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CONSUMER AWARENESS AS AN EMERGING FORCE IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Protection and promotion of consumer's rights and interests is a vital function of the Government of any economy. It is basically a social and political necessity and is essential for all round progress of the country. In rapidly changing business environment and emerging global markets, expectations of the people of the country for better services, quality goods, availability of choices and value for money has been continuously rising. Accordingly, both public and private sectors are undertaking several policy initiatives, schemes and incentives to promote consumers' welfare in the country. They are making all efforts to ensure that consumers are provided with every relevant information in order to avoid any kind of exploitation and given a rational choice in selection of products and services from the market. The enactment of the Consumer Protection Act in 1986 had provided the momentum for the consumer movement in India to bloom which explicitly called for the protection of consumers. Promotion of consumer welfare is the common goal of consumer protection and competition policy. At the root of both consumer protection and competition policy is the recognition of an unequal relationship between consumers and producers. The objective of this paper will be to throw a light on various aspects of Consumer awareness and consumer protection and to relate the initiatives of the government with the consumers' welfare, both in qualitative and quantitative terms. Protection of consumers is accomplished by setting minimum quality specifications and safety standards for both goods and services and establishing mechanisms to redress their grievances.

KEYWORDS: Consumer awareness, consumer protection, grievance redressal

