

DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA

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The content is prepared according to the text book and reference book given in the syllabus.

| Year | Subject Title | Sem. | Sub Code |
|-------------------------|---|------|----------|
| 2018 -19 Onwards | Core 10:Development Administration in India | VI | 18BPA61C |

Objective

To make the students to understand the Concept of Development Administration through integrated, organized and proper Coordination in Governmental Action in India.

UNIT – I: INTRODUCTION

Meaning, Nature, Scope and Importance of Development Administration – Evolution of Development Administration – Traditional Administration and Development Administration – International Context of Development Administration.

UNIT – II: BUREAUCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

Development Planning in India – Bureaucracy and Development Administration – District Collector – DRDA – Field Level Agencies.

UNIT – III: URBAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Urban Development Programmes– Urban Housing Development Programme– JNNURM.–Urban Wage Employment Programme -Urban Self Employment Programme

UNIT – IV: RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Rural Development Programmes – Integrated Rural Development Programmes – Poverty Alleviation Programme – SJSRY-MGNREGA.

UNIT – V: ISSUES IN DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

NGOs and Development Administration – Citizens’ Grievances and Redressal Mechanism.

Textbook

1. Palekar-S.A ,Development Administration- Prentice hall India Publication -2012

Reference books

1. Narayanan Hazary ,Development Administration, Quest for identity Publication- 2005- -Aph Rup
2. KuldeepMatheer ,Development Policy and Administration ,SAGE publication Pvt Ltd-1996
3. Anil K.Srivatsava ,Development of Public Administration in India, Kunal Book Publishers, 2011

DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA

SEMESTAR : VI

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UNIT-V

ISSUES IN DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

NGO:

Non-governmental organization Organizations which are independent of government involvement are known as non-governmental organizations or nongovernment organizations, with NGO as an acronym. NGOs are a subgroup of organizations founded by citizens, which include clubs and associations that provide services to their members and others. NGOs are usually nonprofit organizations, and many of them are active in humanitarianism or the social sciences. Surveys indicate that NGOs have a high degree of public trust, which can make them a useful proxy for the concerns of society and stakeholders. However, NGOs can also be lobby groups for corporations, such as the World Economic Forum. According to NGO.org (the non-governmental organizations associated with the United Nations), "[an NGO is] any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level ...

Taskoriented and driven by people with a common interest, NGOs perform a variety of service and humanitarian functions, bring citizen concerns to Governments, advocate and monitor policies and encourage political participation through provision of information."

Russia had about 277,000 NGOs in 2008. India is estimated to have had about two million NGOs in 2009 (approximately one per 600 Indians), many more than the number of the country's primary schools and health centers. The term "NGO" is used inconsistently; it is sometimes a synonym for a civil society organization, any association founded by citizens. NGOs are known in some countries as nonprofit organizations, and political parties and trade unions are sometimes considered NGOs. NGOs are classified by orientation and level of operation; orientation refers to the type of activities an NGO undertakes. Activities may include human rights, consumer protection, environmentalism, health, or development. An NGO's level of operation indicates the scale at which an organization works: local, regional, national, or international.

Types

NGOs may be classified by their orientation and level of operation.

Orientation

- Charities: Often a top-down effort, with little participation or input from beneficiaries, they include NGOs directed at meeting the needs of disadvantaged people and groups.
- Service: Includes NGOs which provide healthcare (including family planning) and education.
- Participation: Self-help projects with local involvement in the form of money, tools, land, materials, or labor
- Empowerment: Aim to help poor people to understand the social, political and economic factors affecting their lives, and to increase awareness of their power to control their lives. With maximum involvement by the beneficiaries, the NGOs are facilitators.

Level of operation

- Community-based organizations (CBOs) are popular initiatives which can raise the consciousness of the urban poor, helping them understand their right to services, and providing such services.
- City-wide organizations include chambers of commerce and industry, coalitions of business, ethnic or ...educational groups, and community organizations.
- State NGOs include state-level organizations, associations, and groups. Some state NGOs are guided by national and international NGOs.
- National NGOs include national organizations such as YMCAs and YWCAs, professional associations, and similar groups. Some have state or city branches, and assist local NGOs.
- International NGOs range from secular agencies, such as Save the Children, to religious groups. They may fund local NGOs, institutions and projects, and implement projects.

Similar terms include third-sector organization (TSO), nonprofit organization (NPO), voluntary organization (VO), civil society organization (CSO), grassroots organization (GO), social

movement organization (SMO), private voluntary organization (PVO), self-help organization (SHO) and non-state actors (NSAs). In Portuguese, Spanish, French, Italian and other Romance languages, the synonymous abbreviation ONG is in use (for example organisation non gouvernementale in French, Organizaçãonão Governmental in Portuguese, Organización no gubernamental in Spanish, and Organizzazione non governativa in Italian). Other acronyms include:

- BINGO: Business-friendly international NGO or Big international NGO
- SBO: Social benefit organization, a goaloriented designation
- TANGO: Technical assistance NGO
- GONGO: Government-organized non governmental organization
- DONGO: Donor-organized NGO
- INGO: International NGOQuango: Quasi-autonomous NGO, set up and funded by the government. Prevalent in the UK (where there are more than 1,200), the Republic of Ireland, and the Commonwealth. National NGO: An NGO which exists in only one country; they are rare.
- CSO: Civil society organization
- ENGO: Environmental NGO, such as Greenpeace and the WWF.
- NNGO: Northern (UK) NGO
- PANGO: Party NGO, addressing political matters
- SNGO: Southern (UK) NGO
- SCO: Social change organization
- TNGO: Transnational NGO; coined during the 1970s due to the increase of environmental and economic issues in the global community. TNGOs exist in two (or more) countries. GSO: Grassroots Support Organization
- MANGO: Market advocacy NGO
- NGDO: Non-governmental development organization
- PVDO: Private voluntary development organization; The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) refers to NGOs as "private voluntary organizations".

NGOs further the political or social goals of their members (or founders): improving the natural

environment, encouraging the observance of human rights, improving the welfare of the disadvantaged, or representing a corporate agenda. Their goals cover a wide range of issues.

Activities

The World Bank classifies NGO activity as operational and advocacy. NGOs act as implementers, catalysts, and partners. They mobilize resources to provide goods and services to people who have been affected by a natural disaster; they drive Activitieschange, and partner with other organizations to tackle problems and address human needs. NGOs vary by method; some are primarily advocacy groups, and others conduct programs and activities. Oxfam, concerned with poverty alleviation, may provide needy people with the equipment and skills to obtain food and drinking water; the Forum for Fact-finding Documentation and Advocacy (FFDA) helps provide legal assistance to victims of human-rights abuses. The Afghanistan Information Management Services provide specialized technical products and services to supportdevelopment activities implemented on the ground by other organizations. Management techniques are crucial to project success.

Operational

Operational NGOs seek to "achieve smallscale change directly through projects" , [19] mobilizing financial resources, materials, and volunteers to create local programs. They hold large-scale fundraising events and may apply to governments and organizations for grants or contracts to raise money for projects. Operational NGOs often have a hierarchical structure; ...their headquarters are staffed by professionals who plan projects, create budgets, keep accounts, and report to and communicate with operational fieldworkers on projects. [19] They are most often associated with the delivery of services or environmental issues, emergency relief, and public welfare. Operational NGOs may be subdivided into relief or development organizations, service-delivery or participatory, religious or secular, and public or private. Although operational NGOs may be communitybased, many are national or international. The defining activity of an operational NGO is the implementation of projects.

Public relations

Non-governmental organisations need healthy public relations to meet their goals, and use sophisticated campaigns to raise funds and deal with governments. Interest groups may be politically important, influencing social and political outcomes. A code of ethics was established in 2002 by the World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations.

History

International non-governmental organizations date back to at least the late 18th century, and there were an estimated 1,083 NGOs by 1914. International NGOs were important to the anti-slavery and women's suffrage movements, and peaked at the time of the 1932–1934 World Disarmament Conference. The term became popular with the 1945 founding of the United Nations in 1945; Article 71, Chapter X of its charter stipulated consultative status for organizations which are neither governments nor member states. An international NGO was first defined in resolution 288 (X) of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on February 27, 1950 as "any international organization that is not founded by an international treaty". The role of NGOs and other "major groups" in sustainable development was recognized in Chapter 27 of Agenda 21. The rise and fall of international NGOs matches contemporary events, waxing in periods of growth and waning in times of crisis. The United Nations gave non-governmental organizations observer status at its assemblies and some meetings. According to the UN, an NGO is a private, not-for-profit organization which is independent of government control and is not merely an opposition political party.

The rapid development of the nongovernmental sector occurred in Western countries as a result of the restructuring of the welfare state. Globalization of that process occurred after the fall of the communist system, and was an important part of the Washington Consensus. Twentieth-century globalization increased the importance of NGOs. International treaties and organizations, such as the World Trade Organization, focused on capitalist interests. To counterbalance this trend, NGOs emphasize humanitarian issues, development aid, and sustainable development. An example is the World Social Forum, a rival convention of the World Economic Forum held each

January in Davos, Switzerland. The fifth World Social Forum, in Porto Alegre, Brazil in January 2005, was attended by representatives of over 1,000 NGOs. The 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, attended by about 2,400 representatives, was the first to demonstrate the power of international NGOs in environmental issues and sustainable development. Transnational NGO networking has become extensive.

World NGO Day

World NGO Day, observed annually on 27 February, was recognised on 17 April 2010 by 12 countries of the IX Baltic Sea NGO Forum at the eighth Summit of the Baltic Sea States in Vilnius, Lithuania. It was internationally recognised on 28 February 2014 in Helsinki, Finland by United Nations Development Programme administrator and former Prime Minister of New Zealand Helen Clark.

DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

Development administration is the process of executing developmental programs and projects in the direction of nation-building and socio-economic progress through public administration.

There are two main issues identified as development administration goals –

- Nation-building and
- Socio-economic development.

The term ‘development administration was first coined in 1955 by an Indian scholar U.L Goswami in his writing “The Structure of Development Administration in India”.

Edward Weidner is the first scholar who gave a proper systematic explanation of the development administration. According to him, development administration as “an action-oriented, goal-oriented administrative system...guiding an organization towards the achievement of progressive political, economic and social objectives”.

Other contributors to development administration are George F. Gant, F.W. Riggs, Han Bee Lee, John D. Montgomery, and Alfred Diamant.

Emerging Factors of Development Administration

Professor Chakrabarty and Chand have mentioned three major factors for the emergence and growth of development administration.

- The emergence of newly decolonized nations after the Second World War.
- The emergence of international and the US economic and technical plans for assistance to developing nations. And
- The establishment of the Comparative Administrative Group and the interest was shown by its members in developing nations and their administrative systems.

After World War II, most of the countries in Asia and Africa gained independence from colonial rule. As a result of the long period of colonial rule, the newly independent states faced many problems. Economic problems cover a large part of their miscellaneous problems. Poverty, malnutrition, starvation, lack of housing were the burning problems of these states. Other social problems were associated with it.

The lack of efficiency of the political parties up to the grassroots level and the absence of pressure groups are noticeable in these countries to get out of such a situation.

Therefore, this responsibility was entrusted to the public administration. Because of the long period of colonial rule, the bureaucratic institutions in these countries were well-established.

As a result, most states survive the bureaucracy in order to take on the main responsibility for social change. It was thought that all development projects should be implemented through public administration. This how developmental administration emerged.

Must Read- 5 Phases Of The Evolution Of Public Administration

The largest contributor to the development administration is the United States Comparative Public Administration Group (CAG). Fred Riggs was chairman of the group from 1960 to 1970. Under his supervision, a group of researchers studied the administration of developing countries in Asia and Africa. In this way, a new aspect of public administration was developed.

The following features of development administration can be identified –

Action and Goal Orientation

Development administration is action as well as goal-oriented. This means that it is related to achieving certain programmatic results. Developing countries need to address socio-economic problems, and this is exactly why development goals are set and development administrations take action towards those goals.

Socio-economic change

Development administration also change-oriented. Here change means the socio-economic change of underdeveloped or developing countries. So, development administration is concerned with bringing socio-economic development.

Client Orientation

It has to do with satisfying the needs of its clients. The need for clients means the need of citizens. It is concerned with the uplift of the poorer section of the society.

Almost every country announces various schemes for the betterment of the lower class or community in the society and all those schemes are managed by the public administration and this kind of administration is called client-based development administration.

Commitment Orientation

The development administration is committed to its goals and responsibilities. It has high morale and motivation in working conditions to achieve developmental goals.

Time Orientation

It is time-oriented. The development administration has to perform all its developmental tasks within a time frame. All development projects have to be implemented within the time frame prescribed by the government.

Ecological Orientation

It is an open system. It continuously interacts with every element of its environment (Social, economic, and political system). It is influenced by every social, political, and economic environment and influences them as well. F.W Rigg's ecological perspective of public administration is a great example of this.

Participation Oriented

The Development administration adopts the policy of administrative collaborative and participatory systems for its purpose. Here, people are not just considered passive recipients of services. The active participation of the people in the formulation and implementation of developmental policies is given priority.

The expansion of the decentralized administrative system is recognized in the development administration. Local self-government ensures people's participation in their grassroots administrative system.

Responsiveness

It is very responsive. That means it is responsive in terms of its service. The administration implements every public welfare project of the government. So the more responsive it is, the more development extends.

Innovativeness

Development administration is innovative as it relates to social change in achieving developmental objectives. It is dynamic and progressive in thought and action.

Challenges of Development Administration

Development administration is a state-centric and citizen-centric administration. This globalized world is transforming from a state-centric to a market-centric approach driven by the New Public Management.

Must Read- New Public Management: Meaning, 10 Principles, And Features

The question is why this transformation is happening. This is because the Development administration is facing challenges for a long time. These are-

The inadequate concern with people-driven development

Development administration has been developed keeping in view the objective of people-oriented development. In any country, people live in different communities. In such a situation, no general policy can bring about the overall development of the people. This requires community-oriented development policies.

Bureaucratic domination in development

The role of bureaucracy as the main tool of development is also questioned. The bureaucracy is an efficient instrument with which administrative policies are implemented. But the bureaucracy proved to be a very powerful institution to the common backward people.

In fact, bureaucratic power goes hand in hand with political power. In the case of development projects in such organizations, there are allegations of nepotism. Therefore, the general public has doubts about the importance of this institution in the overall development of the state.

Political capability and politicization of development

The biggest problem of newly independent countries is the lack of adequate political capabilities and the politicization of development. Due to the weakness of both the political parties and the interest groups, the correct problem is not represented. Its effect can be seen in the policy. Fails to administer the proper implementation of that policy.

Low priority for quality assurance, monitoring, and evaluation

The policy is formulated in the interest of socio-economic development but there is a lack of proper assurance about its outcome. At the same time, it is not seen how effective those projects are, that is, they are not properly evaluated.

Administrative Corruption

The biggest challenge for the development administration is administrative corruption. The government allocates a lot of money for development projects and that money is spent through the administration. Corruption at the administrative level is often seen in developing countries. That means that money is not spent in the right place.

Excessive Political Control and Nepotism in Administration

We call people-oriented government and welfare states the maximum state. In such a state system, the state has a huge amount of power in its hands so that it can guide the development process in the right way. But in reality, this state cannot function properly without effective leadership.

In almost every developing country, politically influential people abuse their political power to influence the administration. Political parties also in many cases appoint people of their choice in the administration. So the allegation of nepotism appears to be fatal.

Lack of Bureaucratic professionalism

Different departments are required for different types of work. In developing and underdeveloped countries, there is no separate division for each job. As a result, there is a lack of bureaucratic professionalism in the proper implementation of the policy.

Grievance Redressal

Grievance Redressal is a management and governance-related process used commonly in India. While the term "Grievance Redressal" primarily covers the receipt and processing of complaints from citizens and consumers, a wider definition includes actions taken on any issue raised by them to avail services more effectively.

Grievance Redressal mechanism is mandated in Government agencies and departments that are directly involved with serving citizens and organizations. Usually a Public Relations Officer (PRO) is designated with the role of receiving complaints and initiating corrective action, but this mechanism often fails on account of lack of authority vested in the PRO over officers of various capacities. The Government of India has made effort to systematize the nature of grievance redressal through legislation, being driven by civil society agitations under leadership of Anna Hazare and Arvind Kejriwal for enactment of the Jan Lokpal Bill into law. Private businesses and Non-Profits engaged in service delivery, such as hotels, restaurants, colleges, etc. often tend to set up their own mechanisms, such as Feedback forms and Contact Us pages. Such means to get direct feedback enable businesses to take corrective action in time. Governments also often accept the responsibility of Consumer protection from private organizations through Legislation as well as setting up Consumer Courts and Organizations for Dispute Resolution. Such consumer courts pursue quick action for redress, while maintaining affordability and ease to the consumer.

Grievance Redressal typically covers the following types of complaints:

- Service Unavailability
- Non-Delivery against
- Commitment Excessive

- Delays Injustice concerns (such as over race, caste, sex)
- Staff Misbehaviour
- Malpractice

Wider definition of grievance redressal covers:

- Malfunctions under
- Warranty coverage
- Product Support issues
- Citizen Vigilance reports
- Employee Disputes

Process

Organizations define their own process flows for grievance redressal. These are rarely made known to the public in case of private businesses; governments and nonprofits usually share voluntarily or by mandate the hierarchy of officers Workflow for Grievance Redressal as handled by sites such as ActPlease.com responsible for taking corrective action. Some organizations maintain a custom developed ticketing software, while others count on SaaS Portals such as ActPlease.com. Feedback Portals such as TripAdvisor and Yelp are driven by consumers, and organizations / businesses have the option to join and participate. Depending on the desire to correct as well as level of transparency of the organization, grievance redressal flow can include the following steps:

Input acceptance

Customers convey their grievance to the organization through feedback forms, letters, registered communications, emails, etc. These inputs may be submitted by mail, over the Internet, or in person.

Anonymity

Customers are often reluctant to report grievances that target individual executives of the

organization, especially those who may influence their future interactions or have the potential to take vengeance. Under such conditions, the organization needs to assure the customer that her identity will be hidden from executives, and preferably from everyone. This, however, opens the potential problem of deceitful negative inputs purposefully targeted against specific executives, as the people reporting are kept anonymous. Feedback forms on website are prone to spam submissions. There are cases when employees themselves submit feedback - positive for their professional gain, and negative if targeting colleagues. Some service centers make employees sign blank feedback forms to create positive statistics. Such situations can be prevented by seeking verification of identity of customers. This is especially possible on online setups, such as ActPlease.com, which uses SMS to verify the authenticity of the mobile number of reporter. Basic tools such as Captcha can prevent automatic spammers. Mass submission of false feedback becomes less likely and easy to detect in case of paper-based submission.

Acknowledgement & Status Tracking

Customers tend to develop much greater confidence in the grievance and feedback mechanism if they are given a formal acknowledgement. The acknowledgement could be by SMS and Email, as used by ActPlease.com, or simply by publicly posting their message on the appropriate forum, such as TripAdvisor. Ticketing Systems such as osTicket and Fresh Desk, as well as SaaS systems such as ActPlease respond with acknowledgements with unique tracking numbers. These may be used by customers to check the status of action taken on their complaint.

Forwarding

Paper-based feedback as well as standard feedback forms on websites usually forward inputs to a single officer or email address. This naturally causes scope for delay or failure to reach the right persons. However, smarter ticketing systems sort grievances based on their classification, and then redirect each to their relevant executive(s) instantly.

Escalation Smart Grievance Portals such as ActPlease expect organizations to configure typical action time for each type of complaint, as well as set up the ...hierarchy for escalation. When an executive fails to take corrective action in time, the matter is promoted to the officer next in line in seniority. Action Computerized and web-based systems have an advantage over paper-based systems as they can alert the reporter immediately upon completion of action, as marked by the

executive in charge.

Verification Customer may certify, if applicable and asked, whether the corrective action takenon their grievance satisfies them or is not substantial enough. Should it not be, the complaint may be marked as pending again, or be forwarded to a more senior officer in escalated form.

Measurements

The effectiveness of implementation of a grievance redressal mechanism can be calculated with the following parameters:

- Count of cases received
- Nature of cases received
- Acceptance of anonymous feedback
- Ratio of false inputs
- Measurements
- Time taken for corrective action
- Escalations required
- Confirmations & rejections after completion
- Repeat nature of grievances

Traditional Grievance Redressal mechanisms tend to fail, or are very ineffective, on account of some of these causes:

- Unavailability or Difficulty to access means to report grievances, at times done so purposefully, or due to lack of priority Challenges
- Lack of authority of PRO over relevant departments and executives in Government organizations
- Disconnect of senior decision-maker executives with end customers
- Non-motivation of front-end managers to forward negative feedback to higher ups
- Fear of citizens / consumers to report malpractice about officers with substantial authority
- Inability of smaller private organizations to set up computerized mechanisms

- Inaccuracy and spamming of feedback forms, driving false impressions
- Delayed feedback acceptance, as feedback is taken after service has been provided, while corrective action may be taken typically during the delivery of service.

Grievance Redressal Options available to Organizations

Feedback Forms

These are most popular and usually used by consumer service businesses, such as hotels and restaurants. They are less likely to be effective, as there is reduced Grievance Redressal Options available to Organizationsassurance of their reaching the decisionmaking authorities.

These also usually do not give any formal confirmation or tracking number to the complainant. Possibility of fake submissions also remains. Customers therefore have less confidence on such forms. Confidence can be strengthened if a central call center sends an acknowledgement of receipt of such feedback. Another possible reinforcement may be done by taking digitized input, which can be processed using scantron machines.

Contact Us Links

Websites of organizations generally carry the Contact Us page, which lists the email and phone numbers to use to submit any concerns. Many websites also provide a form to fill that automatically gets sent by email, with confirmation to the reporter.

Customer-driven Feedback Websites

Websites such as Yelp and TripAdvisor allow customers to post grievances and recommendations about organizations from personal experience. Designated representatives of these organizations have the option to respond to such ...communications, though these responses are often just standard text. The feedback also tends to be subjective and unlikely to be auto-sorted and forwarded for action.

Organization-oriented Portals

Organizations can subscribe to grievance redressal portals such as ActPlease.com to invite their customers to report their grievances and request action. As such portals are configured by the organizations themselves, they can ensure that complaints are directed properly. ActPlease, being a third party site, handles anonymity of the reporter from the ...organization when necessary, while ensuring the genuine nature of the person, through SMS verification. Such SaaS Portals are easy to use and easily affordable for all organizations including SMEs, while empowering them with the latest tools such as Mobile a/c number 60332595050 ko10pm 2000 bank me fas hai adhar card number 644451794526 and Customized Websites.

Custom-developed Ticketing Systems

Large organizations involved in customer service set up their own ticketing systems ...with similar features as the SaaS portals, but with greater customization in the processing of grievances. Examples of such organizations are Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited and Torrent Power. Largescale ERP software, such as SAP and Genie also provide facility for setting up ticketed grievance redressal and customer support systems.

Consumers play a key role in maintaining the economy of India. Each and every person constitutes a consumer because each one of us is engaged in some form of exchange of goods or services through money as a medium. Gradually, there arise many kinds of disputes among the consumers as well as consumers and the sellers. In this context, it has to be stated that there lies a need for a statute which regulates the friction between the consumers and the sellers. For this purpose, Consumer Protection Act was enacted in the year 1986 to look after the various rights and duties of the consumers during the time of purchasing a product and even after that. The Act plays an important role in the fields where there arises an incidence of exchange of goods or services between two persons where money acts as a medium. The Act also provides certain guidelines as to what measures must be complied with during the time of such exchange, what are the various rights available to both the buyer and seller etc. It also provides certain provisions regarding the need and formulation of various 'Consumer Redressal Centres' both at the central as well as states level.

The Act lays down certain provisions regarding the definition of consumer, various consumer protection councils, and provisions in connection with various consumer redressal agencies in India as well as other miscellaneous provisions. Among this, provisions relating to consumer redressal agencies demand a lot of attention in the present Indian scenario. Many people are still not aware that there are such agencies working in favor of consumers in every district. Due to this reason, many of them are not getting proper solutions for their problems as consumers. Chapter III of the Act provides for the implementation of redressal agencies. Section 9 of the Act provides for 'establishment of consumer dispute redressal agencies' which include:

- A District forum established by the State Government in each district of the State by its notification.
- A State Commission established by the State Government in each state by its notification and
- A National Commission established by Central Government by notification

Each District Forum shall consist of a person who is or has been qualified as a District judge, as the President. There must be two other persons who are not less than thirty-five years of age and also possesses a degree from a recognized university. The persons must have adequate knowledge in the field of economics, commerce, industry, public affairs, and administration. The district forum must have the jurisdiction to entertain such complaints where the value of goods or services and the compensation, does not exceed Rs. twenty lakhs. The need for district forums for consumer redressal is that majority of the people who face any consumer rights violation are unable to file a complaint in a state or national forum because such f have to look at matters concerning various other district forums which result in a large number of pending cases. District forums are also enabled with a faster way of dispensing consumer redressal as the amount of claim is pretty less than that of State/National redressal forums which enables normal people to seek a solution for their problems.

State Commission

Each State Commission shall consist of a person who is or has been a judge of High Court as its president. The Commission also consists of not less than two members, who are above thirty-five years of age and also possesses a degree from a recognized university. The persons must have adequate knowledge in the field of economics, commerce, industry, public affairs, and administration. The Act also states that not less than fifty percent of the members shall be from amongst the persons having a judicial background. The State Commission has a jurisdiction to entertain cases where the value of goods or services or the compensation claimed, if any, exceeds the number of Rs. twenty lakhs but does not exceed Rs. one crore. It also entertains appeals against any District Forum within the state and also looks after any pending disputes or cases decided by any of the District forums in which the forums have exercised a jurisdiction not vested in them by the law, or has been exercised illegally or with any material irregularity.

The National Commission shall consist of a person, who is or has been a judge of the Supreme Court, to be appointed by the Central Government, shall be the President, provided that no appointment shall be made except after the consultation with the Chief Justice of India. The commission shall consist of not less than four members of its executive committee who shall not be less than thirty-five years of age and must be graduates from a recognized university. They must also be specialized in the areas of commerce, economics, and administration. The jurisdiction of the commission shall extend to any case where the compensation amount might exceed Rs. one crore and the Commission shall also entertain appeals against State Commissions. The Commission also has the power to check any pending disputes or cases decided by any of the State Commissions where the State Commission has exercised a jurisdiction not vested in it by law or it has been exercised illegally or with any material irregularity.

Power of redressal forums

There are various powers for all of the redressal forums with regards to its jurisdiction. Some of them include:

- Examining, enforcing as well as summoning the witness on oath;

- Discovering and producing any material evidence;
- Receiving evidence on affidavit;
- Requesting for report or test analysis from the concerned authorities and laboratories;
- Issuing commission for examining the witness;
- Enforcing any other powers prescribed by the Central or State Government.

Limitation period

The District, State or National Forum for consumer grievance redressal will not entertain a case which is filed two years after the occurrence of the case unless the party/parties can condone themselves regarding the reasons behind the delay of filing within the specified period. Such a provision was formulated to increase the accuracy of the function of such forums and also for delivering fast redressal solutions to the parties.[1]

Conclusion

From various landmark judgments by the Supreme Court in connection with cases affecting consumer rights, it will be clear that there is an increase in the number of cases involving consumer protection when compared to the past. It indicates that people are now aware of their various rights as consumers. The Act not only covers the rights of the consumers but also provides certain duties for them too. It has been stated that it is the duty of a consumer to ask clearly about various characteristics and features of the product which he/she wishes to buy. The Act does not entertain certain malicious acts such as black marketing and selling a good above the prescribed rate of MRP. The doctrine of 'caveat venditor' (let the seller beware) has been changed into 'caveat emptor' (let the purchaser beware) so that the purchaser will also be aware of various features, merits and demerits of the good as well as protection of their rights themselves. There is still an emerging need of various other redressal machineries in this field due to the increased number of pending cases as well as for implementing alternative means in the field of consumer protection. The Act may be amended in such a way that it includes certain dispute redressal mechanisms like 'Alternative Disputes Resolution' as a core function of the said redressal agencies dealing with consumer rights.