

Quality of work life of women workers in cashew processing units in Cuddalore District

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Abstract

Cashew is one of the important plantation crop introduced in India during the 16th century. The worlds' demand for cashew kernels has been rising steadily for several years in the past. Cashew processing is a labour intensive industry. More than three lakh persons directly employed for whom 95 percent are women from socially and economically backward communities in rural areas. The main objectives of the study is to study the quality of work life among the women workers in cashew processing units in the study area and to identify the various factors affecting quality of work life in the study area. Since the objective of the study is to find out the Quality of work life of women workers in cashew processing units, the researcher has adopted convenient sampling technique for data collection. The researcher has taken 150 samples for the present study.

Keywords: Cashew, shelling, peeling, grading, working condition

Introduction

Human resource plays an important role in the success of any organization, because most of the problems in organizations are human and social rather than physical or technical. A good quality of work life not only attracts new talent but also retain the existing talent. Quality of work life involves job security, good working conditions, adequate and fair compensation and equal employment opportunity all together. Quality of Work Life aims to meet the twin goals of enhanced effectiveness of organization and improved quality of life at work for employees. However, today's employee would not believe in such values of work. Employees work for salary, and continue to work, if the conditions of work are encouraging and pleasant and terms of employment are favorable to them. Women are considered as the major working group of the cashew processing units in the cuddalore district.

Cashew is one of the important plantation crop introduced in India during the 16th century. The worlds' demand for cashew kernels has been rising steadily for several years in the past. Further, being the earliest and the largest supplier of cashew kernels in the world market. India is also enjoys a privileged position in the world. Cashew processing is a labour intensive industry. More than three lakh persons directly employed of which 95 percent are women from socially and economically backward communities in rural areas. Kerala, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Goa, and West Bengal are main cashew producing states in India.

Particularly Kanyakumari, Cuddalore, Puthukottai, Ariyalore are Main cashew producing district of Tamilnadu. Cuddalore district the cashew processing units is mainly located in rural and backward areas. At present more than 1500 cashew processing units in cuddalore district, mostly located at panruti taluk.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the quality of work life among the women workers in cashew processing units in the study area.

2. To identify the various factors affecting quality of work life in the study area.
3. To offer suitable suggestion and conclusion based on the findings of the study.

Methodology

Methodology of research is a way to solve research problems systematically. This study is empirical in nature based on primary and secondary data.

Sample Design

Since the objective of the study is to find out the quality of work life of women workers in cashew processing units in cuddalore district. The researcher has adopted convenient sampling technique for data collection. The researcher has taken 150 samples for the present study.

Tools of Analysis

For the present study, the researcher used percentile analysis and Likert Scaling Technique.

Table 1: Age of the workers

S. No	Age(years)	No. of workers	Percentage
1	Below-20	27	18
2	20 to 30	30	20
3	30 to 40	75	50
4	40 to 50	10	7
5	Above-50	8	5
	Total	150	100.0

Sources: computed from primary data

Age is the important factor to select a work. The distribution of cashew processing units' women workers based on their age is presented in Table 1. It is clear from Table.1. That 75 workers (50 percent) are in the age group 30-40, 30 workers (20 percent) are in the age group 20-30, 27 workers (18 percent) are in the age group below 20, 10 workers (7 percent) are in the

age group 40-50, and only 8 workers (5 percent) are in the age group above 50. It is clear that in most number of cashews processing units women workers are in the age group of 30-40.

Table 2: Marital Status

S. No	Marital Status	No. of workers	Percentage
1	Unmarried	43	28
2	Married	88	59
3	Divorced	4	3
4	Widow	15	10.0
	Total	150	100.0

Sources: Computed from primary data

Marital status is the important factors for selecting a work. The distribution of cashew processing units women workers on their marital status are presented in Table 2. It is clear from Table, 2 that, 88 workers (59 percent) are married, 43 workers (28 percent) are unmarried, 15 workers (10 percent) are widows, 4 workers (3 percent) are divorced. The most number of cashew processing women workers are married.

Table 3: Education of the workers

S. No	Education	No. of workers	Percentage
1	Illiterate	22	14.7
2	Primary	40	26.7
3	Middle School	60	40.0
4	Higher Secondary	28	18.6
5	Graduate	0	0
	Total	150	100.0

Sources: Computed from primary data

Education is the essential social factor. The distribution of cashew processing units women workers on their educational qualification are presented in Table 3. It is clear that Table 3. 60 workers (40 percent) are qualified with middle school education, 40 workers (26.7 percent) are qualified with primary school education, 28 workers (18.6 percent) are qualified with high school education and 22 workers (14.7 percent) are illiterate. It is clear that majority of cashew processing workers are qualified with middle school education.

Table 4: Monthly Income

S. No	Monthly income	No. of workers	Percentage
1	6000 And Below	45	30.0
2	6001-9000	60	40.0
3	9001-12000	30	20.0
4	above 12000	15	10.0
	Total	150	100.0

Sources: Computed from primary data

The income level of the sample workers is given Table 4. It is clear from Table 4 that, 60 workers (40 percent) having monthly income between Rs 6001 to 9000, 45 workers (30 percent) have monthly income at the range of Rs. 6000 and below, 30 workers (20 percent) have monthly income at the range of Rs.9001 to 12000, and only 15 workers (10 percent) have monthly income above Rs. 12000. It is clear that majority of the cashew processing units women workers have monthly income at the range of Rs. 6001 to 9000.

Table 5: Nature of Family

S. No	Nature of family	No. of workers	Percentage
1	Nuclear	130	86.7
2	Joint	20	13.3
	Total	150	100

Sources: Computed from primary data

The division of cashew processing units women workers based on nature of family is presented in Table 5. It is clear from Table 5 that 130 workers (86.7 percent) are living with nuclear family and 20 workers (13.3 percent) are living with joint family. Therefore, the above table indicates that more than (86.6 Percent) of respondents living with nuclear family.

Table 6: Types of Work

S. No	Types of work	No. of workers	Percentage
1	Shelling	65	43.3
2	Peeling	40	26.7
3	Grading	45	30.0
	Total	150	100.0

Sources: computed from primary data

The various types of work performed by the cashew processing units women workers are presented in the Table 6. It is clear from Table 6 that 65 workers (43.3 percent) are directly engaging in shelling of cashew, 45 workers (30 percent) are engaging in grading of cashew, 40 workers (26.7 percent) are engaging in peeling of cashew. It is clear that majority of cashew processing units workers are engaging shelling of cashew.

Table 7: Experience of the Workers

S. No	Experience(years)	No. of workers	Percentage
1	Up To 5 Years	35	23.3
2	6 To 10 Years	55	36.7
3	11 To 15 Years	40	26.7
4	Above 16 Years	20	13.3
	Total	150	100.0

Sources: Computed from primary data

Experience makes a observation of work. Working experience of cashew processing units workers are representing in Table 7. It is clear from Table 7. That, 55 workers (36.7 percent) have been working in cashew processing units from the period of 6 to 10 years, 40 workers (26.7 percent) have been working of cashew processing units for the period of 11 to 15 years, 35 workers (23.3 percent) have been working in cashew processing units for the period of up to 5 years, 20 workers (13.3 percent) have been working cashew processing units for the period of above 16 years. Therefore, the table analysis shows that most of the cashews processing workers have been working in cashew processing units for the period of 6 to 10 years.

Table 8: Disease Affected

S. No	Types of Disease	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Asthma	20	13.3
2	Anemia	10	6.7
3	T.B	10	6.7
4	Skin Disease	65	43.3
5	Back Pain	45	30.0
	Total	150	100.0

Sources: Computed from primary data

The cashew processing units workers are being affected by various types' disease. The classification of sample respondents based on various types of diseases affected is given in Table 8. It is clear from Table 8 that. 65 workers (43.3 percent) are affected by skin disease, 45 workers (30 percent)

are affected by back pain, 20 workers (13.3 percent) are affected by asthma, anemia and T.B have affected both 10 and 10 workers (6.7 percent). It is clear that most number of cashew processing workers have been affected in skin disease.

Table 9: Opinions about the Quality of Work Life

Factors	Very good(5)		Good(4)		Fair(3)		Poor(2)		Very poor(1)		Total		Rank
	No	weight	No	weight	No	weight	No	weight	No	Weight	No	weight	
Wages and salary	0	0	10	40	95	285	30	60	15	15	150	400	VII
Safety and working conditions	15	75	60	240	65	195	10	20	0	0	150	530	VI
Social relevance of working life	35	175	65	260	28	84	17	34	5	5	150	558	II
Opportunity for growth and security	18	90	83	332	30	90	5	10	14	14	150	536	V
Social integration in the work	35	175	60	240	30	90	10	20	15	15	150	540	III
Constitutionalism in the work	55	275	50	200	38	114	7	14	0	0	150	603	I
Opportunities to develop human capacities	33	165	58	232	34	102	14	28	11	11	150	538	IV

Sources: Computed from primary data

The quality of work life about the cashew processing units women workers are analyzed Linkert Scaling Technique. It is clear from Table 9 almost all the workers are highly satisfied with their quality of work life. Even though this study reveals that most of respondent are satisfied with constitutionalism in the work it has been attained first rank (603 points), second rank (558 points) has been attained by social relevance of working life, third rank (540 points) has been attained by social integration in the work, fourth rank (538 points) has been attained by Opportunities to develop human capacities, fifth rank (536 points) has been attained by opportunity for growth and security, sixth rank (530 points) has been attained by Safety and working conditions, and last rank (400 points) has been attained by wages and salaries. It is clear that majority of workers are satisfied with constitutionalism in the work of cashew processing units.

Summary of findings

The scope of the study is to analyze the quality of work life of women workers in cashew processing units in cuddalore district. It is also identifies the important factors tend to affect the quality of work life offered by the cashew processing units to overcome the same.

The findings with regard to the age of the respondents reveal that more number of workers comes under the age group between 30-40. Most number of are women workers are married. More than of women workers are qualified with middle school education. Majority of cashew processing units women workers have monthly income at the range of Rs. 6001 to Rs. 9000. The study reveals that most number of cashew processing units women workers live with nuclear family. Majority of women workers are engaged in shelling of cashew. More than of cashew processing units women workers have been working in processing units from 6 to 10 years. Majority of workers are affected by skin disease. Most number of workers are satisfied with constitutionalism in the work of cashew processing units. In overall cashew processing units women workers are not satisfied with their work.

The researcher found that wages and salaries, safety working conditions is cashew processing units women workers are very low and their quality of work life are very poor.

Suggestions

The present study reveals about the quality of work life of women workers in cashew processing units in cuddalore district.

The researcher grasped up various problems of the workers and summed up- them.

1. The government must fix the minimum wages system in order to provide the needs of the women workers.
2. The government must arrange education of women workers so that, the workers get necessary information.
3. Every cashew processing units should provide oils and soaps, gloves to safeguard of the women workers health. Because lot of women workers affected by skin disease.
4. The government must give necessary training to the workers to increase the efficiency of the women workers.

Conclusion

The study on quality of work life of women workers in cashew processing units of cuddalore district brings out standard of living of women workers, wages and salaries, safety working conditions and problem faced by women workers. Unfortunately, women are facing lot of problem in their work environment. The state and central government can formulate many policies to enhance the welfare of the workers This study suggest to increase the quality of work life of women workers in cashew processing units in cuddalore district.

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