

# ROLE OF KUDUMBASREE UNIT ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT WITH A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MUNDAKAYAM PANCHAYATH (KOTTAYAM DISTRICT ,KERALA)

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## Abstract

*Kudumbasree plays a major role in the empowerment of women in rural areas. Different units of Kudumbasree focuses on different projects available in this program. This study aims at identifying various activities of different units and understanding the various problems faced by them and finding solution for them will be of great use. This study is done by collecting data from 50 respondents. More developmental activities should be included in this program.*

**Keyword: Women empowerment, Kudumbasree**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Development of a country is possible only through the development of all people. In earlier times women were not given due importance. But now the scenario have changed. Gender inequality is been recognized globally therefore the term women empowerment is given acceptance. Women empowerment can gradually create progress in all areas.

Developing country like India is also giving due importance to the upliftment of women especially in the rural areas. Kudumbasree, started in 1998 is a poverty eradication and women empowerment programme by the Government of Kerala. The programme attempts to bring socio-economic changes in the condition of women. Women empowerment helps in fighting against the problems faced by them, since it is a collective effort.

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Jagadeewari (2015)** found that women have become confident about their future and have attained a considerable level of Self-reliance and thereby increase in the economic conditions after joining the member of the organization.

**N. Swarnalatha (2015)** It was found out from the study that a major reason for women joining in self-help groups is to add additional family income. SHGs could be helpful in inducing positive self-image, self-reliance, self-confidence and economic independence in women members.

**(Maddileti.2015)** The SHG has brought a positive impact in procuring permanent and fixed assets like agricultural, land permanent houses and sites for their houses. **Prabhu (2015)** concluded that self-help groups need to focus on a training program for the women with the help of NGOs so they develop their skills and talents. Self-Help group (SHG) is an opportunity for providing gainful employment to the people below the poverty line, thereby improving their income and standard of living.

**Bhagyalakshmi(2015)** It has been observed that in India, women are discriminated against and marginalized at every level of the society whether it is social participation, political participation, economic participation, access to education, and also reproductive health care. Women are found to be economically very poor all over India. A few women are engaged in services

and other activities. So, they need to. economic power to stand on their own leys on part with men.

**Dhanya John (2015)** on her study "Women empowerment through various schemes and analysis", reveals that Kerala's high levels of human development, and gender development and the consequent gender empowerment are the result of its achievements in the field of health and education for women.

**Yasodha Jagadeeswari (2014)** analyses the role of National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) on women empowerment of SHG members in psychological, economic, social and spectacular, managerial skills and their attitudes in Trichy District. This study strongly reveals that women have become confident about their future and have attained a considerable level of self-reliance and thereby increase in the economic conditions after joining the self-help group.

**Reddy (2014)** in his paper "Rural women empowerment and entrepreneurship development in India" deals with the empowerment of rural women through entrepreneurship and the advantages of entrepreneurship among the rural women in India.

**Kenneth and Seena (2012)** studied the impact of various programmes that were introduced in order to raise the women from below poverty line in Puthenvelikkara grama panchayath of Ernakulam Kerala. The questionnaire method was adopted in this study for collecting primary data. The results of the study show the economic independence of the women and their living status.

### 3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To know the awareness level of various kudumbasree project among the members of different units.
2. To know the various activities of respective units.
3. To find out the problems faced by kudumbasree units.

### 4. HYPOTHESIS

**H0:** There is no significant relationship between the activities performed by Kudumbasree units and the

educational qualification of members of Kudumbasree units.

**H1:** There is significant relationship between the activities performed by Kudumbasree units and the educational qualification of members of Kudumbasree units.

## 5. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is conducted in Mundakayam panchayath in Kottayam district focusing on kudumbasree strategies for empowering the women in the panchayath. The main intention of the study is to assess the level of empowerment achieved by women through kudumbasree. Assessment of the different dimensions of empowerment- economic, social and financial is done by studying the impact of various kudumbasree activities. Women empowerment is one of the important objectives of kudumbasree along with poverty eradication. Only few studies have been conducted in this area. Identification of the present situation helps in further improvement in the core areas.

## 6. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Women empowerment is an essential element for national development. Empowerment of women plays a key role in the growth of family as well as society for the social, political and economic development of a country. Kudumbasree plays a vital role in the empowerment of women. Government of Kerala has supported the empowerment of women in many ways. Government has designed a number of policies, implemented programmes and proceeds financial assistance for many years for the empowerment of women. And especially through kudumbasree the State government has thrown a long term action plan for women empowerment. Studying about kudumbasree units will help in making necessary changes in the present scenario and it will add to further development.

## 7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology for the collection and analysis of data has been done as follows:

- **Source of data** Primary data has been used for conducting the study. Data collection was done with the help of a questionnaire.
- **Sample size** The data was collected from 50 respondents of Kottayam district.
- **Sampling Technique** Random sampling technique was used for data collection.
- **Data collection** A questionnaire was designed keeping in mind the objectives of the study.
- **Data analysis** Data analysis was done with the help of charts, graphs and diagrams. Chi square test is used for testing of hypothesis.

## 8. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Every researched study suffers from errors and limitations. Some of these are inherent in the research design while some others become part of the study during various stages of operation. The present study is subjected to the following limitations:

- The reluctance of the respondents to answer the questionnaire was one major limitation.
- The study was limited to only one district. Therefore it may not be applicable to other districts.
- The study is based on a sample of 50 respondents. Demerits of the sampling techniques have affected the study.
- The time taken to complete this study was very limited.

## 9. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Analysis is done with the help of charts, graphs and diagram and Chi square test is used for testing of the hypothesis.

Below given are the major findings of the study:

- 56% of the respondents are educated till high school.
- 40% of members belonged to the age group 41-50.
- Majority of the members in kudumbasree have an experience of more than 10 years.
- The major activities undertaken by kudumbasree is related to agricultural and animal husbandry .

- All respondents are of the opinion that they get awareness class regarding the kudumbasree unit.
- 40% of respondents are of the opinion that they get information from higher officials.
- Most of the kudumbasree units perform agricultural activities.
- It was found that there are activities to help the women in rural areas.
- Majority of the members agree that their saving habits have improved after joining kudumbasree.
- All the respondents have a bank account. Most of the members of kudumbasree unit save their income with the bank.
- Chi square test was used to test the hypothesis and HO was accepted and it was found that there is no significant relationship between activities performed by Kudumbasree units and the educational qualification of members of different units.

## 10. SUGGESTIONS

- ❖ Providing education regarding kudumbasree units will make great change.
- ❖ More training programmes should be included in the kudumbasree unit in related programmes.
- ❖ More activities can be included for women empowerment through kudumbasree unit.
- ❖ Providing loan facilities to the members for starting new activities will help the members to earn more income.

## 11. CONCLUSION

Women empowerment is an essential element for national development. Empowered women are a nation's strength. Kudumbasree offers wide scope for economic empowerment of women. Kudumbasree makes drastic changes in the socio-economic life of women in Kerala generally and particularly rural areas. Success of kudumbasree is not only for individual benefits of women but also for their family. Kudumbasree project boosted the women empowering strategies adopted in Kerala state. Empowering women and improving their social and

economic status are essential ingredients for realising the full potential of economic and political development of the entire society and it ensures a suitable development. So, the study concluded that women can be economically empowered through kudumbasree.