

A Study on the Job Satisfaction among the Kudumbasree Workers in Ernakulam District

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Abstract: Kudumbasree can be viewed as one of the programmes launched by government of Kerala for the upliftment of women. Kudumbasree Units encourage women to utilize their skills, capabilities, talents, innovative ideas etc in an efficient manner which can make the status of both men and women equal. It will also motivate them to work more which can ultimately lead to their job satisfaction. The current study concentrates on the level of job satisfaction among Kudumbasree workers in Ernakulam District. Places like Neerikodu, Kadamakudi, Pizhala, Chennur and Mannamuruthu are selected for the study. Data are collected with the help of schedules.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Kudumbasree Units, Kudumbasree, Kudumbasree Worker(s)

I. Introduction

The economic level of a country has a direct bearing on the economic situation of men and women equally. The condition of men is strong. So more importance should be given to women to raise their standard of living. With the active support of NATIONAL BANK FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT and with the cooperation of local self governments, government of Kerala launched the ambitious programme named Kudumbasree^[1]. The former Prime Minister of India Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee formerly inaugurated the programme in Malappuram District of Kerala on May 17th 1998^[2]. The main aim of this programme is to alleviate poverty by giving employment to women.

It comprises of a three tier structure namely Neighbourhood Group at the bottom, Area Development society at the middle and community development society at the apex level. The President along with a Resident Community Volunteer and three Community Volunteers constitute a Neighborhood Group. A Community Volunteer can be nominated as a Community Health Volunteer, a Community Infrastructure Volunteer and a Community Income Generating Volunteer. A group of Neighborhood Groups form an Area Development Society and a group of Area Development Societies form a Community Development Society.^[3] An Area Development Society and Community Development Society functions through three bodies namely General Body, Governing Body and Monitoring & Advisory Committee^[4].

The maximum number of members permitted to work in a Kudumbasree unit is twenty. All members should meet the President regularly. Some of the products offered by them include handicrafts, bakery items, toiletries, seasonal products etc. Now a day's some of them have extended their works into areas like farming, wedding planning and taxies. Some members are interested in selling their products directly to the customers while some seek the help of retailers for the same. They are usually referred to as Self Help Groups (SHGs) as each member is willing to aid others. They are also interested in giving loans to the people as and when the need arises with cheap interest rates. They make use of their strength and opportunities, putting aside weaknesses to deliver novel products to customers. By doing so they are able to earn goodwill which can ultimately lead to job satisfaction among women.

II. Significance Of The Study

Poverty is one of the problems faced by rural people. Government of Kerala launched a programme named Kudumbasree in order to give more empowerment to rural women. Consequently they are able to produce and deliver products according to the standards of the customers and are able to raise their standard of

living. Thus Kudumbasree may help to eradicate poverty in rural areas. They are also able to solve all their problems within themselves.

Objective Of The Study

The core objective of this study is to identify the level of job satisfaction among Kudumbasree workers in Ernakulam District.

III. Literature Review

Job satisfaction can be seen as a combination of positive feelings or aspirations that a person has towards his/her job. Job satisfaction can be in the form of monetary and non monetary benefits^[5]. Job satisfaction can be defined in many ways by different research scholars. However there has been no change in the concept of job satisfaction.

Schneider and Snyder (1975,) defined job satisfaction as a “personal evaluation of conditions present in the job, or outcomes that arise as a result of having a job.”^[6].

Locke (1976) defines Job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences"^[7].

Mueller & Kim, (2008) explains that “there are two types of job satisfaction based on the level of employees' feelings about their jobs. The first, and most studied, is global job satisfaction, which refers to employees' overall feelings about their jobs (e.g., "Overall, I love my job."). The second is job facet satisfaction, which refers to feelings about specific job aspects, such as salary, benefits, and the quality of relationships with one's co-workers (e.g., "Overall, I love my job, but my schedule is difficult to manage"^[8].

Job satisfaction is an important concept. Higher job satisfaction can lead to higher productivity^[9]. It can also be used to improve the morale of a person. The satisfaction of a person with high morale will be high. Such persons can achieve their personal goals easily. So more strategies or efforts should be introduced as and when the need arises to achieve more job satisfaction.

IV. Scope Of The Study

The study is about Kudumbasree units. Kudumbasree workers in Ernakulam District of Kerala were interviewed for this purpose.

V. Research Methodology

5.1 Sample and Sampling Unit

100 Kudumbasree workers from various parts of Ernakulam District were taken as sample. It was not possible to include all the Kudumbasree units as sample so data was collected equally from five Kudumbasree units operating in Neerikodu, Kadamakudi, Pizhala, Chennur and Mannamturuthu. Convenience sampling was used for the study.

5.2. Methods of Data Collection

The study was conducted mainly based on primary data collected with the help of schedules and by conducting direct interviews with the Kudumbasree Workers. Secondary data was collected from the government and official website.

VI. Data Analysis

The data collected by survey are analyzed and interpreted using percentage method and pie chart. The analysis is divided into five parts namely Work Related Information, Personal Factors, Official Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction, and Specialties of Kudumbasree Units and Drawbacks and Suggestions for Improvement.

A) Work Related Information

Table 1.1. Areas of Operations of the Respondents

Particulars	No :of Respondents	Percentage
Sales & Distribution	20	20
Production & Packaging	60	60
Helper	20	20
Others	0	0
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: Table 1.1.shows that 60 percent of the respondents are engaged in production and packaging, 20 percent engaged in sales and distribution and the rest 20 percent constitute helpers. This is because in production and packaging there are different types of work and the formalities are a bit cumbersome .But in sales and distribution the condition is different as goodwill of the Kudumbasree Units and no much stiff competition in the market necessitate less sales personnel. The people engaged in the production and packaging can do almost all the jobs performed by the helpers .So the helpers are very much less in number.

Table 1.2. Working Experience of the Respondents

Particulars	No :of Respondents	Percentage
Below 1 year	0	0
1-5 years	10	10
6-10 years	15	15
Above 10 Years	75	75
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: Table 1.2 explains that 75 percent of the respondents have an experience above 10 years, 15 percent have an experience between 6-10 years and others (10 percent) have a work experience between 1-5 years .The aged respondents are not highly educated and are not averse to any job . These women like to work in Kudumbasree Units as they are located near their homes, so that they can perform their responsibilities as housewives also But the youngsters are more qualified and they prefer white collar jobs. Moreover the elders want their children engaged in less laborious jobs .These reasons lead to less influx of new young entrants. Hence the number of people with experience above 10 years is more .The number of people with less than ten years of service is proportionately reduced.

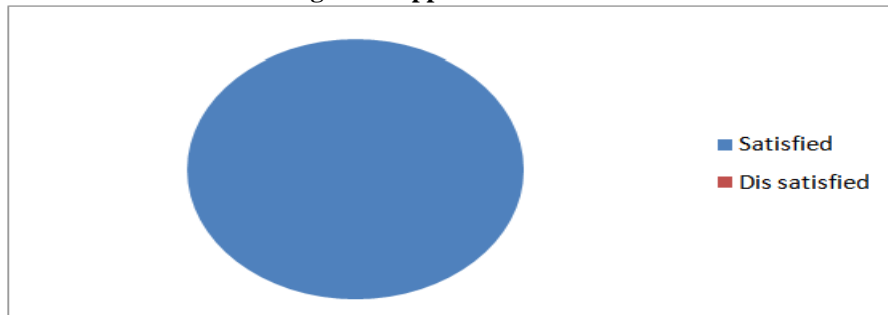
B) Personal Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction

Table 1.3. Happiness to Work

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Satisfied	100	100
Dissatisfied	0	0
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Fig 1.3. Happiness to Work



Source :Table 1.3.

Interpretation: Table 1.3. shows that all the respondents are satisfied with the happiness to work in the Kudumbasree Units and none is dissatisfied. They consider job in Kudumbasree Units as the most ideal job they can have based on their age, qualification and experience. They are able to work in a tension free atmosphere. Time constraints are not there .They are able to make and deliver unadulterated and localized products with low

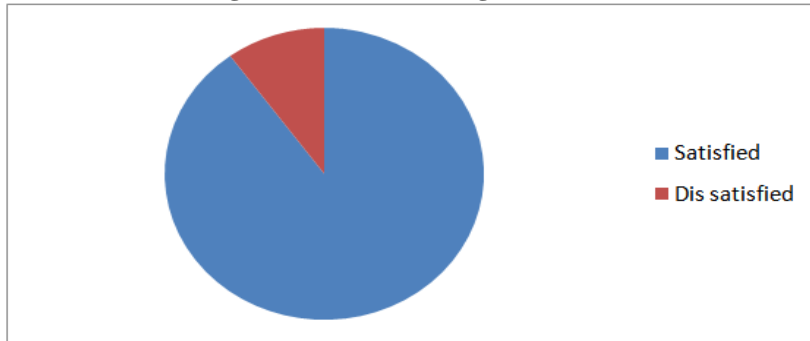
costs to the needed customers. They can also become independent by working in these units. Because of these reasons it can be understood that all the respondents are happier to work in Kudumbasree Units.

Table 1.4. Present Working Conditions

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Satisfied	90	90
Dissatisfied	10	10
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Fig 1.4. Present Working Conditions



Source: Table 1.4

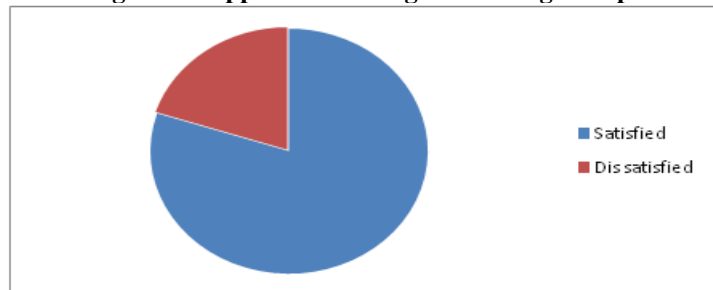
Interpretation: Table 1.4 shows that 90 percent is satisfied with the present working conditions .By working in Kudumbasree Units one can get more relaxations mentally and physically. Units. Education and religion are not considered as barriers for new entrants. They can get the support of the government in the form of good policies ,incentives ,subsidies ,tax concessions etc at any time. They can raise loans from the concerned financial institutions and repay them at affordable interest rates . These can be regarded as the explanations for why majority of the respondents are satisfied with the present working conditions. 10 percent of them have ill health and more financial burdens and they are unhappy with the present working conditions.

Table 1.5. Rappo with Colleagues and Higher Ups

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Satisfied	80	80
Dissatisfied	20	20
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Fig 1.5. Rappo with Colleagues and Higher Ups



Source: Table 1.

Interpretation: Table 1.5. reveals that 80 percent of the respondents are satisfied with the relationship among co- workers and higher authorities and 20 percent are not satisfied. All the Kudumbasree workers are having the same status and are commonly referred to as Self Help Groups (SHGs). There will be less ego clashes among them. All of them have more or less the same opinion. Their opinions will be heard by the higher ups on time and it will be well attended to. These can ultimately create a good relationship among co-workers and between workers and higher ups. 20 percent of them who are otherwise qualified are forced to be with the unit for other reasons become unhappy and they do not maintain a good rappo.

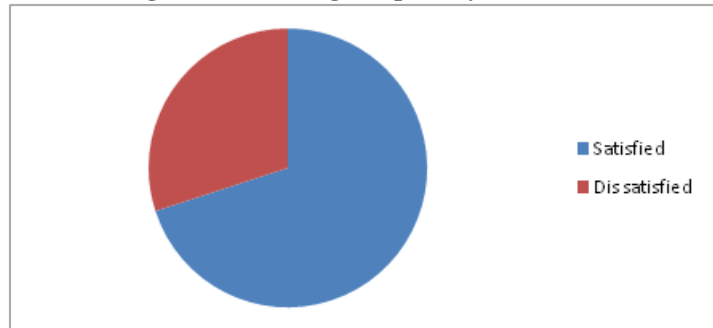
C) Official Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction

Table 1.6. Knowledge/Capability Utilization

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Satisfied	70	70
Dissatisfied	30	30
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Fig 1.6. Knowledge/Capability Utilization



Source: Table 1.6

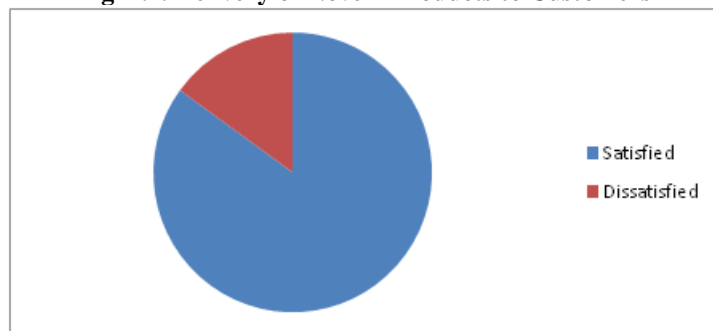
Interpretation: Table 1.6 explains that 70 percent is satisfied with their knowledge/capacity utilization. The job they perform in the unit is not learnt from any institute, university or college. The skills they have are mostly inherited. They are not nuclear in family set up and have earned the capability and knowledge by the working experience which they utilize in the units. The expertise is gained by their experience from their young age itself. 30 percent find it difficult to move with the units as they want to be individualistic and are not able to utilize their knowledge/capabilities properly and they become unsatisfied.

Table 1.7. Delivery of Novel Products to Customers

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Satisfied	85	85
Dissatisfied	15	15
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Fig 1.7. Delivery of Novel Products to Customers



Source: Table 1.7.

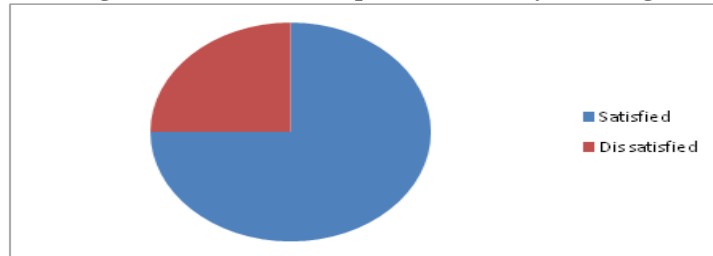
Interpretation: Table 1.7 shows that 85 percent is satisfied with the delivery of novel products and 15 percent is dissatisfied. They are able to maintain good personal relationships with the customers whose sentiments and 'pulses' are well gauged. Their feedbacks are also well attended to. Speedy steps are taken to put into practice the feedbacks and innovations are done faster as there are no procedural delays. These lead to the delivery of novel products to customers. Some of the feedbacks are beyond their limits and some customers are never happy with any products. Therefore 15 percent is dissatisfied with the delivery of novel products to customers.

Table 1.8. Sufficient ,Adequate and Timely Training

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Satisfied	75	75
Dis satisfied	25	25
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Fig 1.8. Sufficient ,Adequate and Timely Training



Source: Table 1.8

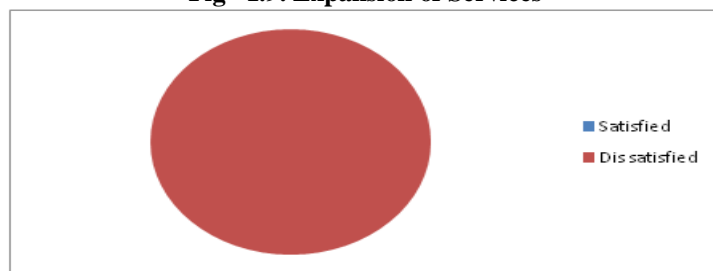
Interpretation :Table 1.8. shows that 75 percent of the respondents is satisfied with the training measures and 25 percent is not satisfied. Most of them are able to grasp the training classes by the experts while 25 percent of the respondents because of their ill health are not able to grasp the classes. Some of them are not patient to attend the classes. 75 percent of the respondents are able to utilize the training practically and can produce quality products accordingly and can keep a good relationship with the customers .They can ultimately succeed in the market.

Table 1.9. Expansion of Services

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Satisfied	0	0
Dis satisfied	100	100
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Fig 1.9. Expansion of Services



Source: Table 1.9.

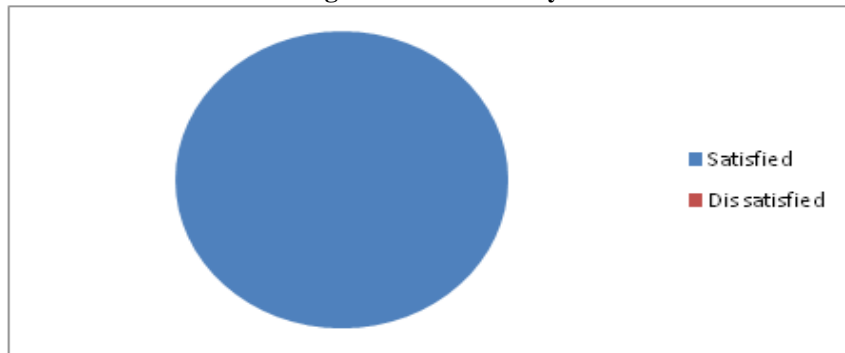
Interpretation : Table 1.9. shows that all of them aren't able to expand their services. Expansion of services requires frequent travelling, staying outside, incurrence of more money, more transporting, increased expenditure are the results of expansion of services which the unit can only ill afford. There is no guarantee of return even if more investments are done. The units can only ill afford taking risks at any stage. The customers are likely to go for branded items. They are not able to recover the costs they incur from customers .So necessary actions should be initiated.

Table 1.10. Job Security

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Satisfied	100	100
Dis satisfied	0	0
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Fig 1.10. Job Security



Source: Table 1.10

Interpretation : Table 1.10. reveals that 100 percent of the respondents are satisfied with their job security. There is no retirement age bar .One can work as long as the health problems are favourable and willing . Quite different from other institutions there are no formalities for joining these units .They are able to get subsidies, incentives from government periodically .There are also able to get good responses from the public and are encouraged and appreciated by others. They are also able to build an effective relationship with co-workers and higher authorities.

D) Specialities Of Kudumbasree Units

Table 1.11. Specialities

Particulars	No :of Respondents	Percentage
Festival Loans	10	10
Awareness Campaigns	10	10
Social Responsibilities	80	80
Others	0	0
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation :Table 1.11. reveals that 80 percent of the respondents mention social responsibilities as the speciality of Kudumbasree units ,10 percent mention festival Loans as the speciality of these units and 10 percent mention awareness campaigns as the speciality of Kudumbasree. The poor hapless village women are given a source of income by employing them the best possible way taking their education and experience to consideration. They are given an opportunity to empower themselves enabling them to do the family responsibilities with their place of work close to their houses. They are given the seasonal lump sum loans to meet any exigency repayable in easy installments .Campaigns are held at village level regularly and periodically to make women aware of the opportunities lying hidden with Kudumbasree Units.

E) Drawbacks And Suggestions For Improvement

Table 1.12 Drawbacks of Kudumbasree Units

Particulars	No :of Respondents	Percentage
Stiff Competition	5	5
Shortage of Finance	15	15
Lack of Creativity/Innovation	30	30
Expansion of Services	50	50
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation : Table 1.12 elucidates that 50 percent of the respondents believe that expansion of services to more areas, 30 percent feel that lack of creativity/innovation,15 percent state shortage of finance drawback and the rest 5 percent declare stiff competition as the drawbacks of the Kudumbasree Units. Expansion of services is explained in another instant. Kudumbasree workers are not able to cope up with the fast changing environment with new marketing techniques as a result established firms dominate in the market..It is difficult for them to own and implement new techniques .There is always a limitation to finance even though government aids are available.

Table 1.13 Suggestions for Improvement

Particulars	No :of Respondents	Percentage
Help From Experts/Groups	85	85
Communication and Coordination	10	10
Morale and Motivation	5	5
Others	0	0
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: Table 1.13 reveals that 85 percent of the respondents feel that getting help from expert/groups, 10 percent feel that communication and coordination and 5 percent opine that morale and motivation as the suggestions for improving the performance of Kudumbasree Units. The expert/groups can harness the capabilities and experiences of the women ideally and can exploit the market potentials. Better communication and coordination among the members and higher ups can bring forth the best in these women. Morale and motivation boosting classes can be conducted by experienced people. Enhancing bonus and remuneration and proper appreciations can also be done.

VII. Findings

The following were the findings of the study

- Production and packaging is the area where 60 percent of the workers are engaged, 20 percent engaged in sales and distribution and 20 percent represent helpers.
- 75 percent of the respondents have an experience above 10 years, 15 percent have an experience between 6-10 years and 10 percent have a work experience between 1-5 years.
- 100 percent of the respondents are satisfied with the happiness to work in the Kudumbasree Units.
- 90 percent is satisfied with the present working conditions of Kudumbasree Units and 10 percent is dissatisfied.
- 80 percent of the respondents are satisfied with the relationship among co-workers and higher authorities and 20 percent is dissatisfied.
- 70 percent is satisfied with their knowledge/capacity utilization while 30 percent is dissatisfied with their knowledge/capacity utilization.
- 85 percent is satisfied with the delivery of novel products to the customers and 15 percent is dissatisfied.
- 75 percent of the respondents is satisfied with the training measures and 25 percent is not satisfied with the present training measures of Kudumbasree Units.
- 100 percent of the Kudumbasree Workers are not able to expand their services.
- All the women are satisfied with their job security.
- 80 percent of the respondents mention social responsibilities as the speciality of their Units, 10 percent mention Festival Loans as the speciality of these units and 10 percent mention awareness campaigns as the speciality of the Kudumbasree Units.
- 50 percent of the respondents believe that expansion of services to more areas, 30 percent feel that lack of creativity/innovation, 15 percent state shortage of finance and the rest 5 percent declare stiff competition as the drawbacks of the Kudumbasree Units.
- 85 percent of the respondents feel that getting help from expert/groups, 10 percent feel that communication and coordination and 5 percent opine that morale and motivation as the suggestions for improving the performance of Kudumbasree Units.

VIII. Suggestions

The Kudumbasree Units should introduce necessary strategies to enhance the performance of the workers to improve their job satisfaction. For this purpose following factors are enumerated .

- Government of Kerala should encourage more youngsters to join Kudumbasree by providing them attractive perks incommensurate with their experience and qualification. Once more dynamic youngsters join Kudumbasree it will become more vibrant.
- Workers should be encouraged to bring in more members to join Kudumbasree. Those who bring in more members may be suitably rewarded in the form of incentives.
- Young people by virtue of their dynamism will be able to do more vigorous sales. Thus they will be able to reach all strata of society and will silence the fault finding customers. Hence more young women should be brought into the folds of Kudumbasree Units.
- Expansion of services will be possible with the help of infrastructure facilities like good transportation and good roads and young sales women.

- Measures may be introduced to improve the health conditions of the workers. It may be government sponsored. Free periodical medical checkups should be made available for early detection ,treating and curing illness.
- To reduce the financial burden of the workers educational loans for their children, housing loans etc should be provided at concessional interest rates. Repayment period of these loans should also be extended to the maximum.
- Only women with devotion and sincerity to the core of Kudumbasree Units should be brought into the Kudumbasree. Necessary campaigning may be conducted to select such personnel. Such efficient people will be interested to maintain a better cordial relationship with the peers and higher authorities and can work in a good atmosphere.
- Assessing the value, any opinion of any individual can be accepted without any bias. Such individual(s) should be properly appreciated and suitably rewarded and projected as a model to other women workers

These aspects should be strictly adhered to. Implementation of these aspects can bring forth at least some if not full improvement in job satisfaction of Kudumbasree Workers in Ernakulam District of Kerala .

IX. Conclusion

Kudumbasree is a plan which is introduced and executed by the government of Kerala mainly for alleviating poverty through empowering women. It has been able to achieve its mission to a great extent. It is a worth emulating model for other states.. Nowadays women have become more status oriented .They want to occupy the same position occupied by the men in the society. They have almost succeeded in this respect. Still they want more respect. So they are more focused on improving their job satisfaction level .As a result they are alertly bring some changes affirmative changes into their lives with the help of various factors. Enhancement of decision making power, self esteem etc of women etc can be regarded as the affect effect of those changes.

Most of them are satisfied with the present working conditions in kudumbasree units and are interested in continuing with the operations of Units. They should build a good relationship with the co-workers and higher authorities .They should be willing to help the peers as and when the need arises in any form .They should be able to communicate with the higher authorities periodically and should be able to seek remedies for their grievances on time . They can avail loans during different festivals like Vishu,Onam,Christmas, etc. A good number of Kudumbasree Workers are able to get adequate incentives from their respective Kudumbasree Units.

Women should utilize all the opportunities for improving their job satisfaction level. They should be able to continuously monitor and adapt to the changes taking place in the market .So that they are able to recognize the needs or desires of the customers and act accordingly to withstand new competitions in the market,. Nearly all of the Kudumbasree Workers are able to cover almost all the sections of the society. Frequent training can improve the performance of Kudumbasree Workers. They shouldn't be depressed by worse times and should strive hard to obtain more job contentment.

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