

## Challenges of Public Policy Implementation: A Critical Analysis of Consumer Rights Protection Act in Bangladesh

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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history

RECEIVED: 30-Aug-19

REVISED: 23-Dec-19

ACCEPTED: 08-Jan-20

PUBLISHED: 30-Jun-20

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to analyze the challenges of execution of Consumer Rights Protection Act (CRPA-2009) in Bangladesh. There are not much meaningful research works have been conducted in the area of CRPA 2009 and comprehensive research on various aspects of this Act is highly required as this act is one of the strongest tools for protecting consumer rights in Bangladesh. This article is written based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data has been collected through a series of in-depth interviews with consumers, members of Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) and the directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection. Secondary data/information have been collected from contemporary literature from various journals, books, newspapers, and authentic online sources. This article gives a thorough analysis of the challenges of implementation of this Act and proposes some policy suggestions regarding the protection of consumers' interests. The authors believe that the policy suggestions will assist the Government to revamp the existing policies and will add to the existing stock of knowledge.

**Keywords:** Bangladesh, citizen, consumer rights protection act, implementation of policy, Public Policy.

### Introduction

Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. It is often characterized by extreme poverty and inequality. (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2011, p. 3). The population of Bangladesh has recently experienced an exponential increase of 14.4% when compared with the 2001 census. Its population density is three times higher than that of neighboring India, four times that of the United Kingdom, seven times that of China and over thirty times that of the United States (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2011, p. 3). The enormous population of the country has heightened poverty levels because it affects per capita income and consumption, diminishes the positive effects of development intervention, and undermines the country's poverty reduction efforts (Islam, S. A., 2004, p. 1). After 48 years of independence, Bangladesh is struggling for the betterment of basic human rights to its people. For strengthening the economy of a country,

protection of consumer rights is highly essential because the consumer is one of the key actors of economy of the country. Since the consumer is the key actor of the market there is no alternative but to ensure the protection of the rights of the consumers. It is essential that each country enact a series of laws that have an impact on the producer, manufacturer, supplier or distributor, seller, and ultimately the consumer. Government of Bangladesh (GOB as GOB is mentioned later) has enacted 'Consumer Right Protection Act in 2009. For this reason, GOB has established eight regional offices (Zannat el. Al, 2009). This paper aims to analyze the challenges for, and difficulties of, implementation of this act.

### Significance of the paper

Over the years, protection of consumer rights has increased its significance throughout the world. Among

the South Asian countries, India was the pioneer to enact comprehensive consumer protection law which was followed by Pakistan, Nepal. In Bangladesh, before 2009, there was no law to protect the consumer rights (briefly what was the situation before 2009, any organization/body?). But in 2009, the Government of Bangladesh enacted The Consumer Rights Protection Act, 2009. We have seen implementation of this law since 6<sup>th</sup> April, 2010. Protection of consumer rights has become a talk of the country in recent times. In keeping pace with the modern world, the formulation of the Consumer Rights Protection Act 2009 is a significant movement towards the protection of the rights and interests of the consumers in Bangladesh. Protection of consumer rights is one of the fundamental constitutional right of citizens. According to Article 32 of Bangladesh constitution "Consuming 'safe goods and services' is the fundamental right of every citizen." There is dearth of empirical research on this issue; therefore it is timely to conduct a comprehensive research on this issue.

## Methodology

Research methodology includes the research method, the research strategy, the research approach, the methods of data collection, the selection of the sample, the research process, and data analysis. Rajshahi is the 2<sup>nd</sup> biggest division and as an academic and researcher of University of Rajshahi I have chosen Rajshahi City Corporation as my research area. The paper aims to analyze the current implementing situation of Consumer Rights Protection Act-2009. People from the implementing agencies and the consumers are the research population. Among them ten officials and 30 consumers were taken purposively as sample. Respondents from the implementing agency were selected on the basis of their knowledge, relationships, and expertise regarding the research subject. In order to accomplish the objectives of the study, the case oriented qualitative research strategy has been selected. As Creswell (cited in Panday, 2004:7) points out six assumptions of qualitative research based on Merriam's (1988) assumptions; qualitative researchers are concerned primarily with (i) process, (ii) interested in learning how people make sense of their lives, experience, (iii) the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis, (iv) it involves fieldwork, (v) is descriptive in that the researchers are interested in process, meaning, and understanding gained through words or pictures (vi) qualitative research is inductive.

As previously discussed, the present study is based on both primary as well as secondary data. To collect the

primary data, the author conducted a six months long field study. Interview, observation and case story were used as data collection techniques. Secondary sources of the research basically include different books, written research reports, journals, thesis, relevant publications, daily newspapers, and relevant websites. Rajshahi City Corporation has been chosen as a study area because it is the second biggest division of the country. Since the objective of the research is to explore the implementation situation of Consumer Rights Protection Act, ten officials from implementation agencies and 30 consumers were chosen through purposive sampling. Some authors argue that too large a sample may involve huge cost, manpower, material, and time while too small a sample may invalidate the result. Around thirty samples might seem to be bare minimum where statistical data analysis can be done. On the other hand, many researchers regard one hundred cases as standard to achieve a reliable result (Fisher et al, 1991 cited in Islam, 2008:115). The present study does not require very large sample size since case oriented qualitative research approach is applied for this study. A sample is selected on the basis of the purpose of the study not on the basis of representative population. As Yin (1994) argues the evaluation of case studies should be based on the theoretical construct, not on the size of the sample, as is done in conventional quantitative strategies. My interest was to have a complete in-depth understanding of the case.

## Theoretical Key Concepts

### *Consumer*

Generally, the term "consumer" indicates everyone in a society including a baby born today to the most aged person; from the head of the state to the rickshaw puller on the street. In simple words, the persons who use or consume products or services are consumers. In the eyes of the law, a person is required to fulfill certain conditions to be regarded as a consumer. Consumers are those persons who, for one or for the dependents, buy or use or obtain a permission to use any products or service by offering a price, prompt or due or in installments. In addition, any person using such products with the consent of the buyer will also be treated as a consumer. But if someone buys something for the purpose of resale or for any other commercial purposes, he or she shall not be a consumer as such. Personal consumption is the main test for defining oneself as a consumer. Under CRPA 2009, a person who buys goods to earn a livelihood by 'self-employment' also falls within the definition of a consumer (Amzad and Emrana, 2007).

Consumer means any individual who in relation to a commercial practice is acting for purposes which are outside his business. Section-2 (19) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2009 in Bangladesh states the definition of consumer. Consumer means such type of person: a. who except for the purpose of resale and commercial intention purchases or agrees to purchase any product by payment of a price b. purchases or agrees to purchase by part payment of price. In this study consumer is a person who buys or uses any product or exchanges of money or uses the utility of product.

### **Consumer Rights**

Every citizen of a state is a consumer. Product seller has the right to earn profit, simultaneously consumer has the equal right of owning a product. According to the declaration of US former president John F. Kennedy in 1962 outlined only four basic consumer rights (sentence formation problem).

- *The right to safety: Protection from hazardous and unsafe products and services.*
- *The right to be informed: Information about the quality, quantity, potency, purity, standard, and price of products and services.*
- *The right to choose: Availability of selection of goods and services from their varieties to justify the quality, cost, preference*
- *The right to be heard: Raise unhappiness against consumer malpractice; or right to be represented by consumer organizations.*

A global federation named Consumers International (CI) with 250 Consumer Organizations movement added four more rights.

- *the right to satisfaction of basic needs: Access to food, clothing, education, healthcare, shelter is a fundamental right according to the Constitution of Bangladesh*
- *the right to redress: This is the crux of consumer rights. The consumer is entitled to have legal remedy, either monetary or exchange, in case of violation of consumer rights*
- *the right to education: To have access to programs and information that helps the consumer to make a better and informed buying decision.*
- *the right to a healthy environment: To live and work in an environment that does not affect consumers' welfare and health.*

The mentioned eight consumer rights form the basis of all types of consumer movements in Bangladesh. In

Bangladesh, around 61 laws are prevailing on consumer rights that aim to ensure safety of products and security in service.

### **Consumer Rights Protection**

There are three aspects of consumer rights protection, which every country must consider. Firstly, voluntary protection: which means that consumers themselves would voluntarily set up associations and/or organizations to safeguard their own rights and interests. Like many other countries of South Asia, Bangladesh has launched Consumer Association of Bangladesh in 1978. Secondly, Institutional Protection: consumer rights of citizens can be ensured by establishing national institutions such as National Consumer Protection Council in India, Islamabad Consumer Protection Council in Pakistan, Commissioner of Internal Trade, and the Consumer Protection Council in Nepal and Sri Lanka. And lastly, Statutory Protection which means the rights and interests of the consumers are protected by enacting relevant laws. For example, the Consumer Protection Act 1979 in both Thailand and Sri Lanka, Consumer Protection Act 1986 in India, Consumer Act of the Philippines 1990 in the Philippines, Islamabad Consumers Protection Act 1995 in Pakistan, Consumer Protection Act 1998 in Nepal, The Law on Consumer Protection 1999 in Indonesia, and Consumer Protection Act 1999 in Malaysia. In Bangladesh, Consumer Rights Protection Act, 2009 has been enacted to safeguard consumer rights.

### **Consumer Association of Bangladesh (CAB)**

The Consumer Association of Bangladesh (CAB) had first initiated the consumer protection movement. This organization has played a vital role in the movement of the consumer protection law in Bangladesh. The core objective of CAB is to promote and protect the rights and interests of consumers. The major objectives of CAB are as follows

- a. to make consumers aware of their rights and responsibilities;
- b. to promote consumer education, aiming at raising awareness of consumers against exploitation, and providing them with technical knowledge and support for real protection;
- c. focus on consumers' problems and develop a spirit of mutual co-operation and understanding among different groups, associations, institutions, NGOs, and Government agencies functioning in the interests of the welfare of the people;

- d. exchange information and knowledge of various actions about consumer protection with national and international organizations;
- e. to organize and set up consumer Association and groups at the district and Thana levels; and undertake research studies on consumer issues and problems.
- f. regularly monitors the market prices of essential commodities and services to show the actual price situation in the market and to keep prices within the purchasing power of general consumers. It runs a market monitoring cell which regularly conducts market surveys and supplies relevant information to consumers through national dailies.

CAB is a non-profit organization that was established in 1978. It is imbued with the idea of consumerism. Since its birth, CAB has been trying to spread the essence of consumerism among poor and low-middle class consumers. In February 2000, Ministry of Commerce sent the draft act (with necessary amendment suggestions) to the Bangladesh Law Commission to do necessary research on it. On 29<sup>th</sup> October 2000, the Law Commission suggested various changes to the draft act so prepared. Based on all these reforms, a bill was later introduced in the Parliament for the enactment.

### **Consumer Rights Protection Act 2009**

The Awami League Cabinet of 1996-2001 approved the relevant bill in principle but it was again sent to the Secretarial Committee meeting for further scrutiny. The following Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) government enlisted it in its priorities of 100 days and approved the bill in 2004. However, in 2006, a revised draft of the consumer Protection Act was framed and the reality is that no such consumer protection legislation had been enacted before the non-party Caretaker Government came into power. The (draft) Consumer Protection Act 2000 was very much similar to that of India and Sri Lanka. Some claim that it borrows heavily from the consumer protection law of Nepal too.

The caretaker Government in 2007 took the matter into consideration. The advisory committee of the caretaker government, in principle, approved a draft ordinance on consumer rights protection in November in 2007, asking the law ministry to plug loopholes, if any, before the final approval. There had been, again, a series of revisions of the draft. Finally, the consumer rights protection ordinance 2008 was approved by the government on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2008. CAB organized numerous press conferences, workshops, round table discussions,

consultation meetings, trainings, and orientation sessions and took part in talk shows to provide input to the proposed consumer rights protection acts most importantly.

### **Public Policy Implementation:**

The starting point for a discussion of approaches to policy implementation must be to consider what we mean by the term 'implementation'. Implementation is what realises decision or what generates outputs? Presseman and Wildavsky (1984) define implementation as "a process of interaction between the setting of goals and actions geared to achieving them. Implementation, then, is the ability to forge subsequent links in the causal chain so as to obtain the desired results". Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) attempt to provide a conceptual framework to the process of implementation by stating, "Policy implementation encompasses those actions by public and private individuals (or groups) that are directed at the achievement of objectives set forth in prior policy decisions". There are two other models of policy implementation i. top down ii. bottom up. Bottom up theories involved the problem that the policy aimed to correct and looked for an anchor in the Network of Implementation (Schofield, 2001) and not adapting to the importance drivers of Implementation can lead to policy failure (Palumbo-1984). In the Bottom up approach central initiative adapted poorly to the local condition. (May rand-moddy, 1990). Najam (1995) argued that Synthesizers referred to the process when it is imperative to implement theory incorporation with both top down and Bottom up structure (Najam, 1995).

In this study, Inter-Organizational Interaction Approach (Kumar de, 2012) has been applied. Interaction approach refers to a process of interactions among different organizations. Interaction approach includes two approaches: i. Power dependency approach and Organizational exchange approach. Power dependency approach takes place in the context of interaction of various organizations. According to this approach more powerful organizations persuade other less powerful organizations to communicate with them. Powerful organizations work in a context where they secure and protect their own interests. Organizational exchange approach refers to a process where a set of organizations collaborate with their counterparts for mutual benefit. Dominance and dependence are key to the power dependency approach and exchanging mutual benefit is key to the organizational exchange approach. The author argues that a law cannot be implemented by a single actor or organization but a set of actors or organizations

## Review of recent Literature

Bhavet and Mohita (2009) in their article entitled, “Current practices in Consumer protection in south Asia (with special reference to India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Nepal) argued that consumer protection legislation is an integral part of a consumer protection framework of any country. This framework encompasses various issues which interact with each other. They further argued that there is no appropriate approach of protecting consumer’s rights. It depends on the socio economic and political context of any country.

Tami (2009) has written an article on consumer rights protection in Bangladesh where he proposed that the consumer rights protection act will not work without full participation of citizens. He again stated that to give full protection of consumer rights, limitation and criticisms of the law should be properly addressed. In another study, Afrin (2019) has written ‘consumer rights at a glance’ where she described both the strengths and weaknesses of the act. In an editorial note, (Daily Star, 2015) the editor claimed that CRPA -2009 has a section of medical issues which is not sufficient in terms of meting out punishments proportionate to the crime.

In another study on the role of Government agencies in consumer protection conducted by Dhyani (1990) she argued that monopoly and restrictive trade practices of Commission of India were unable to keep pace with the complaints filed before it. In her study she had pointed out the weaknesses of the commission to protect consumer rights. Likewise, Shourie (1993) sheds light on some causes of the unsatisfactory role of district forum to settle consumer disputes. The causes include staffing, infrastructure, and provision of funds. While discussing some negative sides of the effort, Ingram, Skinner and Taylor (2005) stated that if the committed consumers perceive the corporate actions of an organization as unethical, there are certain chances that the organization may lose its loyal consumers and ultimately the customer bucket shrinks.

In the context of Bangladesh, Faruque, (2010), wrote a ‘Booklet on Consumer Protection in Bangladesh’. In this study the author argued the consumer Rights Protection Act-2009. Furthermore, whereas a victim could file his complaint or the process of complaining all important information he added in this Booklet. Last but not the least he included all CAB officers’ contacts and addresses in this Booklet where a consumer can find all leading information. From the above discussion, it is obvious that there is hardly any empirical research

conducted on the implementation of this act. Therefore, the author argues that this paper will fill the void of the knowledge gap and contribute to the existing body of knowledge.

## Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework is a written or visual presentation that explains either graphically, or in narrative form, the main things to be studied – the key factors, concepts or variables and the presumed relationship among them (Miles and Huberman, 1994:18). In the following mentioned conceptual model, the author argues that the policy implementation is the outcome of interaction of various organizations such as the implementers of policy (government officials), producers of goods and services, citizens or consumers, CAB and other organizations such as NGOs and civil societies. The following framework reveals how these organizations or actors influence the policy implementation through interaction. The success of the implementation of any policy depends on how actively these actors work by interacting with each other.

The framework illustrates how government officials play a key role in implementing the law. According to the CRPA-09(26) article no 18 has to be established on the basis of this act. Head office should be in Dhaka and Government could establish more offices in other districts, if necessary. For consumers, 64 offices have been established in every district and seven regional offices. Though some offices have no official infrastructure but their program is going on. Dhaka head office was established in 2009

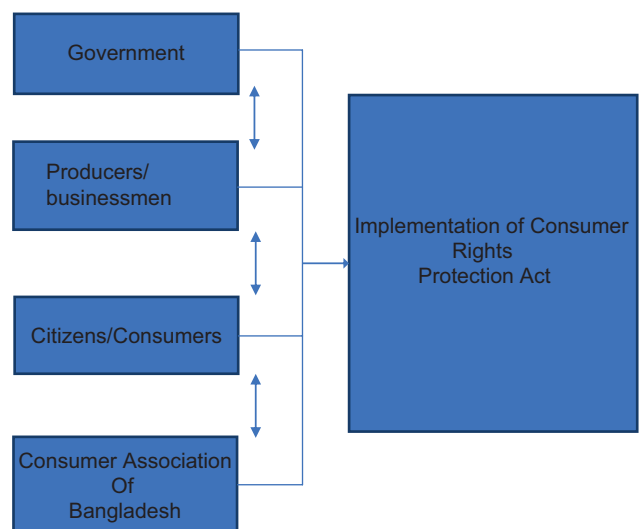


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework  
Source: The Authors



and Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection was established in 2011. Each Directorate should have one Director General who was appointed by the government and his recruiting condition is always reserved by government (20). Generally, the directorate deals with three types of work. Firstly, monitoring and raiding market regularly. Secondly, taking complaints in written, hearing and the disposal of written complaints, and the third one is publicity; these activities are always done by the Director with the help of Assistant Directors and also with the Police or The Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) for security concerns. The implementation depends on the efficiency of the directorate. The second key actor is the supplier or producer or businessmen who produce and supply goods for consumption. The third important actor is the consumer who consumes the product and whose awareness is highly important in this case. Consumer awareness will grow at that moment when a consumer is concerned about the available products and services being marketed and sold and also about the rights he or she has as a consumer. CAB regularly monitors the market prices of essential commodities and services to show the actual price situation in the market and to keep prices within the purchasing power of general consumers. A consumer has to put forth a complaint to CAB by filling out a form. The success of the consumer rights protection law depends on the role and efficiency of all these organizations.

## Findings and Analysis

The findings of the study suggest that market monitoring, raiding, and fining are the basic activities of the Directorate as per the CRPA-09. Raiding against the dishonest activity of the seller or institute or shop held by the substructures of the written complaint of the consumers, sometimes based on the randomly choosing process and also by the information provided from the person or organization which is considered as a confidential source.

What about written complaints? Written complaints are the most attractive and popular in consumers for its disposal process and 25% from the fining which can be defined as remuneration or reward. The directorate is very much aware about written complaints. Consumers can complain against any of sector where he or she gets a purchasing slip as a proof. The disposal processes are very short and easy, easy in the sense consumers need not complain in a court, need not waste time or money on the lawyer and bootless harassment on the name of

court hearing. Directorate maintains the serial; in a working day, it called both disputants to maintain the process of hearing and as a result of the hearing the accused had to pay the fine on the basis of their misdeeds and the consumer gets 25% from the fine instantly. As a consumer, satisfaction is that from complaining to the judgmental day it takes only 37 days based on the number of complaints.

## Consumer

### Are you aware about your rights?

Answer of the consumers	Number	Percentage
yes	10	33.33%
No	20	66.67%
Total	30	100

Source: Field Study

Table shows that 33.33% people were aware about their consumer rights whereas 66.67% people were not aware. Most of them replied that they have no knowledge about consumer rights.

### Do you think you are being deceived by the seller?

Answer of the consumers	Number	Percentage
Yes	16	53.33%
No	14	46.66%
Total	30	100

Source: Field Study

The Table shows how many people think that they are being deceived by the seller. The table illustrates that 53.33% consumers believe they are being deceived. On the contrary 46.66% people also believe that the sellers can never cheat because they also have to obey some rules and they are guided by some ethics.

### Do you check MRP and manufacturing and expiry date while purchasing product?

Sort	Number	Percentage
Yes	19	63.33%
No	11	36.66%
Total		100

Source: Field Study

The table illustrates that 63.33% people check MRP and the manufacturing and expiry date, while on the other hand 36.66% consumers check MRP and the manufacturing and expiry date while purchasing a product.

**Do you check BSTI logo?**

Answer of consumers	Number	Percentage
Yes	10	33.33%
No	20	66.66%
Total		100

Source: Field Study

BSTI stands for Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institute. BSTI works in standardization of services and product, introduction of the international unit system of weights and measures, promotion of metrology services, promotion of quality assurance activities, rendering testing facilities for services and products, preparation, promotion and adaptation of national standards. The table shows that only 33.33% people check this logo whereas 66.66% never check BSTI logo.

**Are you aware about filing a complaint?**

Answer of consumers	Number	Percentage
Yes	9	30%
No	21	70%
Total	30	100

Source: Field Study

The table demonstrates that most of the respondents do not know about consumer rights. In that case filing a complaint envisions even though Bangladesh Government has taken several steps to protect consumer rights through the directorate with the formal compilation of the consumers. From the correspondents only 30% were familiar with filing a complaint whereas 70% were not aware about filing a complaint.

According to field data there were 75% male and 25% female members from which only 40% were aware of consumer rights. Though, they were aware about consumer rights and thought that they are being deceived by the sellers but only 40% check MRP while purchasing a product and only 35% check BSTI logo. It has been seen that most of the students and married people are conscious about their consumer rights but 85% people do not know where to file a complaint. Even a housewife and secondary student complain in the directorate which is remarkable.

To protect consumer rights effectively, Bangladesh Government established Directorate in seven divisions. According to Directorate of Rajshahi in economic year 2016–2017, 34 cases were filed whereas more than 91% cases were dismissed this year which is remarkable. They also encourage and educate consumers by distributing gazettes, leaflets as well as by arranging seminars,

conferences. There is inordinate delay in disposing the cases of the aggrieved consumers. The findings of the study suggest that there is a need of effective coordination and concerted efforts by all concerned to educate the consumers about their rights and the redressal machinery available to them. The consumers of Bangladesh have not enough idea and information regarding the existing laws. Besides they have no idea about their rights as a consumer due to lack of knowledge. Only 8% are aware about their consumer rights and only 3% know where to file a complaint. People do not know if the sellers cheat them, what they should do, or where they should go. Most of consumers thought they are not cheated by the sellers. This finding reveals that consumers' right is still a comparatively new concept to the consumers of Bangladesh. Consumers have no knowledge about their right to get proper service for which they are paying. (Briefly discuss chief factors for lack of information and the potential solutions: is there coordination among agencies working towards implementation?)

**Case Story: Awareness and action of the consumers**

Sawrna (*pseudo name*) stated "I am college teacher and I met with another colleague at a local restaurant. We had a dinner together. Just after we finished our dinner, the waiter served us soft drinks as per our order. The MRP of soft drinks was 15tk but she charged 20tk from us.

I instantly complained to the manager but the manager angrily said they have been doing it from the very beginning but nobody had ever complained like us. Then I brought the receipt and filed a complaint to the Consumer Association of Bangladesh. After a long time, I received a phone call from CAB. They asked me to be present in their office to settle the issue. The directorate accused the manager of the restaurant and fined 50,000 tk. However, the manager apologized to me and the directorate asked me whether I would like to forgive him. I then pardoned him and instantly the amount decreased from 50,000tk to 5,000tk only. And I received 25% of the total amount of fine".

There are many cases available on the website of the directorate. Every day, they update their websites with the actions taken against the dishonest businessman, adulterated food business and fining. The author has identified that most of the cases were against food and extra charge of soft drinks and most of the values added by the provider of not more than five taka. If drinks are served in a glass or in cup the added value will be the cost

as service charge and a complaint will not be applicable. The directorate of Rajshahi also took charge against some famous restaurant named Seyamoon, Nanking, Top and the fining range was 3 to 1 lac. Directorate is unable to take any steps which are not referred by the act 2009. On this note, a person came to the directorate to complain against a coaching centre but the officials denied taking this case because they were not permitted to take such a case. Mobile phone companies are deceiving their subscribers in the name of conditions, hiding cost and vat.

On the other hand, most of time, the people of Bangladesh do compromise with the quality and quantity of commodities bought due to their financial limitations. There is no separate court and ministry in the Bangladesh. My field study suggests that corrupt businessmen tend to establish a good relation with corrupt government officials who might help them to cheat and exploit the innocent consumers. BSTI does not have modern equipment and facilities for testing commodities. When I asked the consumers about the efficiency of the BSTI they sadly replied that the officials of BSTI are inefficient and non-cooperative as per consumers' perception. The consumers are facing a weak consumer movement in our country. As a huge number of people are still illiterate, consumers' movement is facing difficulty in our present socio economic condition. As a result, the field study suggests that consumers of Bangladesh have faced various problems in the market, such as

- adulterations
- high price of products
- deceptive advertising
- deceptive packaging
- deceptive branding
- deceptive labeling
- providing false information about goods and services
- shortage in weight measures
- false date attached with product
- exaggeration unduly
- producing fake products
- black marketing and
- fake billboard.

When government officials were asked about their thinking regarding the types of challenges that consumers encounter they instantly replied that unabated rise in the prices of essential goods has made the lives of the consumers miserable. They further replied it is very important that the consumers are well aware about their rights and responsibilities. The study investigated the level of awareness and satisfaction of educated consumers about the various laws and found that there was a

direct relation between education and awareness. It also highlighted the significant role of electronic and press media in creating awareness amongst the consumers. It also found that most of the consumers want that the Government should make serious efforts for increasing the awareness among rural and illiterate masses which coincides with study findings conducted by Tangade and Basavaraj in 2004. The legal and the policy framework in the country are fairly good to capture the measures suggested by the UN Guidelines<sup>1</sup> but when it comes to implementation, the situation is not up to the mark. It concludes with some suggestions and recommendations that might further improve the consumer protection regime in the country (Bansal, 2006).

## Conclusion

The Government has enacted the Consumer Rights Protection Act, 2009 to protect the rights of the consumers. This is a pragmatic approach of the Government to ensure consumers' rights that ultimately ensures right to life. But for proper implementation of this Act, directorate needs to perform their regular work effectively. However, directorate of Consumer Rights Protection will only succeed when citizens become aware of their rights. Therefore, from the detailed analysis of the paper, it is evident that effective implementation of Consumer rights protection depends on consumers' awareness and the effective activities of the directorates.

## Competing Interests

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

## Acknowledgements

The Authors would like to thank the respondents of the research, the reviewers and editors of this manuscript.

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<sup>1</sup>The United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection (UNGCP) are the valuable set of principles for setting out the main characteristics of effective consumer protection legislation and enforcement institutions



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