

**A STUDY ON CONSUMER AWARENESS REGARDING
PUBLIC UTILITY SERVICES**

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ABSTRACT

The present study is based upon consumer awareness regarding public utility services. The purpose of research is to study the consumer awareness and their rights of transport, postal and electricity. So I decide to research my analysis in this topic oriented.

Introduction

A private business organization is subject to governmental regulation provides and essential. A public utility is an organization that maintains the infrastructure. Public utilities are subject to forms of public control and regulation ranging from local community. Based groups to state wide government monopolies. Some governments used the state provided utility services to pursue political agendas as a source of cash flow for funding other governmental activities, or as a mean of "Hard Cash". These and other consequences of state provision of utility services often resulted in inefficiency and poor service quality.

Overview of public utility services

Companies providing public services, such as POSTAL, POWER GENERATION and PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION have unique needs to track usage provide customer service, and monitor field service operations. In some cases, their work and customers are in the field or remote locations. A private business organization, subject to governmental regulation, that provides essential commodity or service. Such as postal, electricity and transportation to the public.

Statement of the problem

This study is related to the awareness level of consumers in Electricity, Postal and Transport services. In the competitive market today consumers face exploitation from sellers. So it is very important for the consumers to understand about the rights and redresser available to them.

Objectives of study

- To know whether the consumers are aware of their rights.
- To find out the consumer satisfaction regard of transport, electricity and postal services.
- To give suggestions to create consumer awareness.

Methodology

For this study both the primary and secondary data are collected. The primary data has been collected by supplying questionnaires. The secondary data has been collected various books, journals and also from internet.

Review of literature

Ramesh M in his article titled "Get your facts rights with postal department's data services" has explained how to know the addresses of families in Chennai that do not own a colour television set or the names of youngsters and so on. This information can be provided by the postal department through the product 'DATA POST'

Devasagayam M.G. undertook a study on state transport in 1985. He stated in the findings of the study that state transports were unique in three distinct senses. State transports improved the infrastructure of the state and the country at large. State transports provide public utility services to the consumers and state transports are a commercial venture. The researcher has analysed vehicle productivity of the employees, cost and revenue factors of the corporation, profitability before and after tax and thus finally judged the performance of the state transport. He concluded the state transports can be converted into profitable investment only if the management is oriented towards the act the control of cost effectiveness.

Awareness of consumer rights

Following tables shows how many people among the sample respondents about consumer rights.

Table 1-Awareness of consumer rights

S.no	Awareness of consumer rights	No of respondents	%
1	Yes	32	64
2	No	18	36
Total		50	100

Source: primary data

According to the above table 64% of the respondents are aware about their rights as a consumer and 36% of the respondents are not aware about their rights as a consumer.

Consumer Satisfaction Of Electricity Services

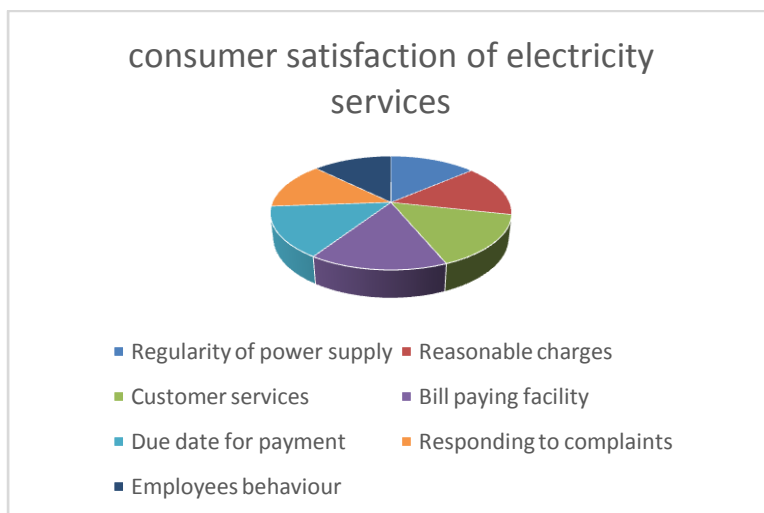
Table 2- consumer satisfaction in electricity services

S. no	Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	total
1	Regularity of power supply	8	10	6	5	2	6	13	50
2	Reasonable charges	10	5	10	7	3	10	5	50
3	Customer services	11	8	6	4	12	5	4	50
4	Bill paying facility	11	5	5	10	8	6	5	50
5	Due date for payment	4	2	10	6	7	10	10	50
6	Responding to complaints	2	7	3	10	8	10	10	50
7	Employees behaviour	4	13	10	8	10	3	3	50
		50	50	50	50	50	50	50	

Table 3- consumer satisfaction in electricity services

S .no	Factors	Garrett's Score	Rank
1	Regularity of power supply	52.64	V
2	Reasonable charges	56.20	III
3	Customer services	58.41	II
4	Bill paying facility	59.83	I
5	Due date for payment	55.82	IV
6	Responding to complaints	51.40	VI
7	Employees behaviour	48.50	VII

Source: primary data



The consumer satisfaction is high in the bill paying facility as it scores the highest of 59.83. The next most depending factor is customer service and it scores 58.41. The reasonable charges and due date for payment are the next two factors according to consumer satisfaction which scores 56.20 and 55.82 respectively. The last factors with 52.64, 51.40 and 48.50 as scores are employee's behaviour responding to complaints and regularity of power supply.

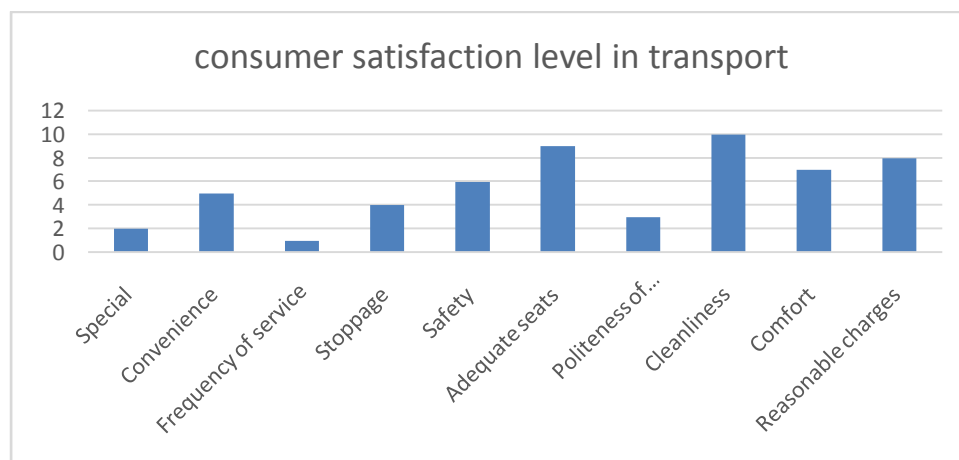
Consumer Satisfaction Level In Transport

Table: 4

Consumer Satisfaction Level in transport

S .no	services	5 HS		4 S		3 N		2 DS		1 HDS		TOTAL	RANK
1	Special	12	60	13	52	11	33	10	20	4	4	169	II
2	Convenience	10	50	11	44	12	36	4	8	13	13	151	V
3	Frequency of service	15	75	11	44	10	30	10	20	4	4	173	I
4	Stoppage	15	75	4	16	11	33	10	20	10	10	154	IV
5	Safety	14	70	7	28	4	12	15	30	10	10	150	VI
6	Adequate seats	11	55	8	32	6	18	5	10	20	20	135	IX
7	Politeness of employee	5	25	20	80	10	30	5	10	10	10	155	III
8	Cleanliness	2	10	10	40	6	18	12	24	20	20	102	X
9	Comfort	7	35	12	48	14	42	6	12	11	11	148	VII
10	Reasonable charges	4	20	10	40	15	45	10	20	11	11	136	VIII

Source: primary data



From the above table 4 the most important factor of satisfaction of service s frequency of service it secures the first rank (173). The second rank is special (169). The third rank is politeness of employee (155). The fourth rank is stoppage (154). The fifth rank is convenience (151). The sixth rank is safety (150). The seventh rank is comfort (148). The eighth rank is reasonable charges (136). The ninth rank is adequate seats (135). The tenth tank is cleanliness (102).

Table 5

Consumer Awareness Regarding Transport, Postal And Electricity Services

S .no	Awareness of these services	I	II	III	IV	Total
1	Through advertisement	10	15	10	15	50
2	Public programme protection	15	10	15	10	50
3	Consumer as a subject in schools and colleges	15	15	10	10	50
4	Through social organization	10	10	15	15	50
	Total	50	50	50	50	

Source: primary data

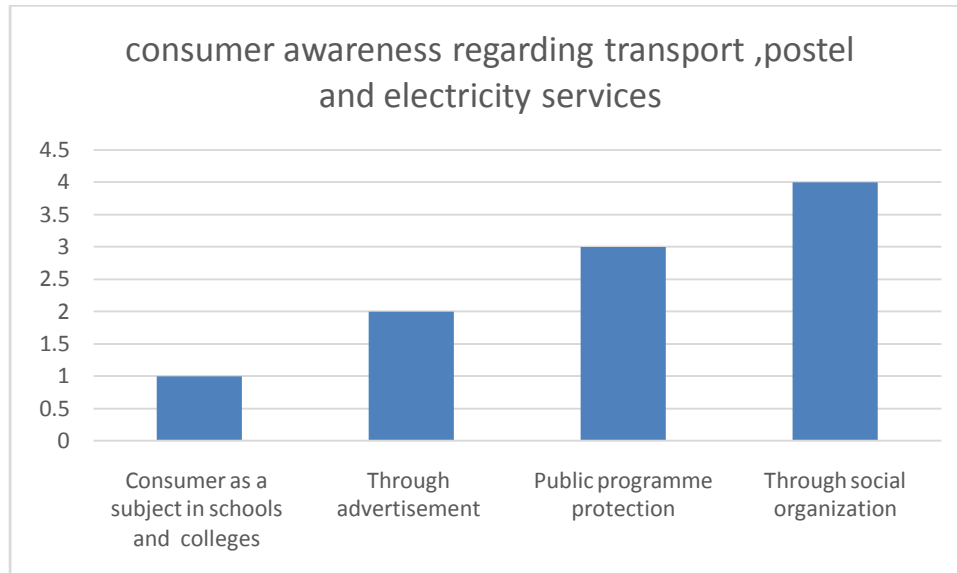
Table 6

Consumer awareness regarding transport, postal and electricity services

S .no	Awareness of these services	Garrets score	Rank
1	Consumer as a subject in schools and colleges	57.23	I
2	Through advertisement	56.97	II
3	Public programme protection	54.67	III
4	Through social organization	49.03	IV

Source: primary data

The consumer awareness is high in consumer as a subject in schools and colleges as its score is 57.23. The next awareness is through advertisement as its score 56.93. And third and last one is public programme and through social organization, as its scores are 54.67 and 49.03 respectively.



Findings

- ✓ The study shows that most of the people prefer road transport services for the factors like speed, safety, adequate seats of service. These are the major factors which influence the people for choosing the transport service. The defects such as risk and high charges are found from the study through Likerts scale. Hence it is suggested that the charges may be reduced.
- ✓ The major respondents are satisfied in electricity services.

Suggesstions

- ❖ Most of the people do not have any idea about their privileges as a consumer. So proper awareness and be given to the public either by advertisement or through any other media regarding creation of awareness of rights.
- ❖ Majority of the people have fear of safety while they are travelling through bus and other transport services. The safety measures should be improved to reduce their fear during travel.
- ❖ The major problems in electricity service is irregularity. Most people want this to be stopped but at least the government should take measures to reduce the power cuts.

- ❖ More awareness programme should be conducted to motivate the rural mass to come forward to get the facilities offered by post offices. Now a days in most of the rural areas there is no post offices. So the government must take immediate steps to create the availability of post office in the rural area. So that the rural mass will get a chance to save in post office

Conclusion

From the above study it is very well understood that findings are very clearly made by the investigator about the consumer awareness in their rights and it also describes the defects in transport and electricity services. The government and the consumer organizations should take necessary action to make awareness among the public and strive to make them know about the ways to protect them and prevent them from being exploited by the greedy marketers. The consumers should be taught about their rights, duties and responsibilities which the consumer protection act of 1986 empowers them.

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