

Cafe Model of AIFHRM in Thrissur Town

Cafe Kudumbashree, a branded eatery operated by Kudumbashree units keeps on serving sumptuous and mouth watering food for the past few years. These catering units operate throughout Kerala with the tagline 'Athithi Devo Bhava' meaning 'the guest is like a God'. There are 2 Cafe Kudumbashree outlets set in the town area of Thrissur district which stands out different because of their mode of operation. Let's study more about how they stand out different.

Cafe Kudumbashree

Cafe Kudumbashree is a sub brand of Kudumbashree (State Poverty Eradication Mission) which aims not only at revolutionizing the hospitality sector in the state but also local economic development providing gainful employment to poor women from Kudumbashree families. More than 1000 units serving ethnic delicacies are functioning across the state of Kerala. The units are run by the poor women and the all profits are shared amongst themselves the owners, who are Kudumbashree members. Kudumbashree Mission provides supports necessary to capacitate them like regular professional training, partial financial support, marketing avenues and interface with banks for raising capital.

Cafe Kudumbashree specializes in ethnic Kerala cuisine, prepared by women from various cultures, traditions and customs. Arguably, it can be considered as the only brand that brings together the diversity of ethnic Kerala cuisine under one

roof. Over the years, Cafe Kudumbashree has established itself as a strong brand in the restaurant sector, through a series of food festivals organized in different parts of the State in association with prestigious institutions such as Malayala Manorama, Mathrubhumi, Kerala Kaumudi, Vanitha, etc. There is nothing to wonder that Cafe Kudumbashree has received the Gold Medal (2013) and Silver medal (2014) in the India International Trade Fair held in New Delhi.

All restaurants initiated by Kudumbashree are branded under a common brand called 'Cafe Kudumbashree' and hence standardized foods and services are provided. Apart from functioning near bus stops, railway stations and secretariat canteens, these units are a strong presence in food festivals and fairs, catering for various occasions in and outside Kerala as well. The brand represents 'quality, pure food served with care by women'. Novel concepts like food court and amenity centres are also coming up. The groups are receiving tremendous support from the local community and the enterprise has helped many women upgrade their status socially and economically.

Cafe Kudumbashree Food Courts at Thrissur Town

The Cafe Kudumbashree Food courts set up at Thrissur town stands out unique because of its different working style. By bringing in a small change they brought out a lot of difference in the sales of the cafe and are making sound income out of it. The Cafe Kudumbashree set up near Shakthan Stand and at Naduvilal near Thrissur round.

The Food Court is run by Adebha Institute of Food Research and Hospitality Management, Thrissur (AIFRHM). Different units are responsible for preparing Breakfast, Morning Snacks, Lunch, Evening Snacks and Dinner respectively. This gives an opportunity for every small cafe units to check their luck.

Adebha Institute of Food Research and Hospitality Management, Thrissur (AIFRHM) started functioning in 2008, during that time they were extending training to the cafe units only.

The Cafe Kudumbashree concept was pioneered by the Thrissur District Mission in 2008, in order to improve the conditions of canteen/ catering units operated by Kudumbashree members.

The idea of using the service of different cafe units for different types of food was evolved from within the members itself. And later the Food Court at Naduvilal near Thrissur round started functioning in 2014. The cafe starts at 7 AM and would gets closed by 9 PM in the evening. The bills would be settled by the management in the evening only. During that time, every unit would confirm the amount for which the sales were recorded for each of their items and settle the payments.

The customer wouldn't get a feel that those foods are being served by different units. For the customer, it is only a single brand- Cafe Kudumbashree. If every unit were started as different shops, the cafe might not have got that much attention and sales as well. And for setting up a shop of their own, they would have to face a higher financial burden. It might have made confusion in the minds of customer on choosing the cafe units. This type of cafe set up make a sense of unity among the cafe units itself.

The waiters, those who serve food at these food courts are the staff of Adebha Institute of Food Research and Hospitality Management, Thrissur (AIFRHM). On the successful running of the food court set up at Naduvilal, yet another food court was started by AIFRHM near Shakthan Stand in the very same model. Both the Cafe Kudumbashree units the branded eatery operated by Kudumbashree units have received training from the Adebha Institute of Food Research and Hospitality Management, Thrissur (AIFRHM). The word Adebha itself means 'Athithi Devo Bhava' meaning 'The guest is like a God'.

AIFRHM (Adebha Institute for Food Research and Hospitality Management) provide both technical as well as marketing support to create Kudumbashree canteens and restaurants. They also conduct training sessions on bulk cooking, crisis management, business promotion, accounting and many more.

The units would buy the needed things to prepare the food. The vessels and other utensils needed for them are met by them itself. The cooking gas will also be bought by them. The bills are settled every day when the cash counters are closed. The main feature of the Cafe Kudumbashree Food Courts is that the customers can see the cooking areas with their eyes. Other than ethnic food varieties the food court also offers special exclusive varieties are also available there. Every member of the units are making maximum income out of the food courts.

Scope of this Model

The cafe model implemented by AIFRHM has got much relevance that it could be replicated by other cafe units as well, even the ones from other districts too. By sharing a common platform, they could get an opportunity to attract the

customer towards their own food items. As the customer doesn't understand that each of those units is different, they remain as a big brand in the eyes of the customer with many different sessions offering different food varieties.

Besides bringing a handsome income for them, they were now able to work as a well-knit group of enterprising people, backed by the Kudumbashree network.

The Kudumbashree Cafe programme started off in Thrissur district in 2009-10 to improve the conditions of canteens and catering units under the district Kudumbashree mission. The formation of an institute for food research and hospitality management has made it easy for the women entrepreneurs to have an in-house expert in marketing and managing the restaurants. The model put forward by the Thrissur District Mission could be replicated by other districts as well.