

# Subject– Consumer affairs and customer care

- ▶ Topic–Consumer advocacy
  - ▶ B.Com (H) 6 semester

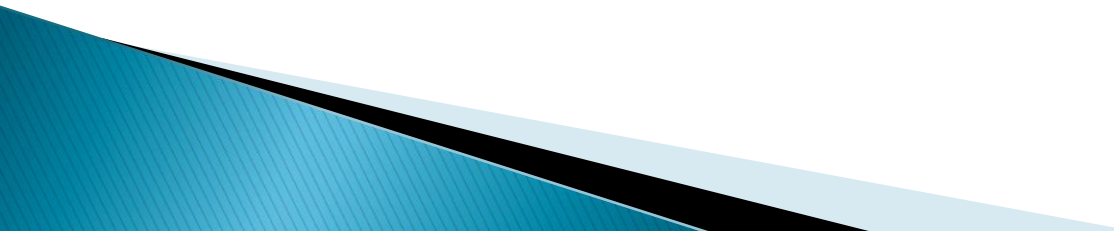
# Consumer advocacy

- ▶ **Consumer advocacy** refers to actions taken by individuals or groups to promote and protect the interests of the buying public.
- ▶ Historically, **consumer advocates** have assumed a somewhat adversarial role in exposing unfair business practices or unsafe products that threaten the welfare of the general public.

Precisely speaking the concept of consumer advocacy is similar to altruism, opinion leadership and market mavenism in the sense that an individual's efforts and opinion can have a profounding impact on consumer decision making and thus promotes favorable market place experiences.

# Consumer advocates

- ▶ Consumer advocates are those who undertake upon themselves for sensitizing consumers to protect their interests thereby engaging not only in negative word of mouth communication about unfair trade practices to consumers but also lent their voices sometimes to protect the interest of businesses following ethical practices.
- ▶ Briefly speaking they work both for customers as well as business houses.

- ▶ Consumer advocates use tactics such as
    - publicity,
    - **boycotts**, letter-writing campaigns,
    - **Internet** "gripe sites," and
    - lawsuits to raise awareness of issues affecting consumers and to counteract the financial and political power of the organizations they target.
  
  - ▶ Since even large, multinational businesses can be visibly wounded when their mistreatment of consumers or other constituencies arouses the anger of consumer advocacy organizations, it should be obvious to business owners that they can ill afford to engage in business practices that could draw the attention of consumer advocates.
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# Functions of consumer advocacy groups

- ▶ Promotion of consumer awareness by stimulating public participation.
- ▶ Generating funds and other required resources for consumer issues thus relaxing burden on government expenditure.
- ▶ Play a powerful role in development of healthy and prosperous nation by raising awareness among consumers.

# Prominent activities of these organisations

- ▶ Indulge in constructive dialogues with statutory bodies, recommendation committees and government forums to raise concerns of aggrieved consumers.
- ▶ Conduct symposiums, debate and discussions on various consumer relevant issues on World Consumer Day every year.
- ▶ Collaborate on various endeavors and projects relevant to consumer protection.
- ▶ Fight against unfair trade practices.

# Landmark cases fought by consumers' association

- ▶ Abnormal Services charges levied by STD booths
- ▶ Service Charge for SB Account-holders Levied by Catholic Syrian Bank



Thank you

