government and civil society to enhance consumers’ satisfaction and social welfare which will in turn benefit all of them and finally make the society a better place to live in. The objective of consumer welfare and protection can be achieved in a reasonable time frame only when all concerned act together and play their role.

In a Research Project (2008) entitled ‘The Impact of Third Amendment to CPA on the working of State Commissions and District Forums’, a set of 20 complaints from each state commission/ district forums was selected and interviews were held with the complainants about their experience in getting their grievance redressed before and after the enactment of 3rd amendment. It was observed that no major difference was reflected in the types of cases, appearance before Commissions/ Forums, nature of order and the kind of relief provided to the complainant after the 3rd amendment. The areas on which the 3rd amendment has made remarkable impact were nature of complaint, number of hearings, number of adjournments and time taken in disposal of cases. In case of nature of complaint, it was observed that out of 205 cases before 5 State Commissions, only 51 cases came up as original complaints and rest of the cases were by way of appeal. Further, there was decline in number of original complaint after the 3rd amendment in which the pecuniary jurisdiction of district forums was enhanced. It was found that a large number of cases handled by the consumer Commissions/ Forums pertained to the deficiency in service. At state commission’s level 87.32% and at district forums level about 87% cases were related to deficiency in service. The study indicated that 3rd Amendment has not yet made any impact on the appearance of advocates. Analysis of data revealed that 85% respondents preferred to engage advocates for their
complaints. In rural areas, it was more prevalent. Reasons for this might be illiteracy, lack of awareness about the consumer rights and ignorance of courts’ procedure. The consumer courts are now charging fee from the consumers and the consumers seem to be comfortable with the provision of fee. It was observed that there was a sharp decrease in number of hearings in complaints decided after the 3rd Amendment. This was also true for the number of adjournments. At state commissions, the hearing of about 52% cases was ranging from 1-6. However, at urban district forums, only 19% and at rural district forums, only 18% cases were disposed within 1-6 hearings. At district forums, mostly, cases were disposed in 7-15 hearings. With regard to time taken in the disposal of complaints, the study revealed that the time frame as stipulated under act has hardly been strictly adhered to. In fact, only 19% (16% new and 3% old) of overall cases at State Commissions, 9% (8.04% new and 0.52% old) at District forums Urban and 21 per cent (18.50 new and 2.50 old) at District forums Rural were disposed within the stipulated time period. However, there was a vast difference in the time taken in old and new cases. The impact of 3rd Amendment in quick disposal of complaints was clearly visible. As far as beneficiary of the orders were concerned, nearly 38% cases at State Commissions (17.56% new and 20.49% old), 64.07% at Urban District forums (34.38% new and 29.69% old) and 60% at Rural District forums (36% new and 24% old) were decided in favour of complainants. Only around 21% of cases went in favour of opposite party. The approach of the consumer courts was to provide relief of a compensatory nature. While awarding costs, a conservative approach was adopted by these consumer forums. It is worth mentioning here that no complaint was being filed in relation to unfair trade practices, restrictive trade practices, hazardous goods/services, misleading advertisements. As a result, the reliefs provided and introduced by the 3rd Amendment in relation to the above were not being utilized.

Singh and Gandhi (2008) found out in their study that getting justice through judiciary was considered as difficult, time consuming and a costly process. Ignorance and indifferent attitude among consumers was the perceived reason for non-implementation of laws. The introduction of consumer education through media mix approach led to significant level of increase in knowledge regarding consumer rights, responsibilities and protective laws. Literacy levels of homemakers showed medium impact on purchase behavior.

As consumer courts are non-profit organizations, running with service motive, government also gives least priority to them. Consumer courts are far from the reach of common men in terms of delayed judgments, legal expenses, inability to meet the pressure from the opposite side with company lawyers drawn from Supreme Court and Bar Councils. Further there exists
no exclusive bar council which exclusively handles consumer cases. Lawyers gives less importance to take up consumer cases; they accept consumer cases as a last resort as they could not charge huge fees as like other divisions. (Suganya, 2008).

Uppal and Chawla (2008) studied level of awareness amongst consumers regarding legal measures taken by the government in Punjab for consumer protection and to examine the role of voluntary consumer organizations. It revealed under the study that 61.25% rural and urban consumers were aware of various legislative measures, nevertheless a major portion of consumers were not aware about the legal measure. 86% urban and 64% rural consumers reported that ignorance was main cause of lack of awareness. Among rural and urban consumers, CPA was popular than other legal measures. Majority of rural and urban consumers considered friends to be very effective source of propagating information about act and advocates were considered as ineffective source.

Agrawal (2009) conducted an intensive study on the aspect of consumer behavior and consumer protection in rural areas of Ghaziabad district of Uttar Pradesh. Besides, role of communication is affecting the buyer behavior of consumers in rural society and study of consumer protection strategies had also been done in this study. This study was mainly based on primary data collected with the help of questionnaire and schedules. Purposive stratified random sampling and multistage stratified random sampling method was used for sample survey. Respondents from 16 villages from 4 selected developmental blocks were proportionately identified. Out of 16 villages, 20 household from selected villages were proportionately chosen randomly making the sample size of 320 respondents. The result of this study was surprising. It revealed that 78% respondents were unaware about the meaning of consumer protection and only 31% consumers could tell that the consumer protection was essential. 94% respondents admitted that there was no VCO in their area. 100% respondents have no idea about various other legislations associated with consumer protection. 94% consumers were unaware about the consumer courts established at different levels. No single respondent was able to explain the main function of consumer court satisfactorily. 87% consumers were unaware about the role played by Govt. to improve consumer awareness. 98% of consumers lodged no complaint before the grievance redressal court at district level. No single respondent were unable to explain anything more about the consumer protection and about the safety & security of consumers.

Kapoor (2009a) highlighted that CPA, was provided for, among other things, the effective safeguards to consumers against various exploitations and unfair practices. It followed mainly a compensatory rather than disciplinary or preventive approach. It was applied to all goods
and services unless specifically exempted and covers the private, public and cooperative sectors. It was also provided for speedy and inexpensive adjudication.

**Kapoor (2009b)** caught the reader’s attention in his column by addressing it more to business and industry rather than consumer. The columnist’s purpose was twofold here. Firstly, to sensitize business and industry to the concept of consumer satisfaction and secondly, to create consumer awareness about the standard of service they can and should expect as a matter of right from business. To that extent, this writing was intended to enlighten the business and industry on one hand and empower consumers on the other in a demand driven market.

**Khatri (2009)** carried an extensive research on unfair trade practices. The findings revealed that majority of consumers and consumer organizations felt that they are the victim of unfair trade practices pertaining to product quality. Majority of sellers did not provide quick and speedy redressal of consumer grievances. Unfair pricing, false and deceptive advertisements were prevalent in the market. Consumers and consumer organizations made the use of provision under MRTP and CPA but lastly resorted that it was very time and money consuming. Procedural complexities and unawareness stopped the consumers to file maximum cases to these agencies. The problem of delayed justice was also observed in the study. Consumer organizations tried to help the consumers with out of court settlement of consumer grievances.

**Sharan (2009)** explained about the various precautions that should be taken while dealing in various fields such as banking, medical, L.P.G., etc. Preference should be given to standardized products with standard certificate marks like ISI and AGMARK. Care also needed to be taken by the consumers as to what kind of weights and measures are being used by the sellers. He further gave tips for buying like checking ingredients, producers or packers address, date and year of production, batch no., weight of the product etc. He said that the malpractices prevailing in today’s market should be curbed in all respects for the protection of the consumers.

**Shekhar, Ahlawat and Singh (2009)** conducted a study at Palanpur city of Gujarat State, India. Primary data was collected from 14 voting wards of Palanpur City through proportionate random sampling. A representative sample of 200 women consumer was selected and data was collected by personal interview technique. The findings revealed that the majority of women showed low level of awareness regarding consumer rights and low extent of utilization of consumer rights. Maximum awareness was observed for the ‘right to choose’ and minimum awareness was regarding ‘right to safety’. ‘Right to information’ was found to be utilized by most of the women but ‘right to health & environment’ was found to
be least utilized by respondents. Perceiving consumer rights as wastage of time was expressed as major constraint while utilizing the consumer rights. Positive association was observed between awareness and utilization of consumer rights.

Shukla (2009) remarked that every citizen of an independent economy is a consumer. Even a producer, distributor and seller of any product also came under the category of a consumer. In a business, consumer is the most important person. But, now-a-days the consumer was exploited by the business community. For them adulteration has become a very important part of their business. She mentioned that even advertisements did have any role in helping the consumers but they misguide and mislead the consumers. She also mentioned different steps taken by the government in the interest of consumers but she recommended that there is a strong need of consumer awareness regarding the consumer rights and consumer programmes. She believed that various consumer rights, laws, measures, courts need to be popularized not only in the urban areas but also in the rural areas.

Siwach and Dahiya (2009) conducted the study on 40 women representing the rural and urban areas of district Panipat (Haryana). The objectives were to make an insight of the existing knowledge of consumer education in rural and urban women and to study the extent of utilization of consumerism by rural and urban women. The respondents were assessed by developing an interview schedule. It was found that most of the urban women (62.50%) had fairly good knowledge of consumerism followed by about 35% having medium knowledge and 2.50% having low knowledge. Whereas, a complete reverse trend was observed in rural women i.e. only 7.50% had high knowledge followed by 75% having low knowledge and about 7.50% had medium knowledge. Moreover, in case of utilization pattern of consumerism, the rural women seldom or never utilized consumer education. Whereas, the urban women, most of the time always utilized their consumer education knowledge except in filing a complaint against the shopkeeper.

Surekha (2009) analyzed the awareness among youth regarding consumers’ rights and CPA in Mumbai. It revealed under the study that consumer movement in the country is quite strong comparing with other countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. However, level of awareness among youth was very low. To know the level of awareness, primary data was collected from the students of colleges and simple questionnaire was prepared for the survey purpose. This study also analyzed the feedback of consumers, lawyers and judges on various issues relating to Consumer Courts in Mumbai. Performance of Forum was not very impressive and found very ordinary. At the end, some suggestions have also been made for improving the awareness among consumers regarding their rights.
**Uppar and Sumangalam (2009)** concluded from their studies that many of the consumer welfare programmes such as CPA, consumer forum, procedure of giving complaint to consumer forum, consumer laws and rules, consumer rights and responsibilities and prevention of food adulteration act were not known by the rural respondents. So this calls for the attention of consumer education in different forms.

**Acharya and Pande (2010)** were of the view that consumer education activists and promoters have to make sure that they involve teachers and their organizations as well as students. It was observed that regardless of gender and income there is a significant difference in enhancements of level of awareness regarding consumerism between different educational media group. The group exposed to participatory media showed the evident difference in enhancement of level of awareness than the other groups exposed to semi-participatory and non-participatory media. Minor difference was observed in enhancement of level of awareness in the group which was exposed to non-participatory media.

The CPA, 1986 which was enacted to address the grievances of the consumers, revealed a very grim picture. **Agrawal (2010)** concluded in her study that despite a plethora of laws and rules the status of consumers is deplorable. There are several drawbacks in many laws. The implementation of many laws is faulty. The enforcement machinery is lethargic, corrupt and the consumers are ignorant of the remedies available under the different laws. The government should therefore, remove the loopholes in laws and enforce them effectively.

**Ahmad, Awais and Goel (2010)** explained that in spite of a large number of laws there are many challenges in the area of consumer protection like supply of defective goods, ever increasing new services in globalized era, ever developing information technology, medical negligence, mis-interpretation of insurance policies and other contracts and increasing exploitation by unfair trade practices in educational services. In fact, consumerism is in its infancy in India. The real purpose of consumer laws is not to make the task of securing compensation easier, but to increase the feeling of responsibility of the producer/ supplier and to reduce the risk of faulty goods and services.

**Ajesh (2010)** studied on the Consumer Redressal Mechanism in Thiruvananthapuram District of Kerala. Samples of 100 consumers who have approached to the Thiruvananthapuram consumer forum for redressing their grievances were taken by him. The researcher found that majority of the sample respondents was not satisfied with the overall performance of the consumer forum. The fact was that consumer laws were poorly implemented. Majority of the sample respondents obtained information about the Consumer Redressal Mechanism from their friends. Justice was always delayed as majority of the cases took two months or more.
time for redressing the grievances. VCOs provided advocacy service to the majority of the sample respondents.

Ali (2010) carried a doctoral study on functioning of Consumer Dispute Redressal Agencies in the state of Goa. He dealt with the functioning of Consumer Dispute Redressal Agencies in the two districts of Goa namely North Goa and South Goa. He found that redressal agencies take approximately more than one year in disposing the complaints. Sometimes the complaint is pending for five to six years before these redressal agencies. The study cleared that there are three reasons for delay i.e. frequent adjournment, non appearance of opposite party and workload. Consumers and VCOs expressed that the procedure followed by the consumer forums is simple as compared to that of the ordinary courts. VCOs in Goa was satisfied with the procedure at forums but reported that justice is always delayed. Adjournments were primarily responsible for delay in justice.

Chacharkar (2010) in his paper averred that every one of us is a consumer and therefore has a right to consumer education. Focusing his study on women consumers, he concluded that even though in today’s world women have come to play an effective role in buying decisions yet they are exploited in many ways, hence need for consumer education at various levels is there. Further there is need for all the stakeholders to come together to protect the consumers. The panchayati raj institutions can play an important role in creating awareness at the local level. The self help groups, anganwaadi centers can be effectively targeted, as women occupy an important position in these organizations.

A study on market and rural consumers by Chakraborty (2010a) revealed that conventional habits of buying un-packed and loose items still prevails over the branded commodities in the rural areas. Nonetheless to say that people living at the minimum level of subsistence or even below, and spending on costly FMCGs, cannot be accepted as a symbol of consumerism in real sense, but such buying can at the most be said to be a matter of chance.

Chakraborty (2010b) dwelled upon the working of the District Forums. He revealed that the overall percentage of disposal of consumer complaints was increasing. The district forums are facing infrastructure problems, particularly those located in the rural/remote areas. Consumers were unaware about the process of filing complaint and other procedures which forces them to take the assistance from the lawyers which results in some expenditure, which they do not like. In the absence of any specific provision barring the appointment of lawyers, consumer often prefers to appoint lawyers out of necessity and compulsion.

Joshi (2010) in his paper examined the notion of consumer protection in India within the larger context of the practice of consumption. He argued that it is necessary to address the
issue of consumption somewhat more comprehensively before discussing the strategies of consumer protection or the effectiveness of legislative measures such as CPA, 1986. He suggested that the terms consumer, consumption and consumer protection be read afresh in the light of discourses which have emerged during the new historical conjuncture called globalization.

In a study carried by Khanooja (2010), the consumers agreed that they were cheated in their purchase in one way or the other. Majority of the consumers when cheated took no action. To meet these challenges, the consumer movement should develop into a people’s movement which may take in its fold all the consumers of the country. Presently, the movement is confined to cities and towns. It has attracted a small section of intelligentsia. It should expand its base to villages and should attract the whole of the population. To achieve this there is a need to develop and design awareness programmes.

Kumuda et al. (2010) in their study focused on adolescents as consumers. The response sought for consumer awareness and other aspects of consumerism was alarming with very poor correct response. The problem there was not with the consumers but with consumerism and poor networking of consumer protection activities. The study revealed that the young consumers are conservative and can be described as rational or prudent consumers.

Prasad (2010) focused on economic and legal aspects of liability rules in terms of providing incentives to tortfeasors to take precautionary measures to reduce risk of harm. He concluded that an incentive must be given to both the party’s tortfeasors and victims to take the socially optimum level of precaution in order to minimize the accident costs. In case of unilateral accidents, strict liability is to be preferred in comparison with negligence. Whereas in bilateral accidents, both the parties can influence the severity of harm, almost all liability rules may give incentives to take optimum level of care, but there is no liability rule which gives an incentive to the parties to take optimum level of activity.

Praveen (2010) gave a deep insight of the working of VCOs. The author had critically examined the infrastructure and financial positions of VCOs. The study revealed that majority of the VCOs agree that the problems generally relate to issues such as paucity of funds, lack of cooperation from business people, lack of cooperation from local politicians and lack of cooperation and awareness among consumers. The author viewed that consumer protection and welfare is not the task of a single entity of the society, rather it is the collective responsibility of the state and various others stakeholders.

Ravichandran (2010) argued that consumers everywhere in this world are prisoners of irrepressible desires fostered by giant technocratic corporations, the Indian consumers, apart
from being prisoners in this aspect are doubly captivated- initially by their fatalistic mind-set and later by the corporate commoditized images. (S)he considers the receipt of defective goods and services as an act of fate. Indian consumers must learn up to give up fatalistic attitude and accept the right to fight when exploited. Then only laws can govern and protect them very effectively.

An efficient and effective programme of consumer protection, concluded Singh (2010), is of special significance to all of us because we all are consumers. If both the producers/ providers and consumers realize the need for co-existence, adulterated products, spurious goods and other deficiencies in services would become a thing of the past. The active involvement and participation from all quarters i.e. the central and state governments, the educational institutions, the NGOs, the print and electronic media and the adoption and observance of a voluntary code of conduct by the trade and industry and the citizen’s charter by service providers is not only necessary but a *sine qua non* for the success of the consumer movement.

Singh, Misra and Chadah (2010a) observed that even though a net of legal protections were provided, they have proved to be insufficient to redress the grievances of the consumers. Apart from this even the institutional mechanism set up to protect the consumers and promote consumer welfare are also inadequate and to a large extent, unable to protect the consumers from exploitation. Therefore, globalization has posed new challenges to the governments throughout the world and new mechanisms and instrumentalities need to be set up to protect the consumers.

In a study on health sector Singh et al. (2010b) concluded that public awareness of medical and dental negligence in India is growing. Hospital managements are increasingly facing complaints regarding facilities, standards of professional competence and appropriateness of therapeutic and diagnostic methods. Therefore, both the professions need to update their understanding on CPA and its amendments to be on a legally safer side.

Surekha (2010) exposed the weakness in the consumer protection movement due to lack of awareness. The study revealed that the majority of the consumers felt that the appointment of retired Judges in the district forums itself was a problem as it resulted in non delivery of justice. The need to strengthen the redressal mechanism and quick disposal of complaints was expressed by the author. To take the consumer movement further the consumers themselves have to unite to fight for their rights.

Tiwari and Prakash (2010) pointed out that with technological advancement, liberalization and globalization, consumer welfare and protection of consumer rights has become a major area of concern. The authors concluded by pointing out that there is a lot variation in the level
of awareness among the rural/urban consumers. While purchasing products and hiring services, women consumers faced numerous problems. Due to lack of education and awareness, people who are approaching the consumer forums are still negligible in comparison to the problems faced by them.

**Uppal and Rani (2010)** critically examined the extent of awareness in rural and urban areas. The study revealed that awareness among the consumers regarding their rights is lacking. They are not aware about the various measures that were taken to protect the consumers. The rural consumers are the worst sufferers. Furthermore, lack of consumer organizations in the rural areas is a major cause of consumer exploitation. It also shows that the overall awareness is low among consumers but it is comparatively very low among rural consumers.

In recent study, **Viswanathan (2010)** observed procedural simplicity and speedy and inexpensive redressal of consumer grievances as contained in the CPA are really unique and have few parallels in the world. Implementation of the act revealed that interests of consumers are better protected than ever before. However, consumer awareness through consumer education and actions by the government, consumer activists, and associations are needed the most to make consumer protection movement a success in the country.

**Chaterjee and Shahoo (2011)** stressed upon that the government and other consumer agencies should make efforts in the direction of propaganda and publicity of district forum, state and national judiciary established for consumer protection so as to make more and more consumer aware about machinery for their greater involvement and to seek justice in case of grievances. Government should make and implement rules of punishment more harsh so that manufacturer and shopkeeper think twice before adopting fraudulent practices.

**Gupta, Mittal and Gupta (2011)** gave a descriptive view of various measures of consumer protection in India and consumerism. To protect the basic rights of consumer, Government of India has taken developments steps by way of enactment of various acts. CPA 1986 is one such unique act exclusively enacted for consumer protection and which provide compensatory relief to the complainants. The consumer is India is still exposed to many malpractice of business like adulteration, misbranding, duplicate goods, poor quality, hazardous goods etc. To protect the consumer, various organizations are doing the commendable job and carrying forward the movement of consumerism. The consumer was provided with various kind of relief under CP Act. Author has given a detailed note about the various rights available to consumer under this act.

**Krishna and Suganya (2011)** compared the performance of consumer courts (State Commission and 30 District Forums) in Tamilnadu with consumer courts (State Commission
and 14 District Forums) in Kerala from November 2009 to September 2010. Statistical Reports published by National Commission at New Delhi since inception on number of cases filed, disposed, pending, existing vacancies and non-functioning courts were used for the comparison. Statistics revealed that consumer courts in Kerala were functioning more effectively than in Tamil Nadu. Apart from statistics, there were other factors, which influenced the effectiveness of consumer courts such as consumers’ awareness level, their attitude and behavior, funds availability, support of state government concerned etc. Consumer courts termed like double edged swords with government and consumers on either side. Neither the government, nor the consumers can be individually blamed for any cause and benefit.

Kumar (2011) carried an empirical research on complainants, opposite parties, advocates, people associated with consumer organizations, presidents and members of district forums in the Haryana as part of his Ph.D. thesis. The study concluded that the 75% complainants lodged their complaints by engaging advocates. Complainants considered the complex and technical procedure as the most important factor for the slow disposal of cases in district forums and a very high percentage of respondents were in the grips of advocates regarding lodging of complaint in district forum. Similar view was shared by the opposite parties and consumer organizations. Complainants, opposite parties and consumer organizations were of the opinion that the method of deciding the complaints in District Forums is much time consuming. 73.33% of the complaints, 70% of the advocates engaged by complaints and 76.92% of the consumer organizations under study were of the opinion that it will provide easy and quick justice to the consumers if these Forums are established at sub divisional level. There is a provision in CPA that opposite party has to file a reply within 30 to 45 days in district forum. About 76.92% of the opposite parties (Govt./ Semi Govt. Sector) were of the view that this period should be increased. However 38.10% of private business houses were of the view that this period was sufficient to some extent. By 34% of the respondents, ‘fear of exploitation by the advocates’ was considered as the most important factor restraining them from filling the complaints before the district forum. It was clear from the analysis that in the opinion of complainants, opposite parties, advocates and consumer organizations, the accommodation of the district forum was sufficient for their efficient working. It was found that one third of the complainants would not like to file their complaints in the district forums, in case they are exploited in future. It was exhibited from the research that the procedure of filing the complaints in the forums was too technical, expensive and complex. Measurement of levels of consumer awareness made it amply clear
that majority of the consumers had just a general awareness about CPA and only 19.33% were fully aware and 36.66% were partially aware about the procedure in filling complaints. 

**Das (2012)** tried to find out the awareness level of the consumers regarding different consumer laws in India, regarding their satisfaction level and if not satisfied with the product or service, what they are doing to protect their right. Primary data was collected from Aizwal only. 50 respondents were taken for the study. Very interesting results were found among the youngsters. In case of CPA, 1986; Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954; and ISI certification Act; less than 10% people were fully aware about this. On the other hand, 52%, 22% and 54% were aware up to certain extent. 40%, 70%, and 38% were totally ignorant about these Acts. Majority of the consumers at Aizwal were satisfied regarding the packaged food items. Only few were dissatisfied. When asked to consumers that what they do if they are not satisfied with the product. More than 90% of consumers said they will do nothing. Only 2% consumers will ask for compensation to retailer, return the product to retailer and file cases to the consumer forum or court. Others were just complaining or informing to the retailers.

**Khurana and Khurana (2012)** analyzed the general awareness among consumer regarding consumer protection and specially awareness of provisions of CPA 1986. They studied the level of awareness with regard to procedural formalities to be completed while filing a complaint in consumer forum. For this purpose a sample of 100 respondents was taken. The results showed that respondents were having general awareness in relation to consumer protection. They were well-versed with the term 'Jago Grahak Jago' almost in all respects. Quality parameters/ standards like ISI, ISO, AGMARK etc. were also not new for them. But in contrast to these, the procedural awareness or practical implications were showing some different results. Only 20% of the respondents were well-equipped in all respects. 20% to 30% were having incomplete idea for these whereas 50% of the respondent showed totally unawareness in this regard. Study showed that only 10% have approached to the consumer forum for justice. No one had used National Consumer Helpline for redressal of their grievances.

**Mittal, Bamba and Gupta (2012)** conducted a study on awareness and utilization of consumer rights among women in Bhiwani district of Haryana. A sample of 200 respondents through proportionate random sampling was taken. Respondents were found to be having low level of awareness and utilization of consumer rights. Women were found to be maximum aware about ‘Right to choose’ and utilized ‘Right to information’ up to great extent. Women were found to be little concerned about ‘right to safety’ and exercised ‘right to health &
environment’ at the minimal level. Consumer rights were not found to be taken seriously by women consumers and felt them as wastage of time.

Singh (2012) studied the effectiveness of consumer forum and it’s Impact on corporate and consumers in U.P. region. He found that a huge backlog of pending cases was great cause of concern for both the Forums and pending cases seemed to have increasing every year. Speed of disposal of cases in Agra and Meerut was low and on an average only 29.64% & 16.82% respectively cases got disposed of in a year. Collective agreement of aggrieved consumers with the factors of effectiveness of consumer forums was calculated and falls in the range of moderate agreement. Collective agreement of lawyers was calculated with the factors of effectiveness of consumer forums. It was greater than consumers, but this score also falls in the range moderate agreement. Selected corporate officers also reported that consumer forums were moderately effective. Members of consumer forum shown greater satisfaction and ranked them as substantially effective with existing efficiency and effectiveness of consumer courts. It was observed that there was a huge difference in the views of different categories of respondents regarding the effectiveness of consumer forums. It was been inferred that difference between actual and expected effectiveness was insignificant. At the end, it was found by the researcher that efficiency of the consumer forums was moderate, that is why these forums were not as effective as they supposed to be and needed to be improved for providing speedy and less expensive justice.

Karim (2013) carried a study to know about the general awareness level of consumer and their awareness about the CPA and its important provisions in Palayamkottai City of Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu. The study was based on both Primary data and Secondary data. Consumers were more aware about the consumers’ rights and their duties. The consumers were having the practice of verifying the prices before purchase and compare the original products with the adulterated and sub-standard goods, in case, if any difference they are complaining the same to replace them. Most of them were not ready to make complaints in the consumer forum as it is time consuming and additional burden. The analysis of performance of the Tirunelveli consumer forum showed that the percentage of number of cases filed and judgment in favour the consumers are more than against the consumers.

Khan (2013) worked on knowing the consumer rights awareness in urban and rural Areas of Muzaffarnagar and Saharanpur districts of Uttar Pradesh as part of his PH. D. thesis. Consumer believed that the government has failed to spread the awareness about consumer rights. Majority of consumers were aware of ISI and AGMARK but purchased adulterated goods and spurious services and they had complained to their sellers only. They do not prefer
to go consumer court. Consumers ignore if they found any adulteration in food stuff. They did not want to go to forum because they think it was a time and money consuming and they will not get any return from the court. Consumers opined that consumer education is helpful to prevent them from any kind of exploitation. Majority believed that the consumers were empowered in modern days to some extent. The very less number of the consumer were fully aware of the CPA. It was interesting to note here that more than 80 percent of rural consumers had never heard of this Act. The experiences of consumers who went to forums were also not encouraging because the time limit prescribed by law was not adhered by the consumer forums and the decision came in two to three years on an average in these forums. The reason for consumers’ apathy was irresponsible behavior of lawyers, pendency of large number of cases and reluctant behavior of consumer courts and its irregular sitting.

Kumar and Dahiya (2013) examined the perceptions of the complainant consumers regarding functioning of the district consumer forums of Delhi. The complainant at the district forum level in Delhi constituted the universe of the present study. For this purpose, out of 10 districts forums of Delhi, five was selected. In all, a sample of 250 complainants (selecting 50 from each) was selected. Majority of the complainants were not found correctly aware about the main provisions of the Act. Timely disposal of the consumer complaints was not found up to the mark. About three fourth complaints were found pending for more than stipulated time frame prescribed by the Act. About 70% respondents paid more than five visits (ranging between 5 to 40 or more) as otherwise what would have justified in context of stipulated complaint disposal time mandated under the Act and the ‘restriction of number of adjournment to minimum’ for speedy disposal of the complaints. Majority of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction over the functioning of forums and the prime cause of dissatisfaction of the complainant-respondents was delay in disposal of their complaints.

Kumar et al. (2013) attempted to examine the consumer right awareness among farmers of Bihar. It was based on primary data collected from 100 farmers visited at state level farmers’ fair at Sabour campus of Bihar Agricultural University, Sabour (Bihar). The study revealed that as many as 58% of the farmers were aware of consumer rights. More than one fourth respondents came to know about CPA 1986 through television followed by radio (26%), newspaper (21%), friends and relatives (17%) and other resources (4%). Farmers were able to bargaining at maximum retail prices and verify the quality and quantity of the input as they became gradually educated through government efforts. However, 68 percent farmers considered it tough to get the benefit of provision of consumer right at the forum and it was time and energy consuming. The study suggested that the government should proceed on
campaign to educate rural farmers through integrating the various departments particularly about filing complaint and location of the forum so that they can able to save time and money.

**Misra, Chadah and Pathania (2013)** initiated a study on evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of CPA under the guidance of Centre for Consumer Studies, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi. The Study covered 5 states, 10 districts, and 50 villages. To widen the scope of the study and also to get a true perspective more than 310 District Forums and 60 villages were covered. The study revealed that the CPA had limited impact on consumer empowerment mainly due to lack of awareness about the Act and its provisions. The limited impact and ineffectiveness of the Act to a large extent was not due to inadequacy of the law or its provisions but it was due to the poor implementation of the Act and the apathy of the governments and other stakeholders including the consumers. For 41.9 percent respondents, the source of information about the CPA was family and friends. Media as a source was indicated by 71.5 percent, lawyers by 13.2 percent. For 29 percent respondents, VCOs were the source of information about the CP Act. A large number of organizations had consumer interface but there was no mechanism to address consumer issues. The three tier redressal mechanism was virtually been hijacked by the lawyers. As a result, undue adjournments were granted leading to delay in disposal of the complaints. There was a broad consensus among the various stakeholders that the delay in disposal of cases was largely due to the involvement and appearance of lawyers in all cases. Because of this the proceedings have become too technical, cumbersome, and expensive as slowly the procedures of the civil court have crept in the proceedings of the district forums. It also revealed that 61.4 percent of the respondents would again file a complaint if the need be. Majority of the respondents believed that the Forums/ Commissions decide the cases only on merit. Only 26.7 percent respondents were aware about the CONFONET Project but 80.5 percent agreed that computerization has helped in data management. 74.8 percent of the members were not aware about the District Consumer Protection Council. The State Commissions were not able to exercise effective supervisory control over the District Forums. As a result, they lack accountability and indiscipline was found a major problem. In many of the states even the working hours were not adhered to and absenteeism has become a major problem. The working of the District Forums needed to be properly monitored and accountability fixed. At present the State Commissions did not have any mechanism to monitor or supervise the working of the District Forums and the President of the Commission did not have adequate time to do this.
Mittal and Gupta (2013a) conducted a study consumer purchase decisions and socio-personal aspects. A sample size of 600 respondents was taken from rural and urban areas of Haryana including NCR. Respondents of different age group, gender, education, income and occupation were taken. Data was analyzed with the help of Percentage, Chi-square, Spearman’s correlation. In the study, five prominent factors with respect to factors affecting consumer purchase decisions were analyzed. The study concluded that consumer is mostly derived by the need for purchasing of goods. There is least impact of advertising on consumers’ purchase of goods. Consumers are more interested in self searching and comparing the products available rather than influenced by any kind of advertisements. Purchase whenever need arises has no linear relationship and no association with any other purchase behavior. It shows that consumers are highly inclined for purchase whenever there is need.

The study of Mittal and Gupta (2013b) aimed to analyze the consumers’ awareness and utilization of consumer rights given under CPA. Further, it checked the consumers’ knowledge about documents required at consumer forums to file consumer cases. It was concluded that the level of awareness of consumer rights was high among the respondents. Respondents with high education level and high level of income were more aware as compared to those having poor education level and low income level. It was surprising to note that even the level of awareness of consumer rights was high but the utilization of these rights was not observed at very good level. It was inferred that respondents did not know the procedure to move to consumer forums if they had any grievances as nearly 3/4th respondents did not know the documents required for filing the complaints in the consumer forums.

Siddamma (2013) attempted to explore the myth that consumer protection was a new phenomenon in India. It has focused on the redressal mechanism established under CPA and problems faced by the governments in establishing this mechanism. The study was conducted in the Bellary district of Karnataka. The research concluded that majority of the complainants and advocates were satisfied with the functioning of the forums and the forums were working efficiently in protecting the interests of the consumers. These forums were suitable and relevant in today’s economic environment. These forums provided hassle free redressal of consumers’ grievances. The justice was reported to be always delayed at these forums.

Chanana (2014) worked on to find the strategies for consumer awareness. She reported that, in general, the consumers were ignorant about their rights. The Government has not been making sufficient attempts to make the consumers aware and its role needed to be improved. Certain rules and regulations were still needed to protect the consumers. The court procedures
of consumer forums took a very long time to provide justice and money required was also more.

**Gupta (2014a)** carried out a study about consumer awareness level monitoring inventory and found that only 14.5% consumers have full awareness about consumer and purchase related issues. 49.17% consumers had general level of awareness and 36.33% consumers had either very low or no level of awareness towards consumers related issues. Taking the holistic view, it had concluded that most of the consumers do not look and analyze for much factors. Few factors like maximum retail price, seal and packing material of product for assuring the genuineness of brand, quality of the product, warranty/ guarantee card filled, check the bill after buy, date of manufacturing and date of expiry were much referred than other factors.

**Gupta (2014b)** conducted a study on consumers’ awareness and action against business malpractices and concluded that majority of consumers had complaints about their purchases. Despite having the complaints, 87.3% consumers either never went for lodging the complaints or sometimes went for lodging the complaints. Although, correlation between ‘complaint found and complaint lodged’ had been found significant, the real problem in consumer protection here seemed to be the consumers’ behavior of accepting the purchase without going for complaining against any complaint.

**Mittal, Gupta and Bamba (2014)** carried a study on consumers’ consciousness towards the problems/ unfair trade practices faced while purchasing the products and complaints lodged with respect to purchases. The primary data was collected through structured questionnaires which were filled up by 600 respondents of rural and urban areas of fifteen districts of Haryana. Consumers had been presented with the fourteen areas of problems (unfair trade practices) faced regarding goods purchased for which complain can be lodged. Nearly half of the consumers had found to complain in almost all the areas but rate of lodging the complaints had been found nearly 60%. Highest number of complaints was found about sub standard goods sold/ adulterated goods. Highest number of complaints had been lodged regarding warranty/ guarantee (such as defective product/ non replacement of items etc.). It revealed that gender, education level and occupation significantly contributed in increasing the conscious level of consumers while age, place of residence and income did not have significance with conscious level of consumers. It was suggested that consumer needs to be more aware of the problems faced while purchasing and a suitable mechanism is required to encourage them to lodge these complaints.

**Singh, Nayak and Bala (2014)** conducted a brief research to check awareness and satisfaction of consumer regarding to CPA in Haryana. The primary data was collected from
complainants, opposite parties, advocates, people associated with consumer organizations, presidents and members of District Forums in the State of Haryana. Study found that majority of the respondents considered necessity as important factor of purchase. Fear of exploitation by the advocates and complex procedure were considered as the most important factor restraining them from filing the complaints before the District Forums. It was found that female were having more awareness than males regarding and 52.22% has no awareness. Out of female purchases related issues. Study clearly said that level of awareness about the Act was more in females as compared to males. One significant observation was that among males, 71.54% were having knowledge of the CPA, but only 17.89% were having the knowledge of filing complaints at district forum. It was clear from the study that level of awareness about the Act was maximum (100%) among industrialists and however, it was minimum (25%) among agriculturists. The level of full awareness about the procedure of filing complaints was found nil among agriculturists, laborer, businessmen and servicemen.

**Mittal and Gupta (2015a)** concluded that majority of consumers had complaints about purchases and most of them either never or sometimes went for lodging the complaints. It was observed that sellers were found to be reluctant in dealing with the consumers’ complaints. Only ¼th of the respondents’ complaints was dealt promptly by sellers else were delayed or even not attended. Highly educated respondents in high income group were significantly more aware to protest before the sellers than their counterparts. It was an important inference that even after the 25 years of enactment of CPA in India; consumers shy away from taking up their grievances to consumer forums even if they were not satisfied with the compensation of seller. Most of the consumers decided not to purchase from that seller. The tendency of reacting to manufacture’s/ seller’s response found uniform in almost all the demographic segments except few variables. It is suggested that more stringent action need to be taken on manufacturers/ sellers by the Government or respective authorities to increase the confidence of consumers in the system.

**Mittal and Gupta (2015b)** carried out a study to find out the consciousness level of consumers towards the problems/ unfair trade practices faced while purchasing the products and complaints lodged with respect to complaints found. Consumers had been presented with the fourteen areas of problems (unfair trade practices) faced regarding goods purchased for which complain can be lodged. Nearly half of the consumers found complaint in almost all the areas and among them nearly 60% had lodged the complaints. Highest number of complaints was found about sub standard goods sold/ adulterated goods. Highest number of complaints was lodged regarding warranty/ guarantee. The study revealed that nearly half the
consumers had moderate consciousness level towards looking into the complaints while purchasing the products. Only 32.5% consumers had been found highly conscious regarding problem during purchases.

2.1 Genesis of the Research Problem
The various studies discussed above provide various dimensions about consumerism, consumer protection, awareness of consumer rights, effectiveness of consumer disputes redressal framework and practices prevalent in the market. However, few prominent studies are further analyzed and categorized on the basis of their objectives, sampling and conclusions and presented in tabular form.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Name/s</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Objective/s</th>
<th>Sampling</th>
<th>Conclusion/s</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Singh and Balachandran</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Evaluation of the effectiveness of implementation of Consumer Protection Act, 1986 in two districts each in five states viz. Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.</td>
<td>Questionnaire filled from state officials, state commissions, district forums and 1168 consumers.</td>
<td>Infrastructure problem was found at almost all levels. List of pending cases at forums was very large. Level of consumer awareness about Consumer Protection Act was found to be severely low.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Verma and Sharma</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Appraisal of the performance of VCOs regarding consumer protection, attitude of complainants and businesses towards VCOs and their perception about role of VCOs.</td>
<td>71 VCOs, 80 consumers, 58 businessmen and complainants.</td>
<td>VCOs were important to fight for the rights of consumers. There were many problems observed with respect to smooth functioning of consumer organizations.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Bajaj</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Appraisal of the status of consumerism in Haryana. Awareness and attitude of different interest groups regarding various legislations for consumer protection, consumer rights, quality marks and various aspects related with consumer movement.</td>
<td>300 consumers, 40 business organizations and 6 consumer organizations.</td>
<td>The pace of consumer movement was quite low. Awareness level of different interest group towards consumerism and consumer rights was not found significant.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Jain</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Appraisal of the functioning of five district consumer disputes redressal forums in Haryana. Attitude of different interest groups towards consumer grievances redressal mechanism and consumer awareness in Haryana.</td>
<td>300 general consumers, 200 complainants, 200 opposite parties, 200 lawyers, 24 judiciary members and 11 consumer organizations.</td>
<td>The study indicated inefficient working of district forums. Consumer awareness level was low. Different interest groups were not satisfied with the functioning of consumer forums.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name(s)</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Research Focus</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Findings</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Sivaprakasam and Rajamohan</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Appraisal of the consumers’ protection measures in Tamilnadu and degree of awareness of rural and urban consumers. It included the analysis of role of VCOs and beneficiaries of judgement delivered by consumer forums.</td>
<td>200 urban and rural general consumers each, 264 beneficiary consumers and 21 VCOs.</td>
<td>Many lacunae in the implementation of Consumer Protection Act were reported. Consumer justice was not found to be satisfactory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Chazhoor</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Analysis of the working and performance of consumer protection and guidance societies (CP&amp;G) in the state of Kerala.</td>
<td>60 CP&amp;G societies working at various levels.</td>
<td>These societies in Kerala were not performing significant functions in promoting consumer education, consumer guidance and consumer protection. Major problem faced by these societies was availability of finances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Kaptan</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>To identify some aspects of consumer protection related to rural consumers and the status of rural consumers in new economy.</td>
<td>241 rural consumers.</td>
<td>There was limited awareness about the protection cover the law offers to the consumers. Most of the consumers felt that the provisions of CPA were not made known to them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Kaptan and Khan</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Analysis of the response of media towards consumer issues and response of readers towards consumer columns and news items in print media.</td>
<td>205 media savvy respondents.</td>
<td>Newspapers were found to be giving due weightage to consumer columns deeming it as social cause. The readership of these articles was found to be irregular. General disinterest was shown to read about consumer movement news and VCOs activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Arora</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Evaluation of the effectiveness of the redressal system for handling consumer grievances in the state of Delhi.</td>
<td>175 complainants to consumer forums, 30 complainants to VCOs and 21 VCOs.</td>
<td>Consumer lack awareness regarding consumer protection measures by government. They were even not willing to fight to combat malpractices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Gupta</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>To examine the awareness of consumers about consumer laws and rights.</td>
<td>100 students of management institutions in Hyderabad city of Andhra Pradesh.</td>
<td>The level of awareness about consumer rights, laws and other related aspects was abysmally low. They also felt that others consumers to whom they know were also not much aware about these issues.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Himachalam</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Analysis of the extent of consumer awareness regarding their rights, protection measures, consumer forum procedures and effectiveness of consumer protection measures in the state of Andhra Pradesh.</td>
<td>1500 consumers (750 complainants and 750 non-complainants) from the six districts of three regions of Andhra Pradesh.</td>
<td>Consumers were found to be aware about their rights and malpractices prevailed in the market. Medium level of awareness was there regarding disputes redressal agencies. Usage of these redressal agencies was found at low level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Seshadri</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>To examine the level of consumer awareness, consumer behavior and their views on consumerism in capital city Chennai of Tamilnadu state.</td>
<td>574 consumers.</td>
<td>The level of consumer awareness was found to be high. Majority of consumers were found to have checked various aspects before purchasing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Gokilavani and Nageswari</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>To analyze the women’s consumer rights and their awareness in three districts of Tamilnadu.</td>
<td>80 women consumers (40 from commercial areas and 40 from non commercial areas) from each of three districts. Total- 240.</td>
<td>Women consumers were not found aware about consumer rights and poor knowledge about consumer self protection measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Gupta</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Analysis of the awareness level of educated consumers and their hesitancy aspect to complain in the state of Punjab.</td>
<td>150 respondents from Ludhiana and Moga cities.</td>
<td>Educated consumers were found to be more aware about consumer rights and other consumer related issues. They hesitated to go to consumer forums because of time and money consuming procedure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Study Objective</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Findings</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Rani</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>To study the level of awareness of consumer rights, pattern of making complaints and attitude of consumers.</td>
<td>540 consumers (225 males and 315 males) from Haryana</td>
<td>The consumers were not fool but helpless. They were not aware of their rights. Government efforts were not reaching to the consumers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Sharma, Kaur and Gupta</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>To find the awareness of consumers about consumer rights, legislations, CPA and perception about consumer disputes redressal agencies.</td>
<td>374 consumers.</td>
<td>Good level of awareness was observed about CPA. The legal process was perceived to be time consuming and cumbersome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Singh</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>To find the extent of consumer awareness in rural markets of Haryana.</td>
<td>200 agriculturists, businessmen and housewives from ten villages of Hisar district.</td>
<td>Awareness about consumer movement was found not adequate. Awareness about product attributes was satisfactory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Agrawal</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>To explore the buying behavior of consumers, role of government in improving consumer awareness and consumer protection strategies in Uttar Pradesh.</td>
<td>320 households from the rural areas of Ghaziabad.</td>
<td>Consumers were having poor and shallow level of awareness regarding consumer rights and legislations. Government role was perceived to be the minimum in consumer protection and awareness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Khatri</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>To ascertain the awareness level of consumers, effectiveness of consumer disputes redressal agencies, role of manufactures and VCOs.</td>
<td>400 consumers from Delhi and 18 VCOs across India.</td>
<td>The awareness about consumer disputes redressal agencies was very low. Variety of malpractices was found to be prevalent in the market.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Shekhar, Ahlawat and Singh</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>To examine the awareness and utilization of consumer rights among women consumers of Gujarat State.</td>
<td>200 women consumers from Palanpur city.</td>
<td>There was low level of awareness and utilization of consumer rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Ajesh</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>To analyze the effectiveness of consumer redressal mechanism and awareness of consumers.</td>
<td>100 complainants to Thiruvananthapuram</td>
<td>Majority of respondents were dissatisfied with the performance of the consumer forum. They</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Results</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Ali</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>To analyze the functioning of three district consumer disputes redressal agencies in the state of Goa.</td>
<td>279 complainants and interview with officials.</td>
<td>Many inadequacies were found in the functioning of consumer forums. It was found that justice is not delivered on time at consumer forums.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Chacharkar</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>To examine the awareness level and buying behavior of women consumers in Maharashtra state.</td>
<td>300 women from Amravati city.</td>
<td>The women as a consumer were found to be ignorant of consumer related issues. They need to be educated about consumer related aspects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Kumuda et al.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Analysis of the level of knowledge of college students on consumer related issues and consumer behavior in Pondicherry.</td>
<td>1000 college students.</td>
<td>The respondents were found to be rational consumers when purchasing. The response for consumer awareness and other aspects of consumerism was alarmingly poor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Kumar</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>To analyze the functioning of three districts consumer disputes redressal forums in Haryana. To assess the level of awareness and attitude of different persons associated with consumer disputes redressal mechanism towards the functioning of consumer forums.</td>
<td>150 lawyers, 150 consumers, 150 complainants, 150 opposite parties and 13 consumer organizations.</td>
<td>Many inadequacies were found in the functioning of consumer forums. General attitude of different persons associated with consumer forums was not favorable. A lot of improvement required in implementation of CPA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Das</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>To find the awareness level of consumers regarding different consumer laws in Mizoram state.</td>
<td>50 consumers from Aizwal city.</td>
<td>Consumers were not aware about different consumer laws enacted in India.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 27  | Singh     | 2012 | Analysis of the effectiveness of consumer district consumer forums. | Eight district forums, 100 | District consumer forums were found to be
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Sample Size/Details</th>
<th>Findings and Observations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Khan</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>To find the level of consumer rights awareness and related issues of consumer protection in urban and rural areas of Uttar Pradesh.</td>
<td>200 urban and 300 rural consumers form each Muzaffarnagar and Saharanpur districts.</td>
<td>Consumers in general, lack consumer rights awareness. They did not know regarding the existence of protective services provided by the government and the voluntary consumer organization for redressal of their grievances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Misra, Chadah and Pathania</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>To assess the awareness of consumer rights among consumers, working of consumer forums, effectiveness of CPA and functioning of consumer councils across five states in five regions of India viz. Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Odisha and Tripura.</td>
<td>2000 consumers, 305 forum administrative functionaries and 175 complainants from two districts in each state.</td>
<td>Consumer Protection Act had limited impact on consumer empowerment mainly due to lack of awareness. The law is ineffective because of its poor implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Siddamma</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>To evaluate the working method of consumer dispute redressal agencies in Karnataka state.</td>
<td>Statistics of consumer forum at Bellary.</td>
<td>Findings showed that this forum was very efficiently worked to settle the consumer cases. Status of complaints filed and complaints disposed were satisfactory. Certain problems were also found in consumer forums.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The studies covered above concerned with awareness amongst consumers regarding Consumer Protection Act and consumer rights. Some researchers attempted in the direction of consumers’ perception, working of consumer forums and the complaining behavior of consumers. Few researchers have studied the attitude of various stakeholders in consumer forums at different time periods but confined to few aspects of redressal mechanism and few cities. Studies undertaken so far gave an almost un-quantified support for the theme selected for this study. Few studies were carried out to understand the problems and challenges in implementation of CPA. The various studies were conducted covering various parts/ places of India. It is evident from above literature that no comprehensive study was undertaken in past on the attitude, perception and awareness of various stakeholders viz. consumers, complainants, opposite parties, advocates/ legal experts, consumer organizations with respect to consumer grievances redressal mechanism in Haryana. In broader sense, the need for this type of study is also justified considering the present scenario i.e.:

- Rapidly increasing variety of goods and services which modern technology has made available.
- Growing emphasis over consumerism internationally.
- Removal of personal relationship of buyer and seller on trading with e-commerce and consumer’s increased mobility.
- Sophistication in marketing and selling practices in advertising.
- Increased incidents of consumer exploitation.
- Significant growth of consumer organizations.
- Augmentation of CPA by enactment of Right to Information Act, 2005.
- Significant increase in imports of inferior goods from China.

It is necessary to bridge the current gaps and to suggest improvements for successful & effective implementation of CP Act, 1986. Therefore, this research is designed to explore the various intrinsic aspects of consumer protection, consumer awareness, consumer behavior etc. which were related to the poor implementation of CPA. The researcher plans to study the problems and challenges in the implementation of CPA in Haryana. Accordingly, the following objectives are identified under the study:

1. To measure the level of consumer awareness about ‘Consumer Rights’ and consumer grievances redressal under Consumer Protection Act.
2. To analyze the attitude and perception of complainants towards consumer grievances redressal system.
3. To analyze the attitude and perception of opposite parties.
4. To analyze the attitude and perception of advocates/ legal experts.
5. To analyze the attitude and perception of voluntary consumer organizations.