

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CONSUMER AWARENESS AMONG COLLEGE GOING BOYS AND GIRLS OF HARIDWAR DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted on 600 respondents comprising 300 college going boys and 300 college going girls in Haridwar district of Uttarakhand to ascertain awareness level of both the categories for consumer awareness. An endeavor has been made in the present study to quantify the lack of awareness about consumerism among boys and girls. Maximum number of respondents fell into the category of low awareness. The level of awareness has to be assessed for before and after creating awareness by posters, televisions, radios, newspapers, journals etc. There is significant difference between the awareness level of the boys and girls respondents regarding consumer terminology and consumer protection laws in post exposure level.

Keywords: Consumer awareness, Socio economic status, Advertisements, Relational Statistics.

INTRODUCTION

In India, globalization of the economy is helping consumers to become confident managers of their resources. Good consumership is based on relatively high measures of information, as purchasing is the most important function of the economy. About changes in the buying habits and dietary patterns of young children, it is important to know about expiry and manufacturing date, food adulteration, advertisements on food and how to check labels on food products. Consumers have become brand conscious. Consumer awareness is actually the need of the hour. With the increasingly large number of new products springing up in the market, there is need to educate the community. In the country like India, which has high population and illiteracy about the awareness; there is need to make consumer awareness.

Consumer awareness is actually the need of the hour with the increasingly large number of new products springing up in the market there is need to educate the community. Consumer awareness program focuses on breaking the barriers of consumer ignorance. School curriculum does not include consumer awareness at any level. Consumer is considered to be the king of the market but when it comes to consumer's protection it is vice versa and we consumers are made to stake at mind. Market is a place where people act as producers as well as consumers. Consumers participate in the market when they purchases goods and services that they need. Consumer in the market find themselves deceived by wrong weights and measures, adulterated and substandard products causing great damages to health. Although government has passed several acts and laws to protect consumers and seek

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redressal of their grievances, still they are not in position to utilize their knowledge. Neelkanta and Anand (1992) found that people prefer to absorb and endure the wrong done to them rather than fight against the injustice.

Both pre exposure and post exposure (after creating awareness) data were collected for the accomplishment of the objectives of the study. Awareness was created using charts, posters, flash cards, pamphlets and repeated group meetings. The instructions were given through seminars and group discussions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To assess the level of consumer awareness among UG and PG boys/girls of low income group (LIG), middle income group (MIG) and High income group (HIG) before (pre exposure) and after (post exposure) creating consumer awareness.

The study was conducted in Haridwar district of Uttarakhand. A total of 600 students were selected according to socio economic status (SES) (as per scale of Bhatdwaj and Chauhan, 1989) by the method of stratified randomization technique.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Commensurate with the set objectives and information available for the study, various analytical tools were employed for the analysis and interpretation of the data.

(a) Descriptive Statistics

Scores- The scoring of consumer awareness, legislation quality marks, and influence of advertisement was carried out for arriving at the results.

Scores of consumer Awareness- The answer to consumer awareness statement were sought in terms of 'correct', 'don't know' and 'incorrect' and were scored. Correct answers were given score of 1 and incorrect and don't know types were given score of zero. Accordingly scores of complete questionnaire were added up and classified as Low level (0 - 40 %), Medium level (40 - 74%) and High level (more than 75%) of awareness. Means scores and standard deviation (S.D.) were calculated of each group and presented in tables.

(b) Relational Statistics-

t- Test was applied to find out the significant differences between boys and girls, UG and PG and among income groups of the respondents towards consumer awareness level. (Ray et al, 2005).

$$t = \frac{\overline{X_1} - \overline{X_2}}{S \sqrt{\frac{n_1 + n_2}{n_1 n_2}}}$$

$\overline{X_1}$ = means scores of boys respondents
 $\overline{X_2}$ = means scores of girls respondents
 n_1 = total number of boys respondents
 n_2 = total number of girls respondents

The minimal level of significance required for judging the relationship under study was 0.05 level of probability.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The various data on the questionnaires was collected and compiled for further interpretations about consumer awareness among boys and girls. The data has been divided into various groups based on the level of education (i.e., Post graduate (PG) and Undergraduate (UG)), their income group (i.e., High Income Group (HIG), Medium Income Group (MIG) and Low Income Group (LIG), and gender (Boys and Girls). The results have been made on the data collected before and after the exposure to consumer awareness. Present study describes the sample, consumer awareness, data collected and its analysis among various sets of data.

Pre exposure significance test

Maximum number of respondents fell into the category of low awareness. With urbanization and industrializations purchasing power has increased. People now spend more. They don't take much care about the quality and standards of the product. Also with the pace of time /lack of time students are not interested in knowing about the real facts of the product. They have the attitude to spend the money especially which they have not earned so the value of money is also decreasing. In this text the information related to the significant difference between boys of PG and UG, girls of PG and UG. It was observed that there was no significant difference in PG and UG among boys and girls at pre exposure there was no difference on the level of awareness. Awareness level of both the boys and girls was low in pre exposure.

Table 1: Mean scores of awareness level among HIG group (PG, UG) pre exposure

Awareness level ⇔ ↓ Student	LOW Less than 40%			MEDIUM 40 -74 %			HIGH More than equal to 75%		
	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value
PG Boys	20.611	4.518	1.735	55.331	6.671	0.828	78.333	3.214	0.138
UG Boys	18.970	3.888		56.692	8.111		78.000	2.828	
PG Girls	20.634	4.526	0.883	54.000	8.200	1.350	0	0	0
UG Girls	21.726	4.791		57.333	8.455		0	0	

Table 1 shows mean scores of awareness level among HIG group. For all awareness level (Low, Medium and High) a statically insignificant difference ($P > 0.05$) was observed in boys and girls of High Income Group.

Table 2 : Mean scores of awareness level among HIG group (boys and girls) pre exposure

Awareness level ⇨ Students ↓	LOW Less than 40%			MEDIUM 40-74 %			HIGH More than equal to 75%		
	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value
Boys	19.814	4.274	1.159	56.040	7.339	1.987	80.250	2.217	0.0145
Girls	21.165	4.659		55.905	8.306		0.000	0.000	

Table 2 shows the mean scores of boys was (19.814± 4.274) and girls were (21.164 ± 4.658). Insignificant difference ($P>0.05$) was found in HIG boys and girls in pre exposure. This shows that in pre exposure mostly boys and girls both were unaware.

Table 3 : Mean scores of awareness level among MIG group (PG, UG) pre exposure

Awareness level ⇨ Students ↓	LOW Less than 40%			MEDIUM 40 -74 %			HIGH More than equal to 75%		
	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value
PG Boys	21.684	5.168	0.935	54.625	12.105	2.11	81.250	2.500	0.976
UG Boys	22.000	4.392		57.636	8.947		79.000	4.000	
PG Girls	22.525	5.134	1.069	57.900	9.350	3.939	0	0	0
UG Girls	21.684	5.178		55.833	9.665		0	0	

Table 3 shows the mean scores of awareness level of MIG students. For all awareness levels (low, medium, high) there were insignificant difference among boys and girls of UG and PG at significance level of 0.05.

Table 4: Mean scores of awareness level among MIG group (boys and girls) pre exposure

Awareness level ⇨ Students ↓	LOW Less than 40%			MEDIUM 40 -74%			HIGH More than equal to 75%		
	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value
Boys	21.836	4.781	2.012	56.368	10.188	1.857	80.286	3.147	0.124
Girls	19.117	4.310		56.773	9.355		79.000	0.000	

Table 4 shows the mean scores of boys (21.835 ± 4.781) and girls was (19.116 ± 4.310). No significant difference was observed among boys and girls regarding consumer awareness of Middle Income Group at 5% level of probability in pre exposure level.

Table 5: Mean scores of awareness level among LIG group (PG, UG) pre exposure

Awareness level ⇒ ↓ Students	LOW Less than 40%			MEDIUM 40 -74 %			HIGH More than equal to 75%		
	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value
PG Boys	20.567	4.867	3.558	56.750	11.335	0.289	77.200	4.207	0.500
UG Boys	19.512	6.082		57.000	9.477		76.000	0.00	
PG Girls	18.657	5.089	3.070	57.363	10.726	3.073	81.000	0.00	0.0
UG Girls	20.536	5.268		55.700	10.242		0.000	0.00	

Table 5 shows the mean scores of awareness level among LIG group. For all awareness levels (low, medium, high) statistically insignificant difference was observed in boys and girls of low income group at 5% level of significance in pre exposure.

Table 6: Mean scores of awareness level among LIG group (boys and girls) pre exposure

Awareness level ⇒ ↓ Students	LOW Less than 40%			MEDIUM 40 -74 %			HIGH More than equal to 75%		
	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value
Boys	20.026	5.514	1.156	56.316	10.382	2.032	78.200	2.683	1.121
Girls	19.564	5.234		56.571	10.269		81.000	0.000	

Table 6 shows the mean scores of awareness level of low income group. Mean scores of awareness level of boys was (20.026 ± 5.513) and girls were (19.564 ± 5.233). It was observed that no significant difference ($P > 0.05$) was found in boys and girls of LIG.

Post exposure significance test

The results reveal that boys (both PG and UG) were more aware as consumers than girls. There was significant difference among the two groups. The boys are probably more aware than girls because boys have (a) better social network (b) better knowledge of market and its trend. . Girls being more emotional and easily swayed by advertisements / sale /exchange offers /talks of salesman etc and are not aware of rights being a consumer.

Table 7: Mean scores of awareness level among HIG group (PG, UG) post exposure

Awareness level ⇨ Students↓	LOW Less than 40%			MEDIUM 40 -74 %			HIGH More than equal to 75%		
	Mean	S.D.	t- value	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value
PG Boys	31.222	4.549	3.112	58.125	9.047	5.458	93.624	4.231	3.255
UG Boys	31.090	4.458		60.833	8.480		91.256	5.241	
PG Girls	29.230	5.818	2.147	59.894	8.326	2.625	86.111	7.119	2.943
UG Girls	31.363	3.931		58.541	7.666		82.866	5.730	

Table 7 shows the mean scores of awareness level of high income group in post exposure level. For all awareness (low, medium, high) it was observed that no significant difference ($P > 0.05$) among PG and UG.

Table 8: Mean scores of awareness level among HIG group (boys and girls) post exposure

Awareness level ⇨ Students↓	LOW Less than 40%			MEDIUM 40 -74 %			HIGH More than equal to 75%		
	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value
Boys	36.450	2.163	3.145	59.558	8.725	2.998	86.282	6.459	2.901
Girls	31.750	2.996		52.023	7.980		80.636	5.632	

Table 8 shows the mean scores of the boys and girls. Mean scores of boys was (36.450.±2.163) and girls (31.750 ± 2.996). A significant difference was found ($P < 0.05$) among boys and girls of high income group at 0.05 level of probability.

Table 9: Mean scores of awareness level among MIG group (PG, UG) post exposure

Awareness level ⇒ Students ↓	LOW Less than 40%			MEDIUM 40 -74 %			HIGH More than equal to 75%		
	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value
PG Boys	31.545	3.882	3.512	67.421	6.585	2.983	84.850	6.019	3.124
UG Boys	32.230	3.320		58.541	6.204		84.652	6.371	
PG Girls	27.428	2.501	2.779	60.863	5.012	2.840	76.583	5.126	2.094
UG Girls	29.545	3.110		51.560	6.212		84.285	5.775	

Table 9 shows the mean scores of middle income group students. There was no significant difference ($P > 0.05$) among education level (PG, UG) of MIG.

Table 10: Mean scores of awareness level among MIG group (boys and girls) post exposure

Awareness level ⇒ Students ↓	LOW Less than 40%			MEDIUM 40 -74 %			HIGH More than equal to 75%		
	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value
Boys	31.917	3.525	3.568	68.000	6.364	4.125	84.744	6.138	3.987
Girls	24.040	3.899		60.170	6.558		81.346	6.462	

Table 10 shows the mean scores of the boys and girls of middle income group. The mean scores of boys were (31.916 \pm 3.525) and girls mean score was (24.040 \pm 3.899). Statistically a significant difference ($P < 0.05$) was found among the boys and girls.

Table 11: Mean scores of awareness level among LIG group (PG, UG) post exposure

Awareness level \Rightarrow Students \Downarrow	LOW Less than 40%			MEDIUM 40 -74 %			HIGH More than equal to 75%		
	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value
PG Boys	31.727	4.474	3.929	58.620	6.789	3.987	92.000	6.585	4.125
UG Boys	31.285	3.667		58.761	7.013		89.733	5.586	
PG Girls	28.769	4.164	2.193	53.653	6.039	3.221	87.272	6.326	3.652
UG Girls	29.533	7.140		57.681	7.593		89.923	6.512	

Table 11 shows the mean score of the boys and girls of LIG. It was observed that no significant difference ($P>0.05$) among education level as PG and UG.

Table 12: Mean scores of awareness level among LIG group (boys and girls) post exposure

Awareness level \Rightarrow Students \Downarrow	LOW Less than 40%			MEDIUM 40 -74 %			HIGH More than equal to 75%		
	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value
Boys	31.480	3.959	3.124	58.680	6.814	3.581	85.886	6.091	4.536
Girls	27.179	5.850		52.750	6.793		81.083	6.289	

Table 12 shows the mean scores of boys and girls of low income group. The mean scores of boys (31.480 ± 3.595) and girls (27.178 ± 5.850). There was a significant difference ($P<0.05$) among boys and girls.

Table 13: Mean scores of awareness level of income groups.

Income groups	LOW Less than 40%			MEDIUM 40 -74 %			HIGH More than equal to 75%		
	mean	S.D.	t-value	mean	S.D.	t-value	Mean	S.D.	t-value
L I G	29.325	3.214	1.154	55.711	2.571	2.134	83.481	2.65	2.365
M I G	27.975	2.371	1.263	64.085	2.673	2.541	83.045	2.14	2.587
H I G	34.142	2.581	1.698	55.714	2.41	2.684	83.485	3.45	2.374

Table 13 shows the mean scores of all income groups. There was no significant difference ($P>0.05$) among income groups.

CONCLUSIONS

The following are the conclusions drawn based on the present study:

1. No significant differences were found based on the income group as given in pre exposure section.
2. At pre exposure analysis maximum number of respondents fell into the category of low awareness.
3. Education and income had no influence on consumer awareness level among boys and girls.
4. There is significant difference between the awareness level of the boys and girls respondents regarding consumer terminology and consumer protection laws in post exposure level.
5. The buying practices followed after making the purchases showed significant difference between the boys and girls respondents in post exposure analysis.
6. More percentage of boys knew about consumer forum as compared to girls respondents.
7. Boys were more aware about all the consumer protection Acts.
8. Post exposure data showed that majority of respondents read labels for expiry and manufacturing date, price tag etc.
9. After post exposure respondents followed practices such before buying while buying and after buying the product, majority of the boys took cash memo always and checked it before making payments.
10. Television was the main media for both the boys and girls respondents which influenced their buying the most. Advertisements increased the sale of the product.
11. In the study it was found that gender is the only factor in which the significant difference exists regarding consumer awareness.

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