

**THE STUDY OF THE REDRESSALS AND JUDGEMENTS GIVEN BY  
THE DISTRICT CONSUMER FORUM AGAINST THE STATE  
ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION COMPANY**

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**Introduction**

It is always said that a consumer is the king. He is a key element in market because it changes as per the consumer's demand. Ideologically it is may be true but at the grassroots level the facts are otherwise. We read about many cases of cheating and malpractices by the sellers. Consumer is easy prey to such things but he is not aware of it and not conscious enough about his rights as a consumer. He is reluctant to go into the legal proceedings for his complaints and blame the luck. Consumer is not thoughtful towards the seller's malpractices, cheating hack and misleading advertisements which keep bubarding at consumer and IS easy prey of artificial scarcity leading to unnecessary purchases. He lacks knowledge of consumer protection forum or Consumer Protection Act which can help him to Protect his rights as a consumer.

Consumer is the key component of market. Without his prosperity no country can lead on the path of progress. Vigilant and smart consumer can play a pivotal role to improve the quality of goods and services he needs. But look at the orthodox he never enjoy this status. Manufacturers always thrust their products on consumers. They are obliged to purchase; they are cheated pin down to face the scarcity sudden price hike inferior quality products and services. They are helpless: no guarantee of quality of products. Thus they are being exploited by the shop men and marketers.

Today is the era of information explosion. Consumer is confused, puzzled. Life has become full of struggles and challenges. Consumer has to face many difficulties in day to day life. It is essential to come over the misery. There IS need to support the illiterate and Uneducated people to provide them with the right information; educate them about consumers' rights and the ways to get assistance. There is immense need to form Consumer's Rights Movement at rural level. It should become the People's movement. Consumer has every right to protect himself from abusive market. He should get the whole hearted support and timely redressal of his grievances and should get proper guidance about the Consumer Protection Act so that the quality of life will improve.

**Objectives of the Study**

- 1 . To study the level of legal awareness of consumer in day to day life regarding electricity supply.
2. To study the cases of consumers who are cheated in day to day life regarding electricity supply.

**Methodology**

The territory of Amravati district was selected for the study. There are 14 blocks in Amravati district. From these 10 blocks were selected randomly. In 10 blocks total 275 complainants were found who lodged their complaints to the consumer forum. They were selected for the responses. The data were collected by giving questionnaire. Collected data were analysed. For analysis frequency, percentage, coefficient of correlation and Association methods were applied and conclusions drawn.

**Results and Discussion**

The data were classified on the basis of the consumers' responses and analysed as follows.

Complainants Who Had To Wait for Solutions

year	frequency	percentage
2006-07	62	22.54
2007-08	68	24.73
2008-09	79	28.73
2009-10	66	24
total	275	100

Table Number 1

The above table displays the proportion of complainants who had to wait for the rectification regarding the discontinuous electricity supply. The study showed that the number of complaints lodged not showing much difference with the progressing years. Slight hike up was observed in 2008-2009. So the respondents had to struggle for justice.

Thus the slogan 'Redressal in 90 days' did not prove any significance.

Instances of Bluffing/ Cheating/ Imposing

frequency	No. of responses	percentage
once	224	81.45
twice	24	8.73
thrice	17	6.18
four times	10	3.64

Table Number 2

The above table shows the occurrences of cheating cases. Electricity supply is the essential daily service. The study had shown high percentage of respondents got cheated at least once. Though repeated cases were meager it depicted the ignorance or helplessness of the respondents.

Causes of Visit To The District Forum

causes	frequency	percentage
complaint of cheating	15	5.44
inconvenience	34	12.34
anguish	92	33.40
losses	134	48.68

Table no 3

The table depicts that nearly 50% respondents were facing losses. The extent of respondents complaining about their anguish was not negligible. About 5% respondents visited the forum to exhorthe about cheating

Action Taken By The Complainant<sup>Q</sup>

Whether action taken	frequency	percentage
yes	20	7.26
no	225	92.56

Table number 4

The study remarkably showed that there had been no aptness regarding action to be taken. More than 90% of the respondents answered in the negative.

Duration of Getting Redressal

duration (in days)	frequency	percentage
90	70	28.69
180	102	37.02
360	49	17.78
More than 360	45	16.34

Table Number 5

Although the deadline of 90 days to get redressal is guaranteed by the forum reality seemed otherwise. Most of the respondents had to wait till 180 days to get relief. Though the number was less their anguish could not be neglected who had to wait for more than a year to seek justice. It explains the efficiency and sincerity of the forum.

Extent of Relief Sought When Approached To The Forum

extent of relief	frequency	percentage
fully satisfied	12	4.36
poorly satisfied	40	14.52
considerably satisfied	129	46.82
unsatisfied	74	26.86

Table number 6

The table explains the rectitude of the forum towards solving problems of the consumers. Negligible number of respondents had obtained complete relief whereas 26.86% respondents could not get it at all. They were unhappy with the procedure of the feedback.

Opinion On Unitedness Of Consumers

advantages	frequency	percentage
Timely service	18	6.54
Improve mannerism of the employee	26	9.44
Seller will be mindful	74	26.86
Reduce extent of cheating	161	58.44

Table number 7

The highest number of respondents expressed the power of unity. If stood United

they would not face the problems about cheating and bluffing. Moderate number of respondents grumbled about the behaviour and treatment given to them by the company employees.

### **Conclusions**

Consumer protection forum promises redressal within ninety days. It was observed in the study that there was not timely justice. Apparent delay was observed. There was widespread feeling that they had been cheated.

It was also found that respondents were lodging the complaints to the forum about the inconvenience, anguish, financial losses but were unable to seek justice So they were upset about the way of working of the forum.

Respondents also expressed the need of unity among the consumers. Had the consumers united, service providers would be compelled to work efficiently and the quality of services would be improved.

Electricity supply is an essential service provided by the government and semi government companies. Related to these services It was observed that cheating , imposition, seeking redressal, facing trouble these variables were correlated .Coefficient of correlation showed that the consumers having knowledge of Consumer Protection Act were aware of their rights and had less difficulty in getting their complaints acted upon. They were able to find ways of getting redressals for their complaints and faced less instances of getting cheated.

Thus the study concludes that there was a need of consumer awareness program implemented efficiently.

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