

Consumer Awareness Survey about the Public Procurement Framework in Rajasthan

Introduction:

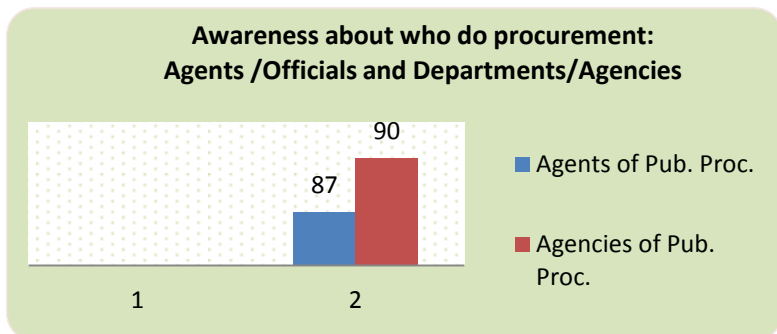
The legal framework of Rajasthan regarding public procurement is very strong. Rajasthan has 'Rajasthan Transparency in Public Procurement (RTPP) Act, 2012, 'Rajasthan Transparency in Public Procurement (RTPP) Rules, 2013, Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Guidelines, 2008 and recently introduced Swish Challenge System in force. To know about the general awareness of the public procurement framework among the common man, a survey was conducted by the Rajasthan Public Procurement Observatory setup at Consumer Unity & Trust Society, Jaipur in association with The World Bank, New Delhi.

Methodology:

Consumer Awareness Survey about the Public Procurement Framework in Rajasthan Around 160 respondents were interviewed across 15 districts of Rajasthan. 60% respondents were up to 45 years of age and rest were above than this, Males were 71% and 80 % of the respondents were graduates and above. Majority of the respondents, around 48% were working in the private sector, Business & Self Employed respondents were 36% and there were some Government servant respondents as well which were around 6% of the total respondents. The Survey was conducted from August 03-August 26, 2015. Survey was conducted using the structured questionnaires through personal interviews and phone interviews as well.

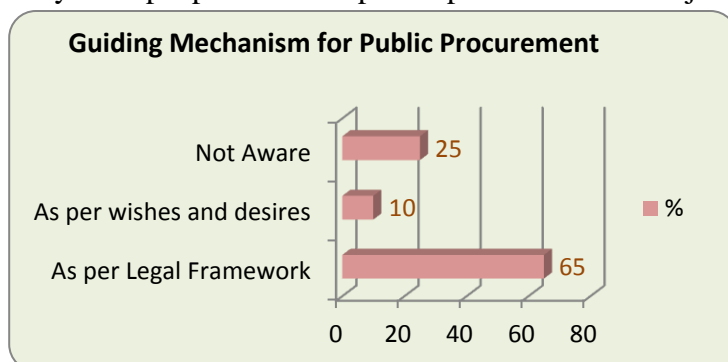
Awareness about agents and agencies of public procurement

A majority of the respondents, around 87% correctly said that public procurement is done by the concerned Government officials and authorized elected representatives but around 13 people still do not understand this simple thing. Further to this, 10 percent consumers even do not understand that public procurement is done by the government departments, authorities, boards, corporations and other governmental, semi-governmental and public agencies.



Awareness about Legal Framework of Public Procurement:

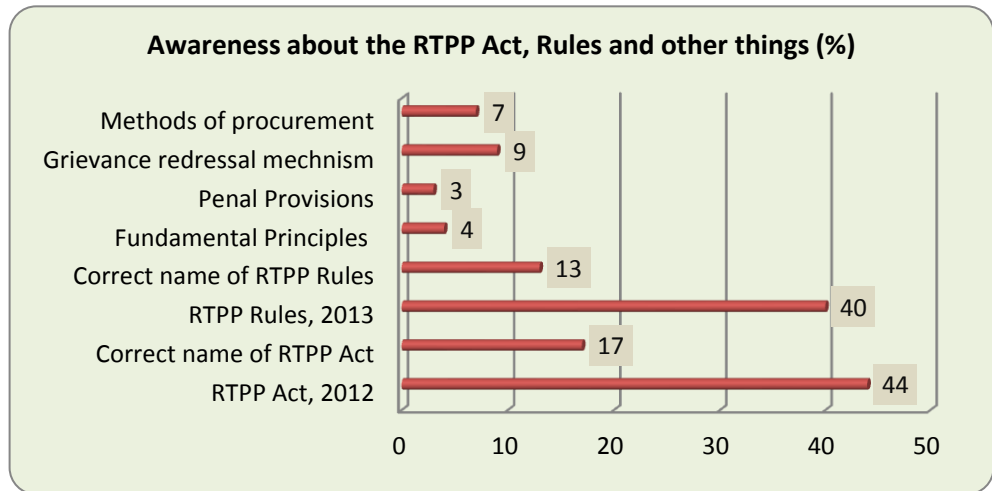
Only 65% people said that public procurement in Rajasthan is guided by and under certain some Act and Rules or by some departmental guidelines. But 10% respondents said that it is not guided by any legal mechanism and done as



per the wishes and desires of the concerned Government officials and Public Representatives. Around 25% respondents were not aware about any of the guiding mechanism based on which the whole exercise of public procurement is done by various public procuring entities.

Awareness about the RTPP Act, 2012 and RTPP Rules, 2013:

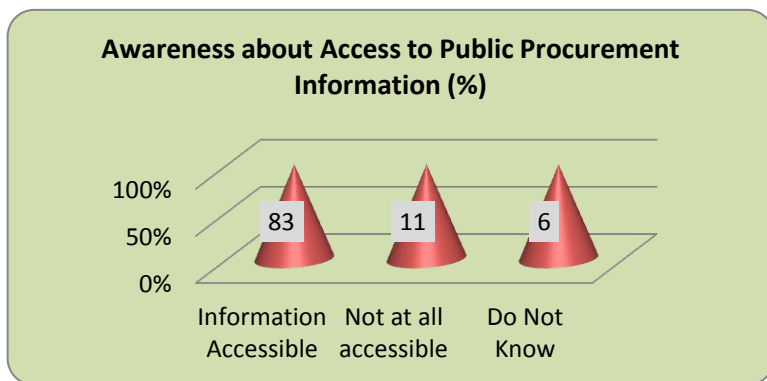
It was come out the around 44% of the respondents were aware about the RTPP Act but only 17% of them were able to tell the correct name of the RTPP Act, 2012. Around 40% people were also aware about the RTPP Rules, 2013 but only 14% of them were able to tell the correct name of the RTPP Rules, 2013. Less than



5% people are aware about the fundamental principles of the RTPP Act 2012 and about the penal provisions under the Act, only 7 % respondents were aware about the methods of procurement and only 9% people were aware about the grievance redressal System as per act.

Awareness about Access to Public Procurement Information:

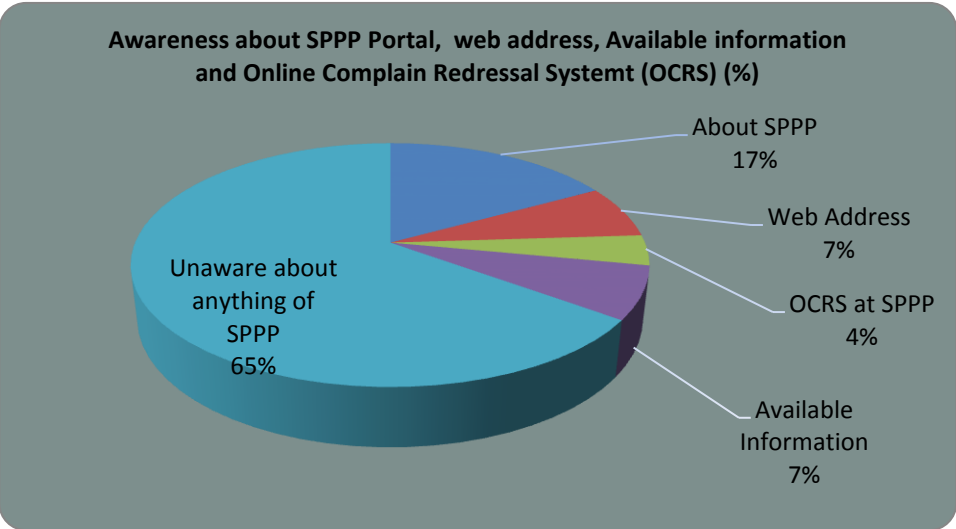
As far as awareness regarding source and access to information regarding the ongoing procurements in various procuring entities is concerned people come to know through various source of information. 83% respondents said that anyone can access public procurement related information through either departmental websites or official visits or written requests. But 11% said respondents think that any information related to public



procurement is always secrete and cannot be accessed through any mean. Around 6% of the respondents were not aware at all about any of the source of such information.

Awareness about SPPP portal and other related details:

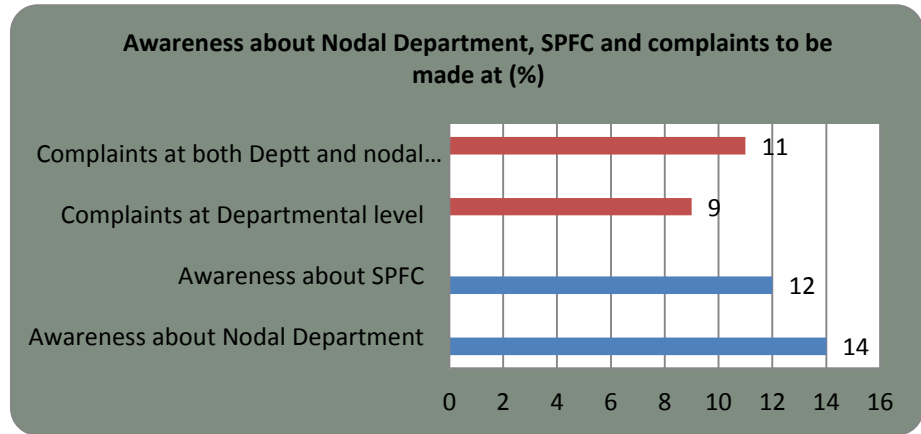
As per the RTPP Act, 2012 there has to be one web portal to publicize the public procurement related information for its wider dissemination and maintaining transparency and accountability in the system. Following the provisions of the act state government has developed a centralised portal for the purpose well defined in the act which is State



Public Procurement Portal (SPPP <http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in/>). It publishes all the NITs/NIBs of the registered procuring entities on the portal and other information like Acts, Rules, amendments done on the above etc. But as far as its awareness among the respondent is concerned its very low. Only 17 % respondent were aware about the SPPP portal and only 4 to 7 % people were aware about the web address of SPPP and sort of information put on the SPPP and provision of lodging online complaint on the same which is not there.

Awareness about Nodal Department, SPFC and complaints to be made at:

As per the RTPP Act, 2012 it is mandatory to set a State Procurement Facilitation Cell to



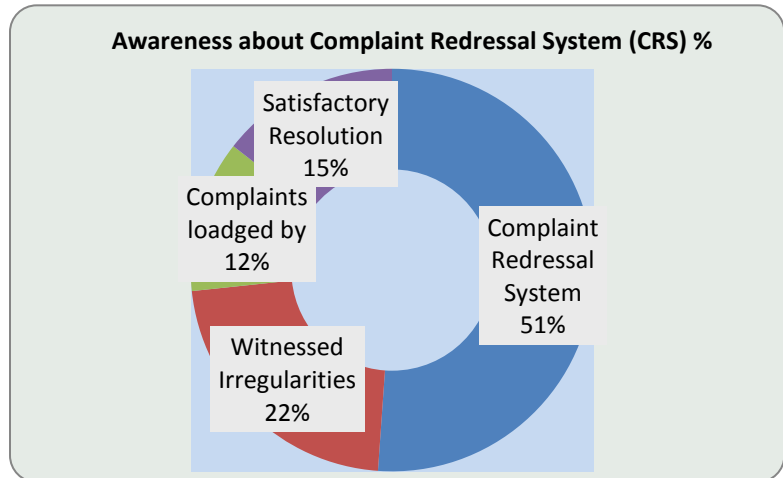
monitor the day to day implementation of the act, capacity building of the procuring officials and procuring entities and make its implementation smooth and effective in the state. There a SPFC set up in the Finance Department,

Government of Rajasthan is the nodal department as well for the RTPP Act, 212 and RTPP Rules, 2013. But the overall awareness level of the common man about the nodal department and the SPFC is very minimal. Only 14 % respondents know about the nodal department for public procurement and 12% people know that there is a SPFC which is formed under the act at finance department, Government of Rajasthan level. 9% respondents said that if anybody is having any grievance related to procurement than they can lodge it at the concerned department level and only 3 % people said that complaints can be lodged at Nodal departmental level as well. While 11% respondents said that any grievance

related to any sort of procurement happening around can be lodged at both concerned departmental level as well at the nodal departmental level which is the Finance Department.

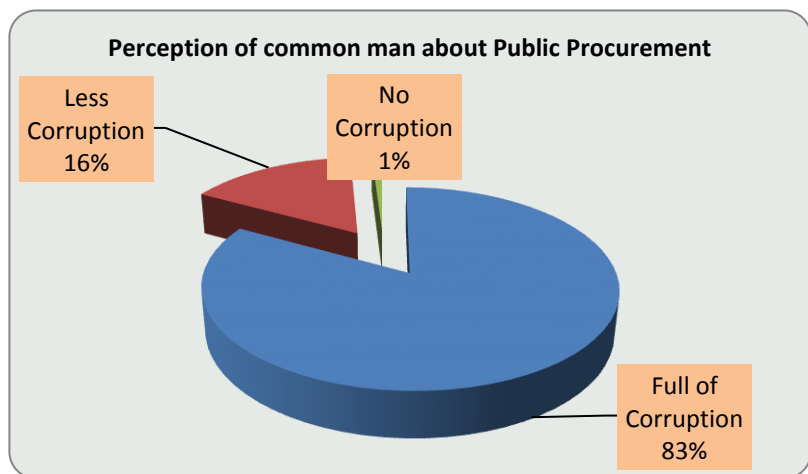
Awareness about Complaint Redressal System (CRS):

Chapter 3 of the RTPP Act, 2012 talks about the complaint redressal system in greater detail and its provision of making appeal as well in its section 40 in case if anybody is having any sort of dissatisfaction from the decision taken at level one. The overall awareness level of the common man about the Complaint Redressal System is much higher and which is 46% whereas being mentioned above that the overall awareness level of the common man about the online complaint redressal system is only 4%. Only 20% respondents said that they have witnessed some irregularities in the public procurement and 11% percent of them have made complaints as well at the concerned departmental level but only 13% of the respondents who made complaints at the concerned departmental level were satisfied with the resolution of their complaints.



Perception of the Common Man about Public Procurement:

Public perception is a Socio-Psychic phenomenon which can be seen as the difference between an absolute truth based on facts and a virtual truth shaped by popular opinion, media coverage and/or reputation. As far as perception of the common men regarding corruption in public procurement in Rajasthan is concerned, 83% respondents said that this sector as a whole is full of corruption and 16% consider that though there is corruption but since it is monitored by the government and certain rules and regulations are there so the rate of corruption in public procurement is still not that much and low. Only 1% of the respondent thinks off and said that there is no corruption at all in the area of public procurement after the enactment of the RTPP Act, 2012 and RTPP Rules, 2013.



Advocacy Issues:

- Mass Awareness generation programmes shall be introduced for RTPP Act, 2012 and RTPP Rules, 2013 by the SPFC and nodal department so that more and more people can be aware about it and can actively participate in the procurement processes and civic watch of the same can be enhanced.
- Online complaint registration process on the SPPP portal shall be started so that people who witness some irregularities in the procurement process at any stage in anywhere of the state can bring that in to mainstream and seek satisfactory resolution of the same.