

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Labour is considered as all human resources available to society for use in the process of production¹. It includes all mental and physical efforts exerted in the production of goods and services. The active participation of labour is seen in all spheres of production, in all types of industries, modern or traditional, all over the world. In the traditional industry the powerful influence of labour is widely acknowledged. Labour power is a term used by Karl Marx to describe the commodity which workers sell to capitalists. Adam Smith maintained that the only source of wealth is production resulting from labour and resources. He also pointed out that increased production is possible only through division of labour and specialisation.

Leiter mentions that labour economics deals with the characteristics of the labour market, with the classification and analysis of labour problems and with the development and role of trade unions².

From the viewpoint of economic analysis Labour Economics reminds us of the primary study about the nature and determinants of pay and employment. It emphasises the role of institutions which play a significant role in determining the pattern and the speed of adjustment in the labour market.

In the production process human resource is utilised in some way or the other. Labour as a factor of production has a qualitative difference from the other factors of production. It has certain attributes necessitating a separate study, considering its role

¹ David W. Pearee: 'Dictionary of Modern Economics', Mac.Millan press Ltd., 1983 p.p 241.

² Robert D. Leiter: *Labour Economics and Industrial Relations*, Baunes and Noble, INC, 1959, .p.p.13.

as an activating factor of other factors of production. We have in the present study concentrated our attention upon labour in traditional Handicrafts Industries of Kerala with particular reference to Thrissur District.

Labour intensivity is very high in Handicrafts industry, it has got prominent role in the production activity. The uniqueness of Handicraft Labour from other types of labour lies in its aesthetic and artistic values. This labour also requires special skill, talent and taste. Handicrafts labour has to be given a special importance considering the fact that this industry fetches valuable foreign exchange and also provides employment to about half lakh persons in Kerala. Besides, Handicrafts labour exhibits our true traditional culture and heritage.

Mill has rightly remarked about the requisites of production which are two, labour and appropriate natural objects³. When labour is interacted with indigenous materials, like wood, screw pine leaves, clay, bamboo etc., we get a variety of products used in our day to day life. India being a highly populated nation supplies various kinds of labour. From time immemorial, the labour connected with the traditional industries of India and especially Kerala is having a wide global reputation. The rich labour of craftsmen and the artisans were transformed into the attractive craft forms and artworks widely seen through out the country from time immemorial. Handicrafts industry with the least interference of machines, expresses the true traditional labour of India. The importance of Handicrafts industry and Handicraft Labour was recognised by Father of the Nation, Mahtma Gandhi, decades ago.

Handicrafts Industry Labour in India and particularly that of Kerala, falls under the following six categories, namely Hbuse hold Handicrafts Labour, Curio labour, making of Musical Instruments, crafting of goods of veneration, Labour involved in the making of articles used in festivals, and Handicraft Labour involved in the making of goods for classical arts.

³ J. S. Mill; *Principles of Political Economy with some of their applications to social philosophy*. Augustus M. Kelley Book seller, New York 1961, p. p 22

The focus of our attention is upon the Household Handicraft Labour involved in the making of goods like mat, pots, baskets and furniture used for household purposes. We have excluded the labour aspects of other craft forms for the greater clarity and precision in the present work.

1.1 Significance of the study

Study of this kind deserves special attention since labour is an integral component of any economic activity. The study is a labour oriented one which is focussed on the different dimensions of labour associated with a traditional industry like Handicrafts Industry which is considered as the oldest industry in our country. Labour in Handicrafts Industry deserves special significance since it requires special skill, talent and taste. Handicrafts Labour is popular in India and else where because of its uniqueness and aesthetic skill.

Indian Handicrafts enables us to get valuable foreign exchange for our country and it also provides employment to large sections of the people. Thus, Handicrafts Labour has a micro as well as a macro significance. Handicrafts Labour is highly catalytic in local as well as national level development. A study related to this area is helpful for the policy makers in chalking out suitable policies benefiting the industry as well as the labourers.

1.2 Review of literature

The Handicraft Industry, a traditional one, is the oldest industry in India, especially in Kerala. Few attempts have been made by the economists to study the labour aspects of this industry. Literature connected with the Handicrafts Industry can be broadly grouped in the following manner;

- a) Literature related with the marketing aspects of the Handicrafts products.
- b) Attempts related with the working of the co-operative society.
- c) Literature related with problems and prospectus of the Handicrafts industry.

The need for winding up the dormant, co-operative societies in the state and reviving the existing handicraft societies was the main recommendation made by the state Department of Industries and Co-operation. This recommendation was based on a survey regarding the working of Handicrafts societies in the state.

The study conducted by Pillai (1965) emphasised the uniqueness and quality of Handicrafts products of Kerala, he suggested the formation of Handicrafts co-operative societies and their proper management for giving new vigour and prosperity to the industry.

The focus of attention given by Menon (1978) was on the quality decline of Handicrafts industry due to foreign rule. Menon also observed about the positive aspects of interaction of the craftsman with the different civilizations and opined that this interaction helped craftsmen to evolve exquisite designs and patterns of various handicrafts. Menon's methodological frame was mainly based on the secondary data of the pre-independence era.

Myrdal's (1968) treatment was on the adverse effect of modern mechanised industries on cottage and Handicrafts Industries. He expressed the concern regarding the unhealthy competition between modern mechanised industries and Handicrafts industries. The study recommended for a strong organisational co-operative set up to ensure healthy competition. Myrdal argued for government protection to limit the competition by the modern industries over cottage industries.

The working group argued about the urgent need for developing and protecting the handicrafts industry through a cooperative base which in turn is essential for the sustainability of the craftsmen in the country.

Kamat (1986) stressed the need for eliminating the intermediary exploitation of the craftsmen and suggested a co-operative marketing system for the handicrafts

products. His method of analysis was primarily based on the observation on the small handicrafts producers.

Ray (1986) analysed matters related to the exports or import of handicraft products. He emphasised on the strong participatory role in importing necessary inputs for handicrafts industry.

Thaimoni (1987) has dealt with the defective sides of co-operative marketing.

Mane (1987) in his study, pointed out that the artisans are not properly organised in their various activities, which is revealed in the meagre membership in the artisans co-operative society. He also pointed out that these artisans are unaware of the need for mutual co-operation and understanding. He opined that the major problems of public and co-operative handicrafts marketing are lack of quality, lack of proper time schedule in receiving order, and more over production without taking into account the market potentiality of the products.

Samuel Kutty (1992) highlighted that crafts is man's first technology, the technology of handicrafts cater to the everyday needs of people belonging to all classes for items which combined utility and beauty.

Sinha (1993) felt that almost every Indian Handicraft has a constant and boundless demand in foreign and home market. He also prescribes for the speedy identification of the real needs of the marketing society.

Keshshully (1994) through his work attempted to convince the negative influence of imports over Indian Handicrafts products. He acknowledged that the Handicrafts industry is capable of producing high profile goods with a low capital investment.

Ray (1986) in his study observes that although Handicrafts products are helpful in earning valuable foreign exchange, the artisans and craftsman are trapped in a state of poverty.

Rao and Rao (1995) highlighted the view that co-operative societies are highly helpful in solving many of the problems faced by the artisans and craftsmen.

Sandria (1997) pointed out that the Handicrafts industry is on a difficult situation due to the lack of infrastructural facilities. And he adds that if it is adequately provided, the massive potential of handicrafts industry can be well utilised.

Khatai (1996) promulgated that entrepreneurial activity in the handicrafts industrial sector is still meagre to living out considerable movement towards progress and prosperity.

Reddy (1998) emphasised the developmental objective of Handicrafts industries to absorb surplus rural labour force in non-agricultural occupations to reduce regional disparities and promote rural employment.

Murthy (1998) in his study showed the importance of rural industrialisation especially Handicrafts industry in the sense that it provides subsidiary income, helps to distribute the workforce, raises the living standard of the weaker sections, increases the use of local source and promotes creative talent.

The study conducted by Jain (1986) regarding the progress of Handicrafts Industry during 1955-85 highlights that the incremental employment in the period was lower relative to increase in production and exports. He also pointed out that large scale mechanisation is a great threat to the development of the Handicrafts Industry. Because of its steadily losing ground, in spite of all efforts to preserve them, he also stresses that the craftsmen are hard to work sweating away for the economy and it is the time for the policy maker to lift his little finger in their favour.

Menon's (1978) study was mainly regarding the hereditary nature of Handicrafts Labour and he took note on the recent trends of the entry of various communities to this field.

Gurpur's (1992) attempt was sociological. He propounded that handicraft ensure brotherhood and co-operation in a society which also ensures social harmony. He expressed that crafty wood works create many self-employment opportunities particularly for women. It has the advantage of less investment and indefinite possibilities for the Indian rural population.

The different dimensions of contract labour was the focus of study made by Rao (1998).

Iyyer (1999) in his study mentioned that the cottage industries are mainly dominated by backward labour class, and raw material scarcity is the main problem faced by this industry.

Subrahmaniam (1994) noted that an increasing dominance of handicrafts is an out come of its orientation to exports and scattered domestic markets.

Historical aspects of handicrafts, especially pottery, was the main focus of attention given by Nayak and Manivannan (1998). Besides, they have also made an attempt to define handicraft in the context of India's cultural heritage.

Kathuria (1986) has undertaken a case study to examine the trends in the export of Indian handicrafts and opined that this industry is among the most efficient foreign exchange earners in our economy.

Mane (1987) examined that only a small percentage of handicraft products are marketed through the public agencies, rest is handled by private traders. Mane highlighted the lack of attention given by the governmental institutions in attending to the essential needs of artisans and craftsmen.

Sreerangi (1987) critically evaluates the policy benefits which accrue to the craftsmen and artisans. He found that all these measures are unsuccessful in controlling the exploitation of the artisans and the craftsmen.

Bell (1964) observed that though marketing channels are commonly regarded as a variable aspect for marketing of the manufactures, too often, channel relationship does not receive due attention, since they involve matters that are outside the production limits.

Antony (1986) revealed that the status and the role of marketing channel members, the type of institutions and the number of stages determine the structure of marketing channels.

Parashwar (1969) stresses about the importance of marketing channels for the smooth flow of handicraft goods.

Martin Zober (1964) explained that there is no such thing as the single channel of distribution that works best for any specific product, especially handicrafts.

The main theme of the study done by Dak (1989) is about the growing world demand for decorative handicraft products.

Maynard and Beckman (1952) conducted their study connected with grouping products, packing, storage, transportation and also other needy input-output marketing services.

Douglas (1975) emphasised the length of the channel as the function of the characteristic of the product of its demand and supply and of the cost structure of the marketing firms that integrate the demand and supply.

Gopalan (1966) opined marketing efficiency in marketing co-operatives can ensure the produce members to get reasonable price for his produce by reducing the price spread between the producer and the consumer.

Sharma (1981) rightly remarked that improving the efficiency of marketing through co-operatives means leaving the cost per amount of moving products from the producer to the consumer and without hurting anyone involved in the process to the extent of forcing him out.

Suraj (1982) also remarked that private traders have played a dominant role in the field of Handicrafts marketing.

Upadhyay (1973) has made an attempt to go into dimensions like designing, quality control and marketing of handicraft industries.

Wright (1959) has dealt with the intellectual craftsmanship and he opined that the sociological conditions of the craftsmen has got a big role to play in framing the craftsmanship of a craftsmen.

Although much data have been churned out on traditional handicrafts industry, a few attempts have been made by the economists to study the labour aspects of the handicrafts industry. Therefore, policy makers and the planning authorities simply rely on the statistics collected for general purpose although they cannot carry information to indicate the economic dialectics, especially the labour related affairs of the handicrafts industry. The present study therefore focuses its attention on “Economics of Labour in the Traditional Handicraft Industry of Kerala”, giving a particular emphasis on Thrissur District.

1.3 Methodology

The research is undertaken with a particular focus on labour in the traditional handicrafts industry of Kerala, giving a special emphasis on household handicrafts labour in Thrissur area. For this purpose we have selected four household handicraft forms which have a great representation for the whole state of Kerala. Thrissur, the cultural capital of Kerala has a great concentration of various craft forms, artisans, and craftsmen. This is the reason why we have selected Thrissur as our sample District.

The objectives are realised mainly with the help of primary data collected exclusively through interviews, discussions, conversations with craftsmen and crafts women based on a pre-tested questionnaire.

The secondary data are also used for realising our objectives. Participatory Research Appraisal was widely applied while collecting data from the sample locations in the District. Instead of collecting data from a particular area of the district, we have randomly selected the sample labour units from the three Taluks, namely, Thrissur, Kodungallur, and Mukandapuram.

Before starting the data collection sample areas were clearly plotted in Thrissur District Map. Besides the general mapping of the District, we have also done particularly the mapping of the different villages to which these sample households belong. Identification of the sample households were done through visiting important marketing centres of the district such as in Kodungallur, Chalakudy, Chavakkad, Thrissur and Irinjalakuda.

Secondary data available from SISI, District Industries Centre, Surabhi, Kairali and state Handicrafts Development Corporation were also utilised for this purpose.

For analysing the first objective, we have attempted to correlate labour with the following variables like gender, caste and community and age.

The second objective of the study is to analyse the various types of inputs used in Handicrafts other than labour. Data connected with the inputs like raw materials money and other agents of production, are gathered from the field survey as well as from the secondary data.

For studying the socio-economic aspects of craftsmen and crafts women, we have taken indicators like education, housing conditions, saving and income. Inflow and outflow method is also used for assessing the economic conditions of the labourers in the traditional Handicraft forms.

While realising the various objectives we have used mathematical statistical and economic tools like Average method, Percentage method, Bar diagrams and Pie diagrams.

Just like any other research in social science we have also relied upon the logical reasoning, assumptions and observations, for the realisation of the various objectives.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study has been conducted with the following main objectives:

1. To identify the labour participation in the four major sample household handicraft forms.
2. To identify and analyse the various types of inputs other than labour and also the technology used in the household handicrafts.
3. Assessment of the socio-economic aspects of craftsmen and crafts women in the selected household handicrafts.

1.5 Limitations

The greatest limitations of the present work is its inability to go in to the labour related aspects of all the forms of handicrafts mainly because of the short span of the study. Absence of documented source material related with Handicrafts labour is another serious limitation of the study. The practical difficulty in collecting primary data due to the scattered location of the household posed another problem for the speedy completion of the project. Till now, there is no proper account of different handicraft forms existing in and around the state, naturally, there was confusion regarding the selection of sample Handicraft forms.

1.6 Chapterisation

The text of the project report is discussed in six chapters, which are outlined below. The report opens with an introduction, significance of the study, review of earlier works, objectives of the study, methodology and limitations of the study.

The second chapter gives a coverage regarding the different forms of Handicrafts in India in general and Kerala in particular.

The third chapter analyses labour participation in household handicrafts on the basis of caste and community, gender and age.

Technology and inputs other than labour is the focus of attention in the fourth chapter.

The fifth chapter examines the socio-economic conditions of craftsmen and crafts women related with household handicraft.

The report is concluded in the sixth chapter with a summary, findings and policy prescriptions.



CHAPTER II

LABOUR, LABOURERS AND DIFFERENT FORMS OF HANDICRAFTS IN INDIA AND KERALA

A traditional industry can be one which transmits the knowledge of its production technique and the secret of skill from one generation to the other, especially by word of mouth, tale, belief and customs.

One cannot discuss the role of traditional industries in India's development without recalling the names of the two principal exponents of the village industries, the Mahatma and Mahalanobis. However, their notion of what role these traditional industries should play varied due to differences in their respective approaches to development. Gandhi stood for greater autonomy of the village republics through their self-sufficiency and for this he suggested a greater role for traditional industries. Gandhiji's campaign for the revival of Khadi and other traditional activities beginning in the 1920's was based on the belief that this would help increase employment opportunities in villages, thereby stemming the drift to urban areas and to increase the activity of low cost consumer goods for villages.

Mahalanobis commented that the chief aim of planning in India, in the first instance, must be to solve the problem of unemployment as quickly as possible. Combining this imperative with Nehru's approach towards industrialisation, Mahalanobis diverted scarce capital to build a modern industrial base for India and diverted abundant labour to the traditional techniques for production of consumer goods. This was helpful in getting a prominent place in the national plan for the traditional industries – Khadi, Handlooms and Handicrafts.

Even now traditional industries have significant place in rural industrial scenario. Papola observes that a large part of the rural industrial structure in most of the states and regions continues to consist of Traditional Industries catering to the local

consumption needs and to the small production requirements of agriculture; these are carried out in the form of craft based on artisan skills⁴.

The Traditional Industries have been making a notable contribution to tackle the problem of unemployment. The traditional industries or decentralised industries account for three fourths of the number of persons in the manufacturing sector. In 1987, the total estimated employment in manufacturing was about 25 million of which the decentralised sector contributed to about 19 million.⁵

2.1 Labour in Indian Handicraft forms

In the self contained village economies of India, the craftsmen had a vital role. His opinion was based with other members of the community and his consideration was in terms of kinds and status. His labour was love and dedication to those who were a part of his total life. The craftsmanship was not an economic compulsion but a sacred duty - Dharma⁶

A handicraft labour is the work of a craftsman who uses his skill and often traditional technique, his own tools, materials and designs and depending only on his own labour and whatever assistance he can get from his family⁷.

According to Ramayana Handicrafts labour in India is associated with the labour of the following craft associations.

1. Jewellers
2. Potters
3. Ivory carvers
4. Perfumers

⁴ L.C.Jain “ *The Role of Traditional Industries in India’s development*”, *Economy, Society and development*. Sage publications; New Delhi. 1991: P.P. 219.

⁵ L.C. Jain *Op. Cit* p.p. 218.

⁶ M.N.Upadhyay, *The Economics of Handicrafts Industry*, S.Chand and company pvt Ltd. New Delhi 1973, p.p.4.

⁷ *Indian Handicrafts Publication Division: Ministry of information and Broadcasting , Govt: of India . p.p.8.*

5. Gold smiths
6. Weavers.
7. Brass Workers
8. Painters
9. Musical Instrument makers.
10. Armourers.
11. Leather workers.
12. Black Smiths.
13. Copper smiths
14. Carpenters.
15. Makers of figures
16. Cutters of crystal
17. Glass makers
18. In-Layers

2.2 Handicrafts Industry in India

The traditional handicrafts industry belonged to an unorganised sector. A clear-cut demarcation of the handicrafts sector seems to be rather difficult task. The basic characteristics of the handicrafts are:

- i. The most important work should be done by hand.
- ii. The resultant product should have some artistic or aesthetic value.⁸

Handicrafts may be found either in the form of a cottage industry or in the form of small scale industry.

“A Handicrafts Industry is a cottage or a small scale industry the products of which are artistic in character and require skill and craftsmanship in their manufacture.”⁹

2.2.1 Indian Handicrafts

⁸ B.D, Khale, *A survey of Handicrafts in south Mysore*, Institute of Research, Dharwar 4, 1963, p.p.7

⁹ [ibid. p.p. 2-3.

Flights of fancy, tempered with traditional fervour, plus a utilitarian view of aesthetic design - all these go into the making of the Handicrafts of India. From the Kohl-eyed doll to the ornate elephant, to the silver filigree and the flowers of papier mache . . . the imaginative skill of the craftsmen is limitless. Those who love India and recognise its artistic wealth, have sought to protect the integrity of the crafts. Thus, even while new markets open up - necessitating the combination of utilitarian trends with aesthetic values, the creative urge remains rooted in age-old traditions. Here, machines have not replaced loving, caring, human hands, although for a time it seemed extinction would be certain. But a tradition of thousands of years cannot be lightly cast aside.

Handicraft is rightly described as the craft of the people. In India it is not an industry as the word is commonly understood, for the produce is also a creation symbolising the inner desire and fulfilment of the community. The various pieces of handicrafts whether metal ware, pottery, mats or wood-work, clearly indicate that while these are made to serve a positive need in the daily life of the people, they also act as a vehicle of self-expression for they reveal a conscious aesthetic approach. At the same time, they manifest in their structure the principles of *silpa sastra*, the ancient scientifically evolved formulae and regulations for manufacturing.

Crafts in India grew on two demands: the comparatively plain objects of utility which served the needs of the common people mostly in or around the centres of production, and the more sophisticated products upon which much time and labour were spent and which catered to the aristocracy and mobility of the land or were exported as choice gifts and objects of art.

Though complicated in the matter of production involving numerous processes, each craft is individualistic and local in appeal. For example, hand- printing in Rajasthan is quite different from printing in Andhra Pradesh. Crafts differ from region to region. They have their traditional ways of production, their own designs, colour

and individual shapes and patterns. The tools that produce these Handicrafts cannot be measured through spectacular structures of noisy machines. But the crafts speak with silent and subtle beauty. Our beautiful, conceptually pure handicrafts have survival, and they thrive, not only in India but all over the world, where they are admired, bought and displayed.

The following paragraphs will say something about the crafts themselves- not all the thousand crafts that add the grace and grandeur of the old world to enliven modern homes but only about some of the more prominent ones.

2.2.2 Carpets and Wamdhas

The deep pile Indian hand-knotted carpets come in magnificent colours with designs oriental and exotic, uniquely modern. The sizes and prices are designed to cater to the needs of the modern markets all over the world.

The Indian carpet is but a true expression of the workers' simple philosophy, his sensitive perception of nature and its changing moods convincingly translated into the craft. It is also a ramification of a set design composed of myths, legends, romances, vegetation all round; embossed designs, rangoli patterns, ancient mural designs, folk paintings from Bihar, Hasham Khani designs from Dacca, designs from Kirmab, Tabriz, Adribil and Bukharal etc. In addition, there is a whole range of Indian designs evolved in recent years. The colour schemes of the carpets are fantastic and workmanship, superb. Carpets as fine as 600 knots or as coarsely handsome as 20 knots to every square inch, are woven.

Important carpet producing centres in India are Mirzapur, Bhadohi, Gopiganj, Khamaria and Agra in Uttar Pradesh, Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir, Amritsar in Punjab; Panipat in Haryana; Jaipur and Bikaner in Rajasthan; Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh, Eluru and Warangal in Andhra Pradesh, Chennai and Walajapet in Tamilnadu and Obra in Bihar.

Eighty percent of the production is from centres in Uttar Pradesh and ten percent from Kashmir. The industry employs nearly two lakh persons. Eighty five percent of the total production is exported to countries like the U.K, U.S.A, Canada, Australia and the continent.

The Namdah Handicrafts is allied to the carpet weaving industry of Kashmir. The namdah is a type of hand made felt which is finer, embroidered with cotton thread, they may be oblong round or oval in shape.

Indian carpets are available in different sizes and varying lengths of pile, which may be as low as 1/5 of an inch as in Kashmir carpets or as high as 7/8 of an inch as in the Indo-Berber variety.

2.2.3 Art Metals

Metal work in India goes back to the third millennium B.C. The earliest bronze figures found at Mohanjodaro reveal a high degree of skill in this art nearly 5000 years ago.

A wide range of metal wares in both traditional and contemporary designs is made by devoted craftsmen using different techniques and styles.

Engraved brass ware with shapes and motifs inspired by the leaves, flowers, and landscapes of the country come mainly from Moradabad and Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh and Jaipur in Rajasthan. The popular items are Aftava or traditional vine jugs of the Omar Khayyam type, flower vases, table tops, trays, candle stands, dinner gongs, bells, carving sets, fruit dishes, plate stands, cigarette cases, ash-trays, beer mugs, calendars, Chandeliers, paper weights and other house hold and decorative items.

The brass and bell metal images produced by the tribal people living in eastern and Central India, known as Dhokra work, have a character of their own. Their

hollow- cast archetypal images mirror the primordial dynamism of pre-historic tradition.

2.2.4 Wood Craft

Wood carving is an important traditional industry of India. It is generally done on a limited number of species of wood, suitable for the purpose. Various forms on different type of wood, elaborate carving with extra ordinary precision and accuracy are the characteristic features of Indian wood work. Images and panels, architectural elements, furniture, utensils and different types of decorative pieces in wood are produced all over India.

Free, bold and deeply under cut designs and motifs of Uttar Pradesh are best represented by the Saharanpur carvings. Low stools, mirror frames table tops and elegantly designed modern furniture are specialities of Punjab while rich, intricate and variegated designs in raised, engraved or undercut on seasonal walnut articles of Kashmir. The Kashmir carvers produce wall plaques, pedestal and table lamps, articles of hollow pattern, carved furniture and other items. Bel Khudao (carving which represents creepers) and Phul Khudao (carving which represents flowers or rosettes) designs on the utility articles of Madhya Pradesh and intricate designs of chests of drawers, tables and so far from Maharashtra are known for their freshness in traditional designs. Sankheda, the lacquered furniture from Gujarat, is fascinating and colourful. Three dimensional and relief icons, various types of panels, cups, saucers, forks etc. are specialities of Andhra Pradesh produced mainly in Bhongir and Udaigiri. Nirmal furniture are also the pride of Andhra Pradesh. Virudhunagar, Madhurai and Thanjavur wood carvers in Tamil Nadu produce decorative as well as utility articles in wood.

The art of wood carving as practiced by the hill tribes of Assam, Manipur, Tripura and Nagaland is entirely different in its nature from other regions. The symbolic representations of supernatural elements made in wood and bamboo are very

interesting. Carved figures, furniture cabinets, jewellery boxes, chests, lamp-stands produced in West Bengal and Bihar are known for their simple yet beautiful designs.

Delicate and ornamental objects are produced in sandalwood. Sandalwood carving has grown to a considerable extent in Mysore, Kerala, Madras, Rajasthan and West Bengal. The articles are invariably carved with designs of extremely involved and elaborate patterns, consisting of intricate interlacing of foliage and scroll work.

2.2.5 Toys and Dolls

A roll-call of the present day toys and dolls of India would present an endless variety in their style and creation to the extent of satisfying the curiosity of a child's mind. They cover all aspects of life such as those representing popular characters of Indian epics and folk-lore, people of different professions, realistic prototypes of birds and animals and the like.

Unlike the toys of the West, Indian toys are rarely mechanical and are mostly representations of life; but they are so made as to stimulate the vibrant fancies of growing minds. With brilliant hues and beautiful dresses, they are made of light wood and baked clay or cloth. The wooden toys of Banaras, the clay toys of Kondapalli, the cloth dolls of Poona and Bihar, the stuffed animal toys of Madhya Pradesh, the terracotta horse figures of West Bengal and clay and pith dolls of Krishna Nagar, the lacquered toys of Channa Patna in Mysore are a few among the wide range of wooden articles.

2.2.6 Costume Jewellery

Elegant simplicity, superb craftsmanship and rare value characteristic Indian Jewellery. Kashmir brings rings, Chokers, bracelets and ear rings made of blackened silver and polished brass into which skilled craftsman meticulously set semi-precious stones. Also available are tigerstone, coral, turquoise, jade in stained pink, amber and green, reflecting the beauty of sunset, flowers and trees of the valley of Kashmir. For

ivory carving, tusks are mainly imported from East Africa to be curved into earrings, necklaces and bangles. The miniature designs in ivory are in a way adaptations from the intricate tracery carved by Persian Craftsman in marble for the courts of the Mughal Emperors.

Rajasthan sends brightly coloured lace bangles light and delicately chased, the bangles in their rainbow hues bring a dash of colour other bangles have small beads and mirror embedded in the lace which sparkle with every turn of the wrist. India's coastal areas are known for a variety of silver articles; from Maharashtra, heavy pieces for those who fancy the spectacular; from Orissa, dainty filigree in leaf, star and flower patterns. Delhi prides in heavy silver bracelets, necklaces rings and locket with delicately etched traditional patterns the paisley leaf, the lotus, the almond and the mango. Hyderabad is famous for its cuff-links, buttons and ear-rings of silver inlaid in oxidised black metal.

2.2.7 Textiles

Indian textiles of merit had greatly captured world market for well nigh two thousand years.

The art of fine weaving, the varied processes of painting and dyeing and the art of hand and loom embroideries were perfected by the Indian people through ages.

Brocades from Varanasi and Surat' Patola from Ahmedabad; Ikkat from Orissa; Baluchar from West Bengal; Chanderi from Madhya Pradesh, Kornad from South India are specialities of Indian fabrics offering quaint and beautiful designs of various patterns. Colour and design are the distinguishing marks of Indian fabrics. The forms of Indian costume have undergone changes gradually and imperceptibly introducing an element of freshness all the time.

The enhancement of the beauty of the fabrics through various processes such as weaving, dyeing, printing, embossing and embroidery is of considerable importance in

Indian costumes, especially in the sari. All these beautiful handicrafts have been practised in India for centuries, and evidence to this effect is also abundantly available. The tie and dye textiles of Jamnagar in Saurashtra, Kota and Jaipur in Rajasthan and Madurai in Tamilnadu are famous for their elegant designs and colours. Even at Madurai, it is the women of the Saurashtra community who are mainly responsible for the tie and dye part of production, which is a unique mode in textile decoration, and is one of our ancient arts. It has survived the ever-changing fashion and has retained its popularity. Both cotton and silk are used in the production of tie and dye textiles and it is not the fineness of the cloth, but the attractive and pleasing designs, and the use of appealing colour make them popular. The tie and dye fabrics are popularly known as Bandhni in Saurashtra, Choondri in Rajasthan, and Choongdi in Madurai. Fine line or silk like chiffon, georgette, Cambric, longcloth, pure white mull with or without jari border are used for tie and dye.

2.2.8 Embroidery and Shawls

Indian embroidery takes its inspiration from nature and the products of various regions reflects the colours of the flora and fauna of that area.

Designs in Indian embroidery are formed on the basis of the feature and design of the fabric and the stitch. The dot and the alternate dot, the circle, the square, the triangle and the permutations and the combinations of these go to make up the design. Religious motifs such as gopurams, tulsi plant, temple door ways etc. are all equally popular.

Every medium has been utilised. Embroidery on leather, velvet, net and silks is found all over the country and recently, even raffia articles have come to be embroidered.

Specimens of Kashmir embroidery provide a riot of colour and excellent workmanship. The designs are balanced and depict the flora and fauna of the area.

The chenar leaf, the grape, the cherry and the plum , the almond and the apple blossoms, the lily the lotus and saffron flower, along with the parrot , canary are depicted in natural colours.

The rumals of chamba are worked in simple stitch depicting the Krishnalila Ras, legends of rages and raginis and other religious objects. The outlines are in dark silk and whole work is done in ordinary running stitch, the gaps on both sides being filled in.

Sind embroidery is influenced by Balulchistan and Punjab in stitch, design and colour, but it makes lavish use of mica pieces attached to the cloth with button-hole stitches.

Kutch uses mica pieces on a lavish scale but, unlike Sind which uses button whole stitches, this area employs chain stitch as the basic stitch.

Chaikan embroidery is worked usually in white cotton on a white base of muslin. It is similar to the linen embroidery of the west. The centres of Chikan is the 'Jali' in which the net effect is produced to drawing out threads but by making holes in the fabric and tightening the ends to give the cloth the appearance of net.

Kantha embroidery of West Bengal utilises waste material pieces of cloth are sewn on the base by simple running stitches which run in several directions to form motifs.

2.2.9 Zari

The stitches are extremely fine and worked with dexterity and skill, the embroidery starting from the centre and proceeding to the outer edges in a circular fashion.

South India produces excellent laces which are mostly made in missionary centres. They are used for table linens and also for making articles of personal wear, specially gloves.

A vast variety of shawls is hand-crafted in India. These are mostly of wool though cotton and silk shawls are also produced. The famous pashmina shawls of Kashmir artisans made of the finest wool have a luxuriant silky texture.

Indian shawls depend of ornamentation either on embroidery or on wearing of the design into the material. The Kashmir embroiderer takes great pride in embroidering shawls which have a pattern identical on both sides. The motifs used for embroidery or weaving in shawls follow Indian tradition the elephant, the mango, the lotus etc. narrow, stoles and men's scarves are also made in the same design as shawls.

India has long been known for its golden thread, zari and its various products. The well known product of the Indian zari industry, besides the gold and silver thread, are the embroidery materials like stars and spangles zari embroidered sarees, evening bags, purses, footwear, belt, zari textiles and the world famous brocades and saris.

The brocades and saris of Varanasi (Banaras) in Uttar Pradesh are renowned for using gold and silver wire as a special weft twisted along with the silk.

To keep pace with the present –day demands the zari craftsmen have successfully made the transition from traditional techniques to modern ones, but retaining the emphasis on complete self reliance. The principal centres of zari manufacture in India are Surat and Varanasi.

Agra, Lucknow, Bareilly and Delhi specialise zari embroidery, zardosi articles, laces, hand bags, belts, shoe uppers etc. The zari badge fabricated manually by skilled craftsmen from Bareilly and Varanasi is a popular item of export. Zari threads are used extensively in handloom and powerloom which are manufactured on a big scale all over India and specially in Paithan, Bhopal, Thiruchirappally, Bangalore and Chennai.

2.2.10 Ivory

Among the most intricate pain-taking crafts of the country is ivory-carving. Various centres in Delhi, Punjab, and Rajasthan, Kerala and Mysore and West Bengal- Specilise in particular types of articles, expressing regional characteristics and artistic influences.

Powder boxes, inlaid jewellery boxes, models, figures of gods and of animals, cuff links, napkin rings, lamp-stands with lovely floral and animal motifs varieties of costume jewellery, ear rings, brooches, book marks and cocktail pins, exquisitely carved are some of the objects of utility and artistic beauty produced by the ivory craftsmen of India.

2.2.11 Pottery

Articles of pottery are in demand through out the country. The products are quite expressive inform and the shape wholesome and true to the material.

Jaipur in Rajasthan has a reputation for pottery. The glazers are mainly blue and turquoise derived from cobalt and copper oxide and is popularly known as Delhi blue pottery. Khurja and Rampur have a similar style of pottery of a distinctive style having raised patterns by the use of thick 'slips' into slight relief. The old traditional shapes of Khurja pottery were vital and beautifully proportioned. Other important centres of pottery in Northern India are Chunar, Azamgarh and Aligarh where a type of interesting black pottery is also made. Some of the ancient potteries of south India are globular or pearshaped ornamented with lines and patterns. South Indian terracottas have reached a very high level of development. Stylised and magnificently modelled terracotta animals are still seen in some villages in south India as also in Bengal and Maharashtra. The popular Bankura horse from Bengal is one of these. In Vellore, a notable type of pottery is made of porous white clay in which a wide variety of wares are produced and glazed mainly in pleasing shades of green and blue.

2.2.12 Stone Craft

Stone craft in India has been in existence for a very long time. From the time of the polished sand-stone Lion capital of Sarnath to the present time, the craft of stone has travelled a long distance. In its course, it flowered, transformed and gave expression to many styles known today as the Maurya, the Gandhara, the Gupta, the Chalukya, the Chola, the Vijayanagra, the Orissa, the Hoyasala, the Mughal, the Indo-Muslim art of the Deccan and the like.

The rock cut caves of Ajanta, Ellora, and Volayagiri; the Chalukyan temple of Virupaksha of Paltudakal; the great temple of Nayaks at Madurai, the Indo-Aryan temple of Bhubaneshwar, Puri and Konark, the sun temple of Modhera, Gujarat or the Chandella temple of Khajuraho -these ageless edifices present an endless variety of exquisite stone carvings.

Today, the stone artisans draw much of their inspiration from these monuments and statues. The glamorous delight of the Taj Mahal in Agra is captured in the marble craft of India. Most of these statues in Orissa show similarity in form and details to the sculptures of Jaganath temple at Puri. The traditional motifs standing Deepalakshmis, Courting apsaras, blossomed lotuses are all adopted as decorative stands for table lamps, ash trays or stone flower vases.

2.2.13 Basketry

Basketry is primarily folk craft. Vast stretches of land in the hills and forests is inhabited by tribal people. Whether in the hilly tracts of Tripura or in the uncut jungles of Assam, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa or in the dense uplands of Kerala, the inhabitants preserve their tradition of basketry to the present day.

Bamboo, cane, grasses and reeds as well as the leaf of coconut and dali palm are being used by the people all over the country from time immemorial to produce items that suit their everyday purpose and satisfy their aesthetic urge. Mats and baskets,

boxes and trays, toys and dolls, costume jewellery and wall hangings of the modern time are products of unbroken tradition carried from the basketry of Neolithic cultures (Circa 5000 B.C).

Men and women from different parts of the country weave fibres made out of grasses for different purposes. They are used for winnowing, carrying, storing, protecting farmers from the sun etc. For sheer cool comfort, pleasing colours and decorative quality, Indian mats stand on their own. In Assam and the mountainous region of the Himalayas, West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, mats are produced in different shades and designs. In Orissa, baskets are woven with geometrical designs. The sultan work of Malabar, Sikki work of Bihar, Willow work of Kashmir, Cane work of Assam and bamboo work of West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa offer an endless choice of superb craftsmanship.

2.2.14. Bone, Shell, and Horn Articles

Bone articles are made mainly after ivory models to fashion table lamps, lamp-stands, jewellery etc. in Agra, Delhi, and Lucknow.

Curios are made out of various types of chanks and shells, such as 'Conch Shells', 'trochurs', 'turbo', 'red milk'. Different colourful items like lamp shades, ash trays, paper weights, agarbathi stands, and jewellery are made from chanks and shells. Rameshwaram, Kanyakumari, Nagarcoil, Kizhakarai and Chennai in Tamil Nadu and Nadia, Murshidabad Bankura, Midnapore and 24 parganas in West Bengal, are major production centres.

Utility articles made out of horn cover a wide variety of items including combs, penholders, napkin, rings, spoons, waling sticks and handles of knives and forks. But the fascinating birds and animals in shining black constitute some of the most popular

items much in demand for interior decoration. West Bengal, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh produce bulk of the horn articles in the country.

2.2.14 Folk Paintings

Colourful designs invariably tinged with mystic belief of the rural folk reveal the traditional aesthetic wage of village India. Madhubani paintings of Bihar, Pata paintings of Orissa, and West Bengal, Nirmal paintings of Andhra Pradesh are only a few from the vast gallery of traditional Indian paintings. The paintings mentioned here may be thematically akin to each other but in form and technique they reveal uniqueness. Epics, Puranas, Krishnaleela etc. are their main sources of inspiration; gods and goddesses are depicted in all possible forms and actions painted in varieties of technique and colour.

2.2.15 Other Crafts

India has a number of other simple and attractive crafts that are now finding their way more and more to modern homes all over the world.

Pitch craft is very popular in West Bengal, and Tamilnadu West Bengal produces various types of decorative articles with delicate workmanship. Images, decorative ornaments of images, and other articles of ritualistic significance have been lately added with various types of toys and dolls. Pitch workers of Tamil Nadu mainly produce beautiful images of gods and goddesses and some toys.

Leather craftsmen of Kashmir, Jaipur, West Bengal produce a number of items including shoes, Morahs (Small stools), purses, bags etc. While Andhra Pradesh craftsmen create coloured leather puppets closely resembling the Indonesian Wayang shadow puppets.

Papier mache products from Kashmir, Saipur, Gwalior, Varanasi, Ujjain, Delhi, Lucknow, Agra and Chennai; table lamps, paper weights, toys etc. in lacquer from

Bihar, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh; Musical instruments from Miraj, Tanjore, Madras, Delhi and Culcutta are some of the important crafts.

In the preceding section we have illustrated different handicrafts forms in India. The compilation of the different handicraft forms was done by All India Handicraft Board¹. Thus, from these secondary sources it is clear that altogether there are mainly eighteen different handicraft forms all over India. The concentration of handicraft labour is more in states like Jammu, U.P, T.N, W.Bengal, Kerala, A.P. and Rajasthan. The state of Kerala is notable in the case of wood carving, ivory carving and basketry. Table 2.1 gives a detailed picture about different handicraft forms concentrated in the different states and centres of the country.

Table 2.1

Handicraft Labour Centres In India

Handicraft Form	State	Centres
Carpets and Namdahs	Uttar Pradesh	Mirzapur, Bhadoli Gopiganj, Khamaria, Agra
	Jammu & Kashmir	Srinagar
	Punjab	Amritsar
	Haryana	Panipat
	Rajasthan	Jaipur & Bikaner
	Madhya Pradesh	Gwalior
	A.P	Elurau & Warangal
Tamil Nadu	Chennai, Walajapet	
Art Metals	U.P	Moradabad, Varanasi
	Rajasthan	Jaipur
	Andhra Pradesh	Hyderabad, Bidar
	Tamil Nadu	Swamimalai,
	Karnataka	Madurai & Madras Bangalore
Wood craft	A.P	Bhongir, Udaigiri
	Tamil Nadu	Virudhu Nagar
	Kashmir	Madurai, Jhanjavur
	Punjab	

¹ *Indian Handicrafts . Published by The Development Commissioner for Handicrafts, All India Handicraft Board, and Govt. of India, Ministry of Commerce.*

Handicraft Form	State	Centres
	Kerala Rajasthan West Bengal Karnataka Assam, Tripura Nagland Manipur	Mysore
Toys and Dolls	Maharashtra Bihar M.P West Bengal Karnataka	Banaras Kondapalli Channapatna in Mysore
Costume, Jewellery	Kashmir Rajasthan Maharashtra Delhi U.P Gujarat Orissa M.P Rajasthan Tamil Nadu Rajasthan Tamil Nadu	Varanasi Surat, Ahmadabad Jamnagar in Saurashtra Kota, Jaipur Madurai Choondri Choongdi in Madurai
Embroidery and Shawls	Kashmir U.P Bihar West Bengal	Chamba Lucknow, Agra, Baggeilly Gaya
Zari	Kashmir U.P Gujarat Delhi M.P Tamil Nadu Karnataka	Varanasi Surat Paithan Bhopal Thiruchirapilly, Chennai Bangalore
Ivory	Delhi, Kerala Punjab, W.Bengal,	

Handicraft Form	State	Centres
	Karnataka	Mysore
Pottery	Rajasthan Delhi Kerala W.Bengal Maharashtra Tamil Nadu	Jaipur Khurja & Rampur Chunar, Azamgarh & Aligarh Vellore
Stone Craft	Maharashtra Tamil Nadu Orissa	Ajantha, Ellora, Udayagiri , Mayakas at Madurai, Bhuvaneshwar, Puri, Konark
	Gujarat	Modhera, Khajuraho
Basketry	Thripura Assam Bengal Bihar, U.P Orissa, Tamil Nadu Kerala Kashmir	Malabar
Bone, Shell, Horn articles	U.P Delhi, A.P, Orissa Tamil Nadu W. Bengal	Agra, Lucknow Rameshwaram, Kanyakumari, Nagarcoil, Chennai, Kizhakarai Nandia, Murshidabad. Bankura, Midnapore
Folk Paintings	Bihar, Orissa, W. Bengal , A.P	
Leather Crafts	Kashmir, A.P Rajasthan Orissa, Delhi M.P U.P Tamil Nadu	Jaipur Gwalior Varanasi, Lucknow, Agra Chennai, Ujjain
Musical Instruments	Tamil Nadu	Miraj, Tanjore, Chennai

Handicraft Form	State	Centres
	Delhi W.Bengal	Delhi Culcutta
Pitch Craft	W.Bengal Tamil Nadu	

Source: Indian Handicrafts, Published by the Development Commissioner for Handicrafts All India Handicrafts Board. Govt. of India. Ministry of Commerce. West Block7, R.K. Puram. New Delhi. 1982.

2.3 The Handicraft forms of Kerala

The handicrafts of Kerala noted for their uniqueness of style, perfection of form and elegance of design form an invaluable part of the life stream of Kerala culture. Utilising mostly the materials available locally, Kerala's crafts men have always sought to meet the needs of the people, and in doing so, have given expression to their aesthetic urges and inherited skill. In the past, these handicrafts developed around temples and palaces and enjoyed the patronage of rulers and feudal chieftains. The end of royalty and the decline in the interest, on the part of the temple authorities, in intricate carvings and mural paintings, led to some kind of stagnation. However, the demand for fancy-cum-utility articles for use as furniture and decoration at home and abroad has created new avenues for the marketing of the products and sustained the traditional industrial arts and crafts from extinction.

The major handicrafts of Kerala are bell-metal casting, Ivory-Horn and Wood carving, mat weaving with kora grass, screw pine leaves and palmyra leaves; Bamboo and Reed weaving, Rattan work, Lace & embroidery work, Lapidary work, coconut shell work, making of cotton caps, art metal ware work, Hand printing of textiles, toy-making (clay-wood), making musical instruments, Lacquer work, laminated wood work, papier-mache etc. In Kerala certain centres are famous for their handicrafts. Arnamura is world famous for Aranmula mirror. Kannur, Thalassery, Thrissur are famous centres for wood carving and Bell metal works. Feroke is a notable place for Arabian vessels.

Palmstem and coconut stem handicrafts are mainly centered in Palghat and Kanjirappilly. Kathakali panels are mainly made in Ernakulam, Thrissur and Thiruvananthapuram. Ernakulam is also famous place for shopping bags, pot hangers made out of plantain fibre. Handicrafts products of coir, sea grass mat show pictures and greeting cards are mainly made in Kollam and Aleppey.

In Thiruvananthapuram and Thrissur we find a great concentration of lace and embroidery work, Buffalo Horn handicrafts, coconut-shell, wood carving and ivory. Following are the major Handicraft forms of Kerala.

2.3.1 Bell-metal Casting

The *moosaries* are the traditional artisans engaged in bell-metal casting. In Kerala Bell-metal includes the copper and tin or zinc or both. Bell-metal casting has involved mainly two kinds of activities. One is the art of making images or idols of deities out of copper, bronze and brass for consecration in temples and other religious purpose, and the other of making huge *varpus* (heavy shallow vessels of hemispherical shape), multistoried –lamps (Dipasthambham) etc. for use in temples and as household utensils. The products are noted for their high degree of technical perfection. The Aranmula metal mirror or ‘Aranmula Kannadi’ has the pride of place among the products of bell metal industry. A pretty large variety of other articles of interest were produced in ancient days in bell metal. For eg. Cosmetic box used by ladies, flower vases, lamp stands, ash trays, cups and finger bowls, oil can etc. are also works of artisans finish and durability at the same time. This industry of which many production units are in Palghat district and the rest in Thrissur, Irinjalakuda, Kunimangalam, Mannur, Kozhikode, Chittur and Alathur.

2.3.2 Ivory –Horn-Wood carving

Ivory carvings from Kerala artisans are in great demand in other parts of India and in foreign countries and ivory carvers therefore produce a variety of models to suit different tastes. These include mythological figures, animals, birds, cigarette-cases etc.

The craftsmen of Thiruvananthapuram have carved in ivory the “Ananthasayanam pose” with a high degree of skill. A very typical specimen of ivory carving from Kerala is that of the snake boat (Chundan Vallom) and it is a star attraction for foreigners who come here. The main centres of this craft are located in Thiruvananthapuram and Trissur districts.

The craftsmen of Thiruvananthapuram who have acquired rich experience in ivory carving also use another material viz.; buffalo horn for carving. They produce flower vases, paper weights, articles for table decoration, snuff boxes, ash trays, models of birds and animals and other fancy-cum-utility articles.

The art of wood carving has a very ancient tradition in Kerala. A number of temples, churches, palaces and private houses and museums are rich repositories of the works of the highly talented artisans in wood carving of ancient Kerala. Wooden models of elephants, decorative furniture like elephant headed tea-poys, stools, ash trays and model of animals, birds etc. are also produced in bulk by the wood carvers of Kerala. The traditional craftsmen or artisans engaged in wood carving are Viswakarmas or Asaris (Carpenters).

2.3.3. Mat Weaving

1. Kora Grass

Most of the units engaged in mat weaving with kora grass, another important handicraft practised mainly by the Harijans, are located in Chittur Taluk of Palghat district and Talappilly Taluk of Thrissur district. Items produced in this branch of the mat weaving industry include mats of different designs textures, and sizes as well as for different purposes. (such as prayer mats, dinner mats, tale mats etc.) The best variety of mats is made by the Kusava community.

2. With Screw Pine

This branch of the mat weaving industry produces very fine mats, in various designs, woven with screw pine leaves, after retting, drying and dyeing them, and is concentrated in Karunagappally, Mavelikkara and Karthikappally Taluks. Mats are produced in abundance in Jozhava, a village in Quilon district, the item is referred to as Thazhappai. In addition to mats, such articles as pillow covers, cushions, vanity bags, purses, hats etc. are also made. The craft is practised mainly by women. Almost all communities are engaged in the manufacture of screw pine mats.

2.3.4 With Palmyra leaves

The Palmyra leaf is used for producing mats and utility-cum-fancy-articles like bags, hats, suit cases etc. Most of the units engaged in this branch are located in Neyyattinkara and Thiruvananthapuram Taluk of South Kerala. A large part of the weaving is done by women, during spare time, in their own houses. What is produced in this branch has only a local market and so does not get any consideration in the All India field of handicrafts.

2.3.5 Bamboo & Reed Weaving

One of the most important cottage industries in the state providing employment to a few lakhs of persons and being a very high concentration among Harijans to whom it is not only a source of employment but also the main means of livelihood produces mats and baskets through out the length and breadth of the state. These items produced in Alwaye and Kallur are noted for their artistic beauty. It is a major source of income for the Hill Tribes of the High ranges.

2.3.6 Rattan Work

Rattan or cane work is a very important handicraft of Kerala. Rattan is used in the manufacture of articles of daily use like chairs, teapoys, cradles, trays, shopping

bags, waste paper baskets and a variety of other utility cum fancy articles. The craft is in vogue in all parts of the state; but Alapuzha, Thiruvananthapuram and Kottayam districts are the main centres. Till recently the Paravar and Paraya communities are engaged in this craft but at present all communities have taken to it.

2.3.7 Lace & Embroidery Work

Many of the social welfare centres and Mahila Samajams organised under the community development programme have undertaken lace and embroidery work as their main industrial activity. The craft is practised all over the state, but Parassala, the southern most part of the state is a major centre. Lace and embroidery work is primarily a craft of the women folk.

2.3.8 Lapidary Work

The work of polishing synthetic stone is known as Lapidary work concentrated in Thrissur district. This industry turns out fake and artificial diamonds which are now being used in the manufacture of costume, jewellery and other ornaments. Almost all communities are engaged in the lapidary work.

2.3.9. Coconut Shell Work

This is a rare and specialised item of work which produced coconut shell articles embellished with intricate carvings, excelling in craftsmanship, so to say even wood and horn carvings and which only a few experienced craftsmen do depending on demand and sales potential of products. In Thiruvananthapuram, Attingal, and Neyyattinkara a few craftsmen are producing coconut shell articles like cups, vases, tea pots, rose-water sprinklers etc. on a limited scale. Some of the coconut shell products manufactured with brass covering in Quilandy in Kozhikode district are very much in demand in African and Gulf countries.

2.3.10 Making of cotton-caps

This is an important cottage industry in the coastal villages in Kasargode, where a large number of Muslim women earn their livelihood through it. Two kinds of caps are being made, a variety made of inferior cotton clothes, and the other of the fine cloth and art silk. These cotton caps have a good market in the Arab and African countries.

2.3.11 Art Metal Ware Work

Quilandy in Kozhikode district, has a singular importance as the home of this craft which turns out metal ware, not of much utility except for decorative purposes.

2.3.12 Hand Printing of Textiles

Concentrated in Kozhikode, Quilon, and Aleppey, this art dyes clothes, generally of the handloom variety and prints on them various attractive designs most of the units in this branch are in the nature of servicing units undertaking dyeing and printing of cloth which is supplied to them by handloom weavers.

2.3.13 Toy-Making (Clay & Wood)

In the sphere of this craft, there is no cooperative products unit. By using small tools and machinery, toy makers turn out quality products which have a market both inside and outside the state.

2.3.14. Making Musical Instruments

Engaged in this industry, manufacturing musical instruments of the percussion, wind, and string types are 32 units of which the largest part is located in Palghat district.

2.3.15 Laminated Wood Work, Papier Mache, Koftigari and Silver Spoon Making

These are some of the other handicrafts spread all over the state and each having one or two units. Although the number of workers employed in each of these crafts is not much the goods produced have a fairly good market, obtained mainly due to the

high quality of craftsmanship. The prices of these goods have no bearing on cost of raw materials, but depend wholly on the attractiveness of such goods.

2.3.16 Other Handicrafts

In addition to the main crafts stated above, there are also a number of other handicrafts practised by the artisans of Kerala. The products of coir industry also deserve to be mentioned among the Kerala handicrafts. Mats, mattings, carpets, upholstery, stuff-pillows and couches, brushes, yarn and cordage including large sized cables, hats and bonnets, are some of the articles manufactured with coir. The main centres of the coir industry in Kerala are in Alapuzha district.

Chengannore is well known for Granite Carving. The granite workers of the place manufacture a variety of objects like idols, household equipments, pillows, survey stones etc. which are still in demand. The costumes and other accessories required for the Kathakali and Theyyam dances are being manufactured by some craftsmen who have specialised in these particular handicrafts.

The manufacture of musical instruments like Chenda, Mridangam, Maddalam, Edakka etc. is done by some craftsmen. In Thalassery, the home of circus in India is manufacturing the particular kind of umbrellas required by circus companies. Another typical handicraft is the work of pasting pieces of straw and bark of different types of wood on a black cotton silk background so as to make attractive picture which can be used for all decoration. This art had its origin in Perinad near Quilon. Natural scenery and portraits are the themes of these pictures.

Kerala, being a maritime state has also been able to develop its own handicrafts based on some marine material. Thus in Thiruvananthapuram coastal area, conch shell articles like paper weights, ash trays, pin cushions, studs etc. are made by the craftsmen.

Handicrafts Development Corporation of Kerala has compiled the handicraft forms of Kerala. The above classification of handicraft forms shows that there are fifteen handicraft forms in Kerala. Regional concentration of handicraft forms is found in two districts namely, Thiruvananthapuram and Thrissur. Almost all the handicraft forms are centered in these two districts. Besides, these districts monopolise mainly wood carving, mat weaving, rattan work, coconut shell work, lace-embroidery, bell metal casting and Lapidary work. Table 2.1 illustrates handicraft forms of Kerala concentrated in districts and centres.

Table 2.1
Handicraft Labour Centres In Kerala

Handicraft Forms	Centres
Bell Metal Cashing	Aranmula, Thrissur, Irinjalakuda, Kanimangalam, Mannar, Kodhikode, Chittor
Ivory-Horn-Wood carving	Thiruvananthapuram, Thrissur
Mat Waving (with Screw Pine)	Chittur, Palaghat, Thalassery Thrissur
(With Palmgra leaves)	Quilon, Karunagaoally, Mavelikkara, Karthikapally
Bamboo, Reed weaving	Neyyatinkara, Thiruvananthapuram.
Rattan work	Alwaye, Kallara
Laze , Embroidery work	Alapuzha, Thiruvananthapuram, Kottayam
Lapidary Work	Parasala
Coconut shell Work	Thrissur
Making of Cotton caps	Attingal, Neyyatinkara (TVM), Quilandy (Kozhikode)
Art Metal Wire work	Kazaragode
Hand Printing of Textiles	Quilandy
Making of Musical Instruments	Kozhikode, Quilon, Alappey.
Coir Industry	Palghat
Granite Carving	Alapuzha
	Chenganoor

Source: Brochure Published by Handicrafts Development Corporation of Kerala Ltd. 1982.

Conclusion

Based on the above secondary resources, we can observe that Handicrafts Labour is strictly combined with those raw materials which are available locally. Handicrafts Industry and Handicraft Labour are thus mainly based on natural resources and availability and richness of natural resources is an essential condition for the flourishing of Handicraft Industry and Handicraft Labour. The predominance of a number of Handicraft forms in Jammu and Kashmir can be cited as a perfect illustration for the above statement. Similarly Kerala is observed to be a state rich in natural resources and almost all the raw materials necessary for the handicrafts industry are available locally in abundance. If at all Handicrafts Industry is sustained in Kerala it is mainly because of this richness in natural resources.



CHAPTER III

AN ANALYSIS OF LABOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE HOUSEHOLD HANDICRAFTS OF THRISSUR DISTRICT

Thrissur district with an area of 3032 sq. Kms. is located in the central part of Kerala state. Talking about the geographical boundary of Thrissur District, on the Northern side, we have Palghat and Malappuram District and on the Southern side there are Idukki and Ernakulam Districts. On the Western side, there is Arabian Sea. Thrissur district has a coastal line of 53kms. Two important rivers of Kerala, namely, Bharathapuzha and Periyar are flowing through this district. Besides, Chalakkudy river, Karuvannur Puzha and Kecheri Puzha are also touching Thrissur District.¹ Thrissur District has cultural as well as historical importance and this district is considered as the cultural capital of Kerala.

3.1 Population of the District

According to the census of 1991 the total population of the District is 27,37, 311 with male population of 13,12,683 and female population of 14,24, 626. Table 3.1 gives a detailed picture of taluk wise population of the district.

Table 3.1

Taluk wise Population of Thrissur district - 1991

Taluks	K.M.	Male	Female	Total
Chavakkad	243.26	200219	226757	426976
Kodungallore	145.07	134675	149090	283765
Mukundapuram	1315.98	357541	381117	738658
Thalapilly	662.99	256087	281473	537560
Thrissur	635.71	364161	386191	750352

Source: Thrissur District Handbook.

From Table 3.1 it is evident that Mukundapuram Taluk is the largest Taluk in the district on the basis of area whereas Thrissur taluk has larger population. Thrissur

¹ Thrissur District Hand Book.

and Mukandapuram Taluks can be ranked as first and second on the basis of female population.

3.2 Handicrafts of Thrissur District

Mat weaving, basket making, wooden furniture making, pottery, leather works and handloom are the important hand icrafts of the Thrissur district. Among these, mat weaving, basket-making, pottery and furniture-making can be considered as important household handicraft forms.

3.3. Sample Handicrafts, Sample Area, and Sample Products

Thrissur Districts has been selected as a sample area, all the different forms of Handicrafts as well as the labourers associated with the various handicrafts are observed to be seen in this District. Table 3.2 gives a detailed picture of the sample Handicraft forms, sample units, sample area and sample products.

We have selected mat weaving, bamboo basket weaving, pottery and wooden furniture making as sample handicraft forms. These craft forms come under Household Handicrafts. All these craft forms are widely prevalent in almost all parts of the state. The sample craft forms are based on four types of raw materials namely screw pine leaves, Bamboo, Clay and Wood. These raw materials are commonly seen in all parts of the state. Since, the study is a labour oriented one, we have selected three Taluks in the District which have sizeable populations. The selected Taluks are Mukundapuram, Thrissur and Kodungallur.

- Table 3.2 on separate sheet -

We have selected 70 labour units of mat weaving, 60 labour units of Bamboo basket making, 60 labour units of pottery and 60 labour units of wooden furniture-making. For mat weaving we have selected Edavilangu, Kothaparambu, Perinjanam, Moonnupeedika and Vallivattam as sample areas in Mukundapuram and Kodungallur Taluk.

Sample areas for bamboo basket making are Kodali, Nayarangadi, Kaduppassery, Nadavarambu and Vellikulangara in Mukundapuram Taluk. For pottery, Cherur, Chittissery, Annallur, Chengaloor, and Kodakara in Mukundapuram and Thrissur Taluk are taken as sample areas. Sample areas taken for wooden furniture making are Chevoor, Cherpu, Thrikoor, Ammadam and Chappara in Thrissur and Kodungallur Taluks.

Sample labour units and sample areas are identified through the information given by the officials at SISI, District Industries Centre, Surabhi and Kairali. Besides, information regarding the location of craftsmen and craftswomen were given by the traders and contractors, related with these products.

Five important market centres namely Thrissur, Chalakkudy, Irinjalakuda, Kodungallore and Chavakad were also visited, to know the whereabouts of the craftsmen and craftswomen.

3.4 Labour in Household Handicrafts

For analysing the different aspects of Household handicrafts labour, we have taken the following variables like caste and community, gender and age. This is done for identifying whether there is any predominance of caste and community, gender and age in any form of Household Handicraft. Another purpose of this type of analysis is to know whether Household Handicrafts labour is on the verge of extinction or not.

Table 3.3

Distribution of Labour on the Basis of Caste and Community

Sample Handicraft	Caste and Community	No. of Labourers	Percentage
Mat Weaving	Ezhava	43	61.43
	Vettuva	11	15.71
	PulayaAsari	3	4.29
	Kollan	1	1.43
	Kuruppu	1	1.43
	Christian	1	1.43
	Muslim	10	14.28
Bamboo Basket making	SC/ST (Parayan)	60	100.00
	Christian	-	-
	Muslim	-	-
Pottery	Odans	60	100.00
Wooden Furniture making	Viswakarma	21	35.00
	Ezhava	7	13.00
	Nair	3	5.00
	Vettuva	4	6.00
	Kurupanmar	6	10.00
	Ezhuthachan	11	18.00
	SC	3	5.00
	Christian	5	8.00
	Muslim	-	-

Source: Field survey.

Chart 3.1

Pie Diagram showing the Caste and Community-wise Distribution of Labour

(Mat Weaving)

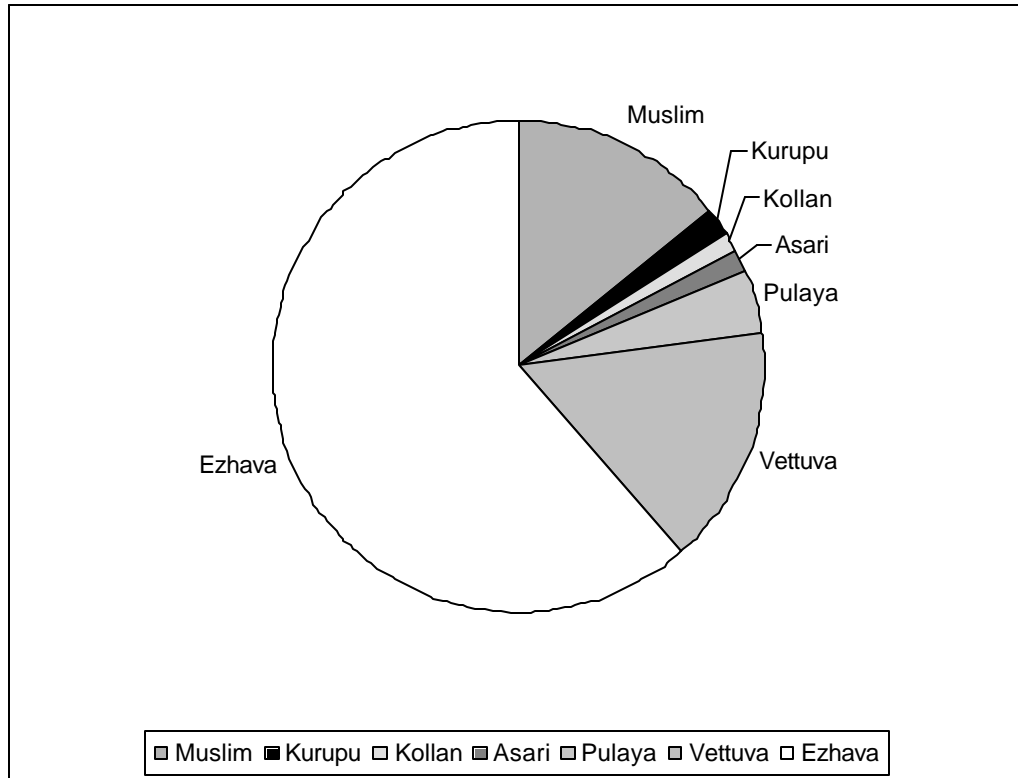
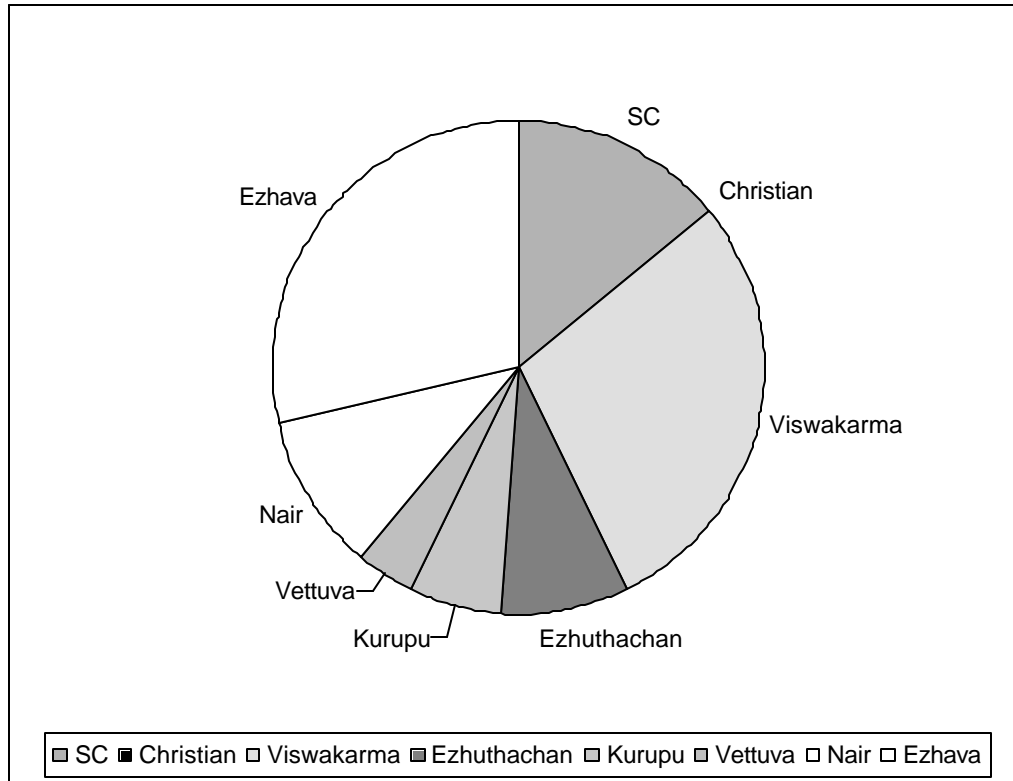


Chart 3.2 Pie Diagram showing the Caste and Community-wise Distribution of Labour (Wooden Furniture making)

The Table 3.3 shows that there is a great predominance of Ezhava community in



mat weaving, Odans in pottery, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes in bamboo basket-making. In wooden furniture making although there is an intermixing of various castes and communities, Viswakarma community has a slight domination over the rest of the communities. Among the sixty labour units surveyed for mat weaving 61.43 percent are found to be Ezhava's community. In bamboo basket making, the survey showed that 100% is occupied by SC/ST classes. Among the sixty labour units related with pottery, only Odan Mahasabha is engaged in this craft. Although there is an intermixing of caste and community for wooden furniture making, surveyed labour units in Chevoor area show a great predominance of Christian labour participation. The following set of pie-diagrams show the caste-wise labour participation of household handicrafts.

3.4.1 Labour participation in mat weaving, Bamboo Basket Making, Pottery and Wooden Furniture-Making on the basis of Caste and community

In Thrissur District irrespective of geographical division, mat weaving is taken as a part time or full time occupation of the people particularly Ezhava community.

Bamboo basket making is also another traditional handicraft pursued by lower section of the community, especially the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes. Regarding the caste wise concentration of pottery, it is observed that these labourers come mainly from the ‘Odans’ community. Furniture making is an occupation in which there is an involvement of all types of castes and communities. After the field survey it is apparent that to a certain extent some handicraft labour is highly influenced by certain castes and communities. Table 3.3 gives a detailed picture about the correlation between caste and community and the labour participation in the four sample Handicraft forms.

3.4.2 Gender-wise analysis of Labour Participation

We have analysed the house hold handicraft labour on the basis of Gender to know the extent of male-female participation. In the traditional handicrafts like mat weaving, basket making, pottery and wooden furniture making, there is involvement of both the male and female labourers. Classification of data on the basis of gender shows the following tendencies represented through Table 3.4

Table 3.4

Gender-wise Distribution of Handicrafts Labour

Sample Handicraft	Total No. of Respondents	Male	%	Female	%	Labour	Male	Female
Mat weaving	316	123	38.9	193	61.1	95	-	95
Bamboo basket making	245	116	47.3	129	52.7	106	55	51
pottery	181	87	48.0	94	52.0	132	68	64
Wooden furniture making	215	922	43.1	123	56.9	73	73	-

Source:Survey data

From the table 3.4 it is evident that in mat weaving 100% of the work is done by female whereas in wooden furniture making only male labourers are involved. In bamboo basket making and in pottery, there is an equal participation of male and female labourers.

3.4.3 Age-wise analysis of Labour

Age is the other variable which we have connected with the household handicraft labour. Age wise household handicrafts labour shows the following tendencies. Generally speaking, child labour is not involved in any of the sample household handicraft labour. Participation of younger generation in household handicraft labour is practically negligible, except in the case of wooden furniture making. This tendency is also very much observable in bamboo basket making. On the contrary, labourers belonging to elderly group are more in number in the case of mat weaving. In pottery and mat weaving, there is a more or less equal participation of labourers belonging to all age groups. Table 3.5 furnishes these details.

Table 3.5

Age-wise Distribution of Handicrafts Labour

	Total No. of Members	Labourers involving the craft	Below 15	15-35	%	35-55	%	55-75	%
Mat weaving	316	95	-	15	15.79	52	54.73	28	29.30
Bamboo basket	245	106	-	10	9.44	67	63.20	29	27.36
Pottery	181	132	-	18	13.64	92	69.69	22	16.67
Wooden furniture making	215	76	-	21	27.63	48	63.26	7	9.11

Source: Survey data.

From Table 3.5 it is evident that from the total 95 mat weavers, 15.79% fall under the age group of 15 - 35 years, 54.73% are in the 35 - 55 years age group and labourers between 55-75 formed 29.5 percent of the total.

In bamboo basket making, labourers belonging to 35 to 55 years is 63.20 percent, labourers above 60 years come to 29 percentage. Only a small percentage of labourers come under the age group of 15 to 35 which come only 9.44 percentage.

In pottery works, of the 132 surveyed, labourers in the age-group 35-55 years formed 69.69 percent and those between 55-75 constitute 16.67 percent. Speaking about the age group of wooden furniture-making , 63.26 percent come under the age group 30 to 60 years. The involvement of elderly labourers is insignificant, with only 9.11 percentage.

The younger age groups are more involved in wooden furniture making whereas the same age group shows an aversion towards bamboo basket making. This reluctance of labour participation is also seen in pottery works.

These particular tendencies of the sample handicrafts labour are represented through the following diagrams.

Figure 3.3

Diagram showing Gender-wise Distribution of Labour

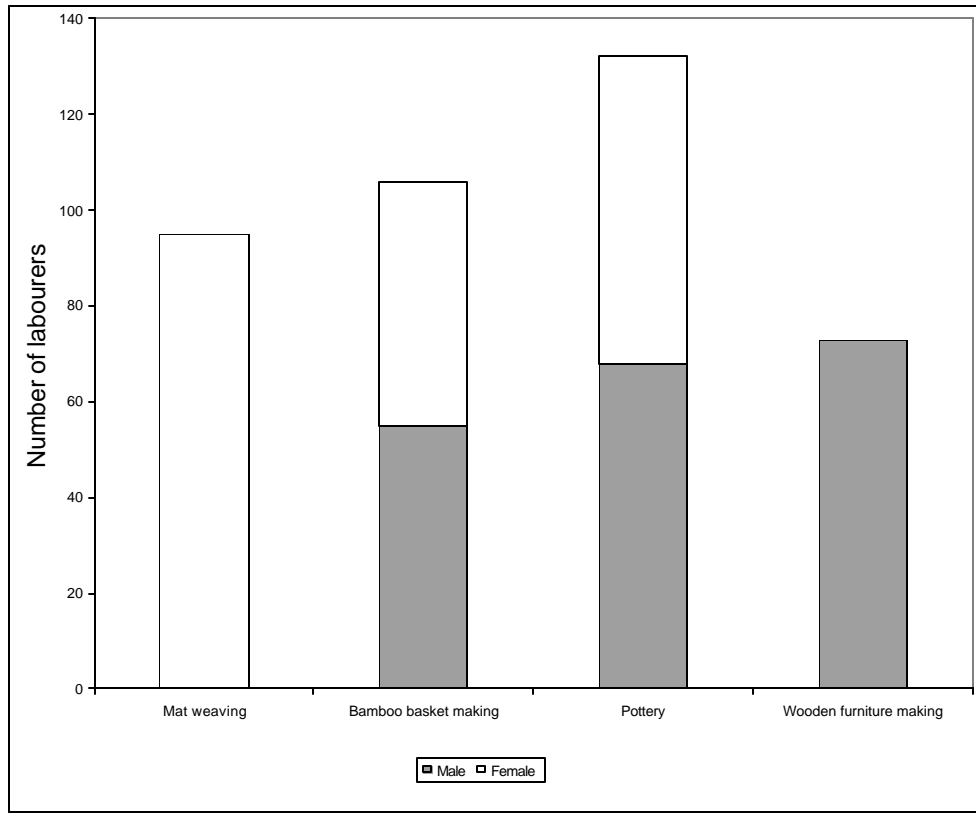
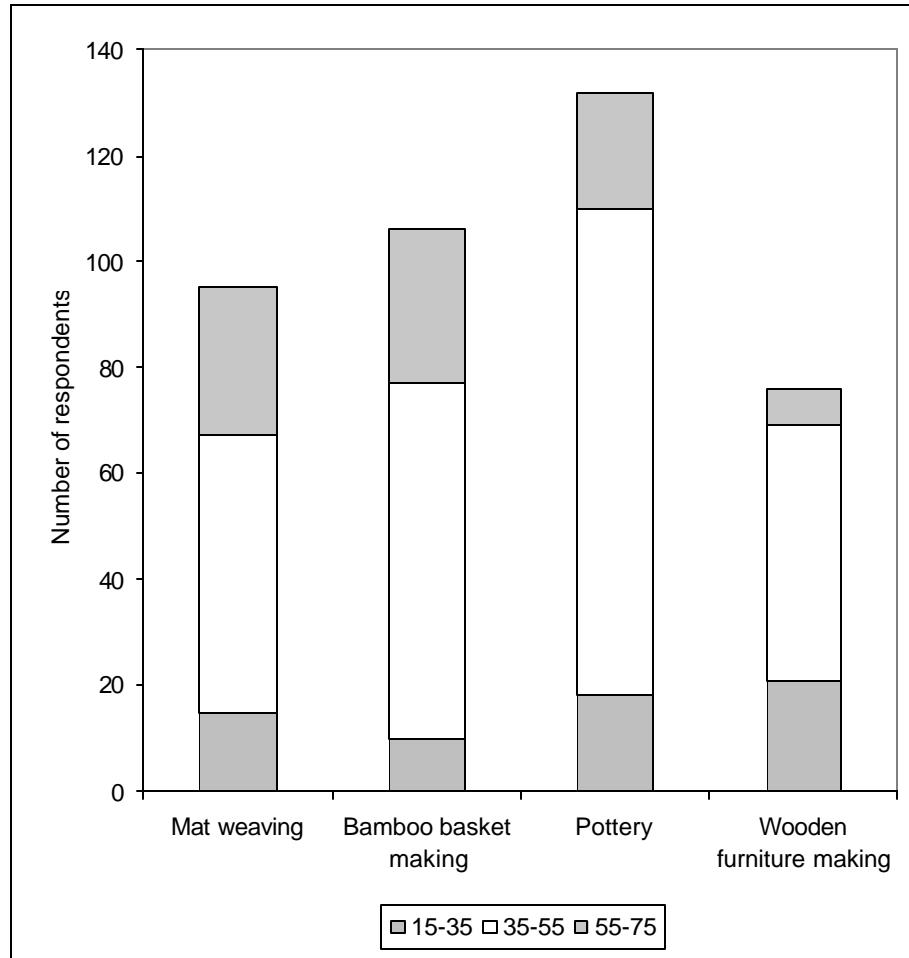


Figure 3.4

Diagram Showing Age-wise Distribution of Labour



3.4.4 Type and Nature of Household Handicrafts Labour

The kind of labour involved in sample handicrafts fall under three categories, namely, contract labour, family labour and daily labour. In the case of pottery and mat-weaving only family labour is involved. Whereas in the wooden furniture making and bamboo basket-making, all the three types of labour are involved in production.

Regarding the nature of labour, only labourers connected with furniture making take this occupation on full time basis. In mat weaving, pottery and Bamboo Basket Making, artisans take up the craft work on full time as well as part time basis.

Table 3.6

Type and Nature of Handicrafts Labour

Sample Handicraft	Type of Labour				
	Full-time labour	Part-time labour	Contract labour	Family labour	Daily labour
Screw pine leaves	Full-time	Part-time		Family labour	Daily labour
Bamboo basket making	Full-time	Part-time		Family labour	Daily labour
Pottery	Full-time	Part-time		Family labour	Daily labour
Wooden furniture making				Family labour	Daily labour

Source: Survey data.



CHAPTER IV

**TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER INPUTS OF HOUSEHOLD
HANDICRAFTS- AN ANALYSIS**

There is a great predominance of labour in household handicraft production, since production is highly labour intensive. The previous chapter dealt with the different aspects of labour in a detailed manner. This chapter focuses its attention up on other inputs used in household handicrafts production. The following table gives a detailed picture about the different type of inputs applied, other than labour.

Table 4.1

Inputs other than Labour used in Sample Handicrafts

Sample Handicrafts	Inputs used in Production
Mat weaving	Screwpine leaves, sickle money
Bamboo basket making	Bamboo, cutting tools, small knives, money
Pottery	Clay moulding wheel, shed, fuel wood, hay, water, money
Wooden furniture making	Wood, tools and impliments, sketch materials, sand paper, wax, money, electricity

Source: Survey data.

Table 4.1 shows that inputs are mainly in the form of locally available raw materials like screwpine leaves, bamboo, clay and wood. The combination of these inputs with labour is very simple and less complicated. The table reveals that in mat weaving, bamboo basket making and pottery, the involvement of machinery is insignificant, except the usage of sickle, pocket knives and wooden moulding wheel.

In wooden furniture making this cannot be fully true. Because in this craft, the present tendency is towards mechanisation in almost all stages of production. It is only

in this craft that electricity is used as an input in production. Again, compared to other craft forms, participation of more inputs is observable in wooden furniture making. Besides wood, sketch materials, carpentry tools, sand paper, polish are also used.

In mat weaving, the most important input is screwpine leaves, besides sickle and small knives. Input combination is more or less similar in mat weaving and bamboo basket making. Clay forms to be an important input for pottery. Other important inputs are wooden moulding wheel, water, fuel wood and clay.

4.1 Raw material availability and raw material cost in mat weaving, Bamboo basket making, pottery and wooden furniture making

Raw material and other inputs used for mat weaving are locally available. Some fifty years ago mat weavers in the district faced no problem regarding the availability of screwpine leaves. It is reported that they collected the screwpine leaves free of cost from river sides, ponds and boundaries of private persons. Presently mat weavers get screwpine leaves from two sources, namely processed screwpine leaves from markets and unprocessed screwpine leaves from the boundaries of private property of people on a lease basis. Mat weavers in Edavailangu, Perinjanam, Moonnupeedika and Vallivattam, acquire screwpine leaves on lease. Generally, for a twenty cents stripland area of screwpine leaves, one year lease rate is Rs.3000, which can be harvested twice in a year. On the other hand, the processed screwpine leaves available in markets in bundles or in 'Madies' are available at the rate of Rs.25 each.

Bamboo, the raw material used for bamboo basket making is supplied by private persons and Bamboo Corporation. Bamboo poles are available to the basket weavers at a rate of Rs.520 for a bundle, the price for one bamboo pole in the market is Rs.75.

Clay is available to the potters from the tile factories, for Rs.400 where as 50 years ago clay was available at Rs.50 per load. The wooden moulding wheel which is another input for pottery is locally made by the carpenters. The cost for making a wheel is estimated to Rs.300 to Rs.400. The cost for fuel wood and baking amounts to

Rs.1200-1500. The cost for hay and other temperature adjustment materials comes to Rs.50 to Rs.75.

Teak wood and rose wood are mainly used for furniture items which are available from the government. The sq. feet rate for teak wood, ranges between Rs.800 to Rs.1200. The other inputs are the different types of chissels which are locally called ‘modam’, ‘chathuram’, ‘keet’ ‘chissel’, ‘vattavaya’, ‘aram’ and ‘moola aram’. Cost for a set of work tools is about Rs.800. Other materials are polish, wax, gum, sand paper and sketch materials.

4.5.Sources of Capital

The significance of capital cannot be overlooked in household handicrafts. Among the four sample handicraft s, mat weavers and potters avail funds from Co-operative Banks, Commercial Banks and IRDP loans. Besides they also borrow from local money lenders. Since bamboo basket making and wooden furniture works are carried out mainly on contract basis, capital is either own capital or the borrowed capital. Among the selected household handicraft, capital investment is comparatively low in mat weaving whereas it is very high in wooden furniture making.

Table 4.2

Source of Capital

Handicraft Forms	IRDP	Coopera- tive Societies	Commer- cial Banks	Corpora- tion	Chit Funds & Money Lenders	Other Sources
Mat weaving	2	4	9	1	42	13
Bamboo basket making	-	2	1	3	-	54
Pottery	4	2	1	-	45	8
Wooden furniture making	1	2	12	-	5	10

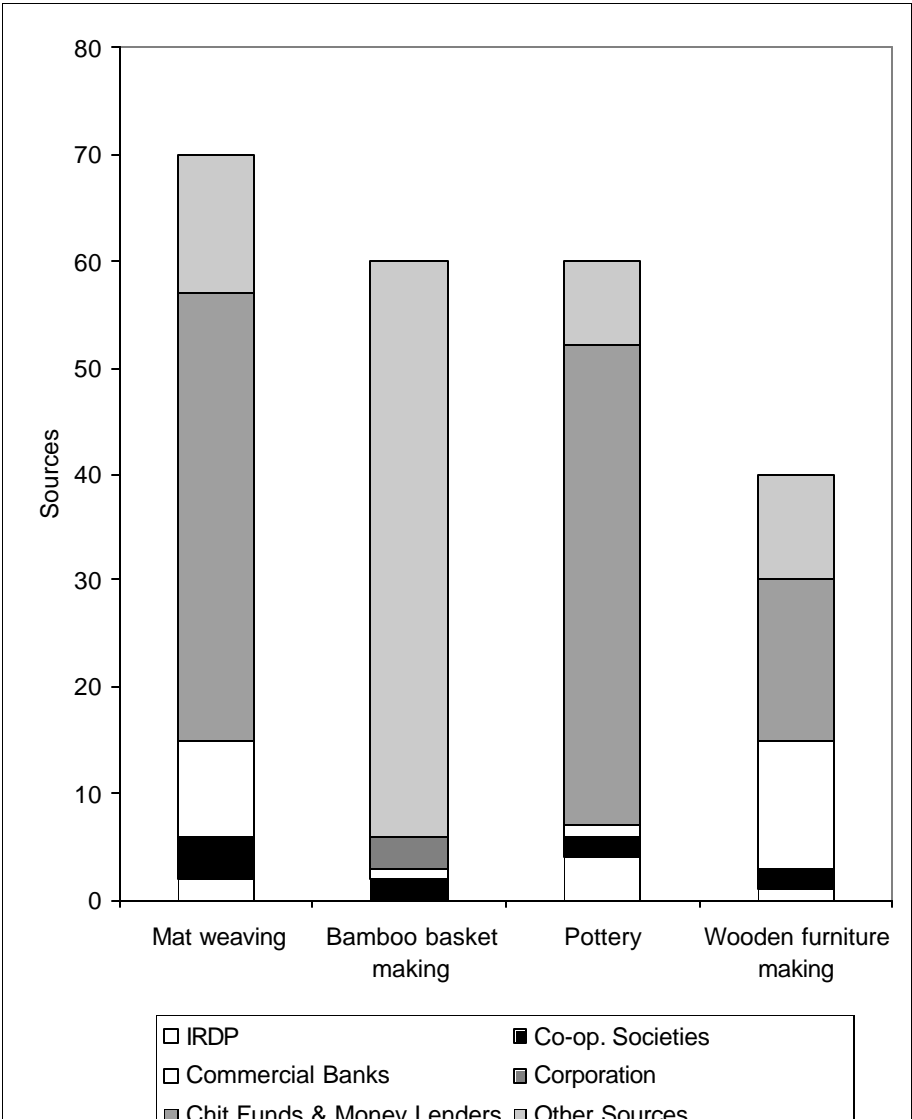
Source: Survey data.

From the table it is obvious that, the main source of capital is borrowals, which mainly come from money lenders and private chit funds. In the case of bamboo basket making, since capital is financed by the contractors themselves, the influence of chit funds is very less. In wooden furniture making capital flows mainly from the commercial banks. In the case of mat weaving and pottery, there is great influence of chit funds and money lenders in providing capital.

The following Diagram illustrates the percentage share of each agency in providing capital to the various craftsmen and craftswomen engaged in household handicrafts.

Figure 4.1

Figure Showing Sources of Capital



4.6. Technology of Household Handicrafts

Just like the technology of any other cottage industry, the technology of handicrafts industry, particularly, household handicraft, is highly labour intensive. It uses locally available raw materials like, screwpine leaves, bamboo, clay and wood. Thus household handicraft technology can be considered as local or indigenous technology. In the present analysis, our focus is upon the state of technology of four sample household handicrafts, namely mat weaving, bamboo basket making, pottery and wooden furniture making.

4.6.1 Technological phases of sample Household Handicraft

In mat weaving, crafts women after harvesting the screwpine leaves, roll the leaves into 'Bundles' or 'Madies'. Drying the Madies is done by two methods;

- a. Sundrying in summer season and
- b. Smoking in rainy season.

After drying 'Madies', it is spread and split for weaving the mats. The first step of mat weaving is to make a corner or 'vakku', after wards, the screwpine leaves are woven vertically and horizontally to be transformed into a mat.

In bamboo basket making, bamboo poles are split into pieces and these bamboo pieces are smoothed with the help of small pocket knives. After this, bamboo pieces are made into 'Alies'. The weavers arrange the 'Alies' according to the size of the basket. After weaving the baskets, additional touch up works are carried out for making 'vaku'.

In pottery, clay is properly conditioned with water and made into bowls. Potters keep different moulds for making different sizes of pots. Before making an item, each mould is attached to the moulding wheel. The moulding wheel is in fact run by the potter himself to give the final shape of the clay item. Before baking the clay items, pots are dried in sun light and afterwards, the pottery items are baked in choolas.

In choolas, the potters are very much skilled in adjusting the temperature with the help of plantain waste and hay.

In wooden furniture making, at present, wood is processed and prepared with the help of machines. Wood is cut into different sizes by machines. In the initial stage of beginning the furniture-making, sketch materials are used to determine the size, nature and appearance of the furniture item. In curved household items, sketch is used to prepare the outline of the same. The structure of the wooden item is prepared with the help of the carpentry tools and equipment. Sand paper works, waxing and polishing carried out in subsequent stages to make an item in full form.

Thus technology of household handicrafts comprises of input combinations, technique of production and method of production assisted by the active participation of human labour.

4.6.2 Technological Trends in Household Handicrafts

Based on the field survey data and observations, the state of technology, with its labour domination, has remained the same over a long period of time. The most simple technology is that of mat weaving and basket weaving with 100% involvement of labour. Pottery comes the next, but of late, in pottery works, there has been a tendency towards mechnisation by attempts to spin the moulding wheel with the help of electricity. Mechanisation tendency is the strongest in the case of wooden furniture making.

4.6.3. Labour-Capital Share in Household Handicraft Technology

In the present selection, we are analysing labour – capital involvement in household handicraft technology. For analysing this, we have broken up the production of household items into different stages. After this break up, we have noted the comparative involvement of capital and labour in each stages of production.

Under mat weaving, the technology is purely dominated by labour. Labour is predominant from the beginning to the end of production. In the previous section, we have divided six stages for mat weaving. In all stages, the involvement of labour is more when compared to other participating inputs. With regard to bamboo basket making also, labour dominates in all phases of basket making. In pottery, we can observe that capital equipment dominates in certain stages of production, namely, moulding and baking stages. Involvement of labour and capital is more or less equal in all stages of wooden furniture making. From this, we can note that the technology of mat weaving and bamboo basket making is identical with regard to the involvement of capital and labour. The involvement of labour and capital in the technology of pottery and wooden furniture making cannot be compared because labour as well as machineries are equally involved in wooden furniture making. In the case of pottery, particularly, in two stages namely in moulding and baking works, the importance of capital equipments is specially noteworthy.

4.6.3.1 Labour-Capital share in mat weaving , bamboo basket making, pottery and wooden furniture making

For analysing labour capital share in mat weaving, we have reduced the value of inputs, labour and capital, into rupee terms. We have calculated labour-capital share for one mat. It is found that for weaving one mat, it requires 7 hours, and the cost for screw pine leaves is Rs.10. If the average price is taken as Rs.25 for one mat, the labour capital share is 10/15 or 2/3.

Thus, the percentage share of labour and capital is 60:40.

We have calculated labour-capital share for bamboo basket making. The cost for bamboo is estimated to be Rs.75 and it requires 5 hours for weaving a basket. If the average price of a bamboo basket is taken as Rs.100, the labour-capital share is 25/75.

Thus, the percentage share of labour capital is 25:75

We have calculated labour-capital share for one fish curry pot. For making this pot, it requires one labour hour; the average cost for clay is Rs.3½ and the fuel wood cost also is roughly Rs.3½. This item is sold at Rs.22 and if it is so, labour-capital share is 68/32.

The percentage share of labour and capital is 68:32.

For analysing labour capital share in wooden furniture making, we have taken one chair as a sample product for which it requires roughly 16 hours of labour. Other input cost is calculated as Rs.400. If the average earning of a labourer is Rs.150, the labour-capital share is 300/400 and the percentage share of labour and capital is 43:57.

Table 4.3

Labour-Capital Share in Household Handicrafts

Sample Household Handicrafts	Sample Products	Labour-Capital Ratio	Percentage Share of Labour cost
Mat weaving	One mat	10/15	60
Bamboo basket making	One basket	25/75	25
Pottery	One fish curry pot	15/7	68
Wooden furniture making	One chair	3/4	43

Source: Survey data.

From the above analysis it is evident that labour share is comparatively higher in mat weaving and pottery. In bamboo basket making and wooden furniture making, due to high raw material cost, the share of labour cost is less compared to other input cost. It is also observable that the percentage share of labour cost is maximum at the pottery and minimum at the bamboo basket making.



CHAPTER 5

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF CRAFTSMEN AND CRAFTS WOMEN IN THRISSUR AREA

The present chapter attempts to analyse the socio-economic position of craftsmen and crafts women who are engaged in mat weaving, bamboo basket making, pottery and wooden furniture making. The societal position of an individual is judged by the indicators like education and involvement in leadership activities. In the present report, we have taken these two indicators for deciding the social position of a person related with house hold handicrafts work.

Economic position and living standard of a person is assessed by the type of house, land size, home appliances used, income and saving. Here, we have taken these indicators, for identifying the living standard and the economic position of a person engaged in the sample house hold handicraft.

5.1. An analysis on the economic position of household handicraft labourer

Local level development to a great extent depends upon the economic progress of the people living in that locality. The economic progress of an individual depends on his occupation or job and the income derived from these sources. From the field survey, it is apparent that the labourers associated with house hold handicrafts are mostly located in rural areas. Talking about the standard of living of the labourers in household handicrafts residing in these areas, is far from satisfactory. The income which they get from their work is inadequate to lead a reasonable standard of living. In the following section, we will be dealing with the variables determining the standard of living of the household handicraft labourers and they are, ownership of land, type of house and home appliances used, land size, income and saving.

5.1.1. Land size owned by the sample Handicraft Labourers

Data related with land area possessed by labourers show a gloomy picture. A great number of persons are having only a small size of land holdings. For some labourers, although they possess land, they are in need of 'Pattayams'. Table 5.1 furnishes details about the land size of the sample house hold handicraft labourers.

Table 5.1

Land Ownership of the Sample Handicraft Labourers (in cents)

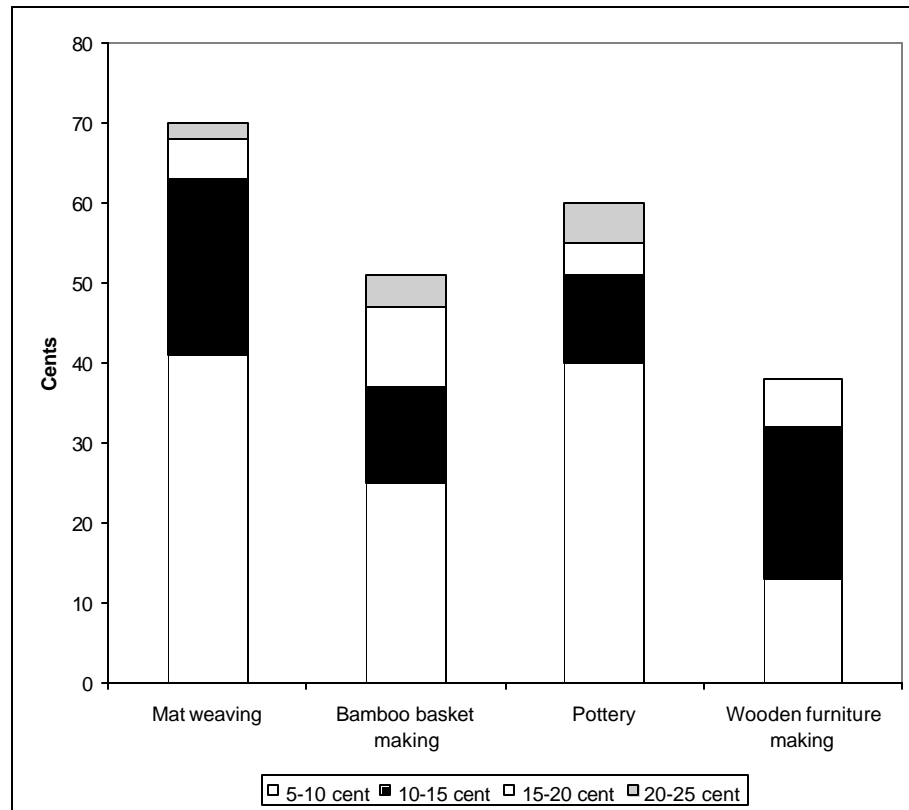
Sample Handicraft Forms	1-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-25	Total Sample Units
Mat weaving	41	22	5	2	-	70
Bamboo basket making	25	12	10	4	9	60
Pottery	40	11	4	5	-	60
Wooden furniture making	13	19	6	-	2	40

Source: Field survey data.

The table clearly shows that among four categories of household handicraft labourers, the land area is comparatively small for mat weavers and potters. Even though bamboo basket makers are comparatively better inland area, they are yet to receive 'Pattayam' from the government. The position of the wooden furniture makers is comparatively better. It is also notable that the labourers engaged in mat weaving and pottery are the worst in the case of land size possession. The following percentage bar diagram shows the land size possession of the surveyed households.

Figure 5.1

Figure Showing Land Ownership Pattern of the Respondents



5.1.2. Housing Conditions of the Respondents

Type of houses owned by the labourer is another indicator, which we have selected for identifying the economic position of the respondents. We have classified three types of houses namely thatched, tiled and concrete houses and electrified and non electrified houses.

Although there is an improvement in the housing conditions of the labourers, a good number of them are still living in thatched houses.

Again, good number of houses are still waiting for electricity. Table 5.2 gives a detailed picture about the housing conditions of the sample households.

Table 5.2

Housing conditions of the sample households

Sample Handicraft Forms	Thatched	Tiled	Concrete	Electrified	Non-electrified
Mat weaving	22	41	7	38	32
Bamboo basket making	13	45	2	39	21
Pottery	14	39	7	36	24
Wooden furniture making	8	30	2	30	10

Source: Sample survey data.

Table 5.2 also shows that the majority of the households are electrified. In this regard only a few households in the wooden furniture making are non-electrified. Non-electrified houses are the maximum in mat weaving and the minimum number of non-electrified houses in wooden furniture making. The details of the electrified and non-electrified households are represented through the following Bar Diagrams. It is clear from Table 5.2 that bamboo basket makers are in a better position compared to other labourers and it is gathered from the survey that the various schemes under People's Plan have helped to improve their housing conditions. The potters and the mat weavers live in thatched and tiled houses. Among these households, only a small percent have concrete houses. Irrespective of the type of handicraft, it can be stated that the return from their craft works is insufficient to make any attempt to improve their housing conditions.

Figure 5.2

Diagram Showing Housing Conditions

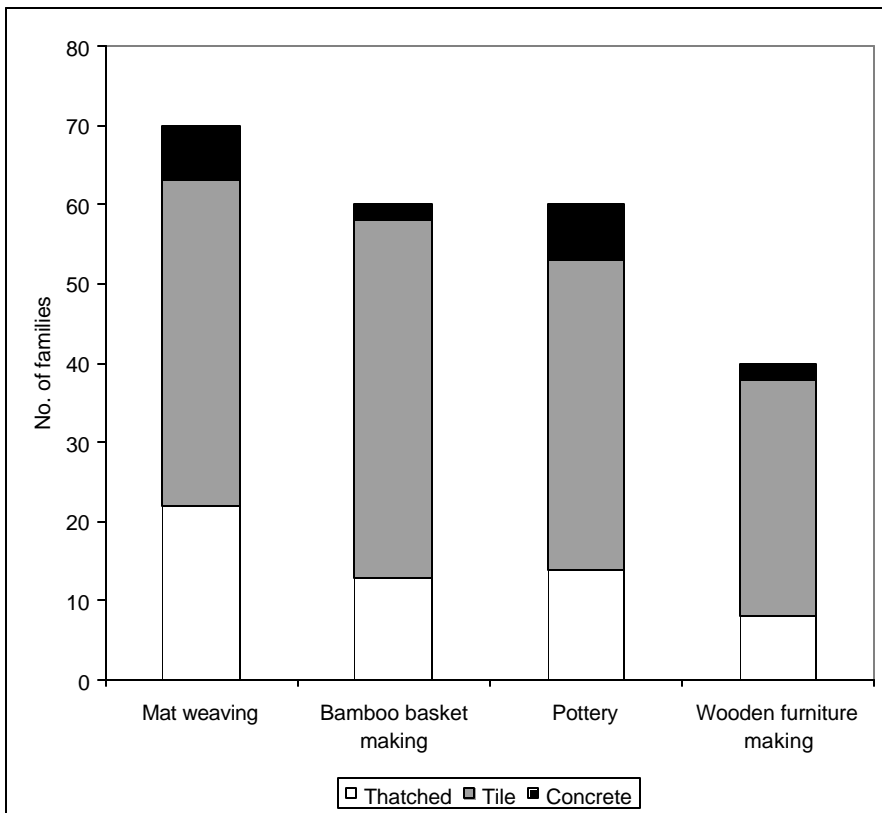
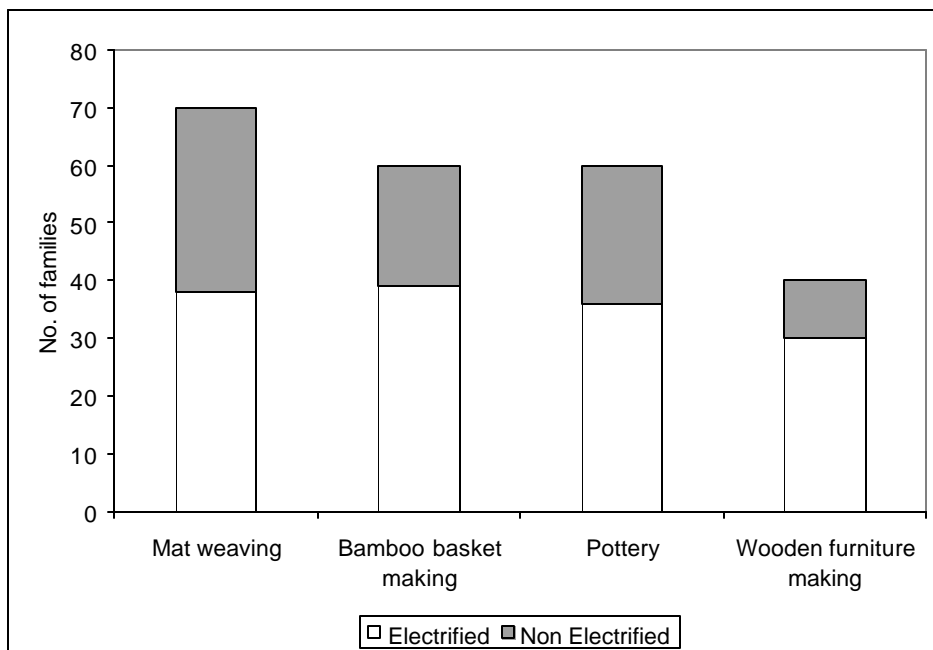


Figure 5.3

Figure Showing Electrified and Non-Electrified Houses



5.1.3 Household appliances used by the Respondents

The economic position of a household can be also determined on the basis of household appliances used in a family. For the present analysis, we have relied upon this measuring rod for judging the economic position of the surveyed households.

The survey showed that none of the mat weaving, bamboo basket making and pottery households used refrigerator or cooking gas. Only a small percentage of households have radio and Televisions. These details are given in Table 5.3

Table 5.3
Home Appliances used by Sample Households

Sample Handicraft Forms	Radio	T.V	Fridge	LPG
Mat weaving	7	2	-	-
Bamboo basket making	9	5	-	-
Pottery	13	6	-	-
Wooden furniture making	18	12	4	14

Source: Survey data.

Table 5.3 illustrates that none of the respondents in mat weaving, bamboo basket making and pottery have either a refrigerator or cooking gas. Regarding the use of modern home appliances, wooden furniture makers show a satisfactory trend.

5.1.4 An Estimation of Labour Earnings from the Household Handicraft Labour

Earnings from household handicrafts labour are through mat weaving, bamboo basket making, pottery and wooden furniture making which are received on daily, contract and family house hold basis. Handicraft labourers are not able to lead a reasonable standard of living, so most of them are engaged in other types of subsidiary works, such as coolie, driving, mason, cooks, tailoring, merchants, etc. On the basis of labour earnings from household handicraft, labourers engaged in wooden furniture

making get a comparatively larger earnings than the craftsmen and crafts women engaged in rest of the household handicrafts. Labour earnings are the worst in pottery work. Table 5.4 illustrates the earnings of household handicraft labourers.

Table 5.4

Labour Earnings from Household Handicraft Labour

Sample Handicraft	Average Daily Income from the Craft (Rs.)	Average Working Hours	Type of Labour
Mat weaving	25	9	Family labour
Bamboo basket making	40	8	daily labour & Family labour
Pottery	35	8	daily labour & Family labour
Wooden furniture making	125	8	Daily labour

Source: Survey data.

Table 5.4 shows that although the labour hours for mat weavers are lengthier, their earnings from the labour are low. In pottery as well as in bamboo basket making, the influence of both family labour and daily labour are observable to a great extent.

Figure 5.4

Bar Diagram Showing Average Working Hours

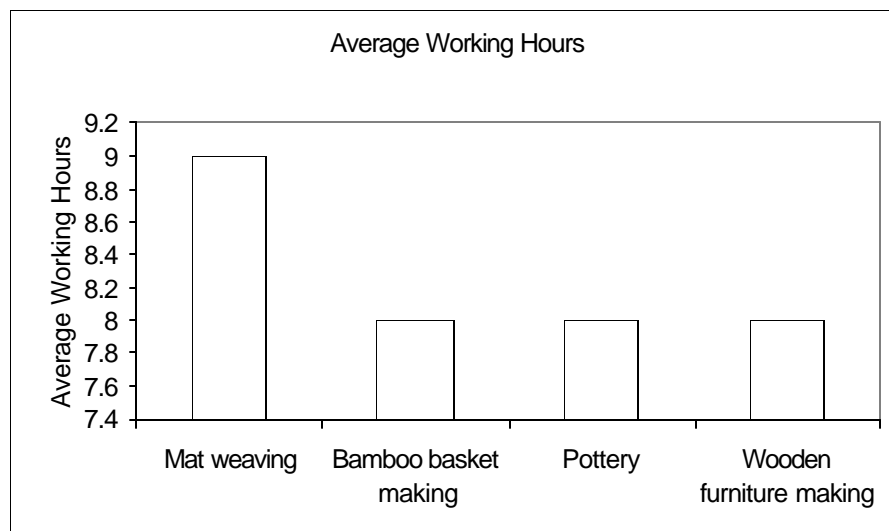
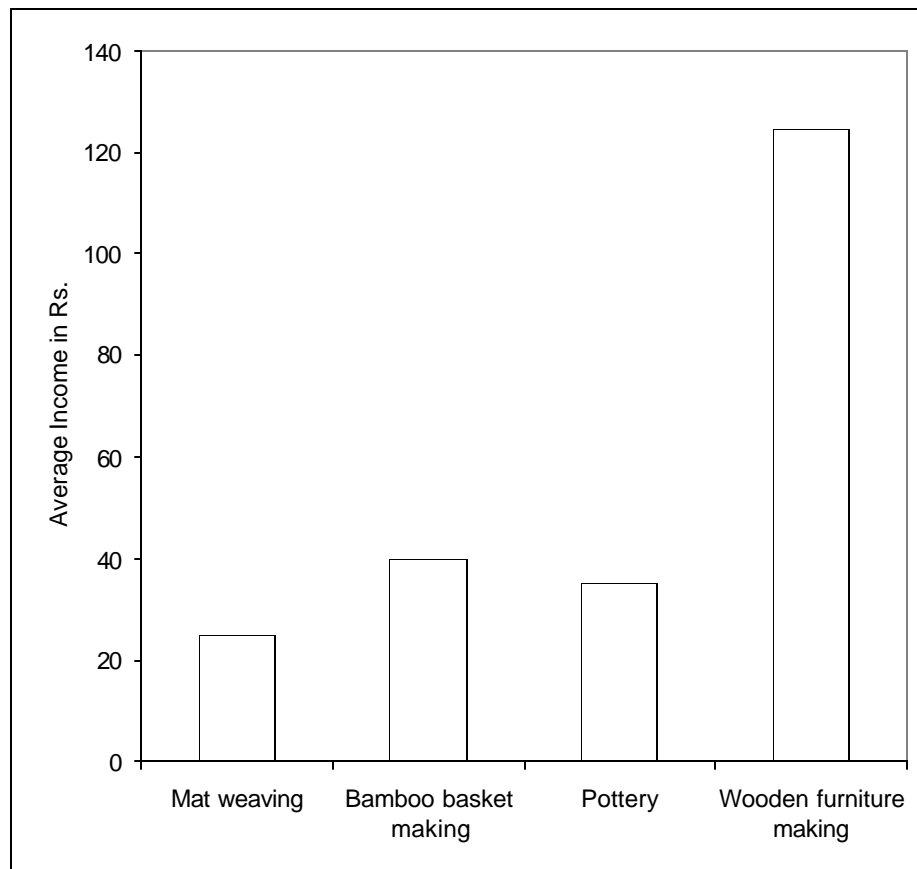


Figure 5.5
Diagram Showing Average Income



5.1.5. Earnings from Other Sources of the Household Handicraft Labourers

The returns from household handicraft are not attractive, especially in mat weaving and pottery. Thus, these labourers seek subsidiary occupation. Among the women labourers in mat weaving, only a small percentage seek subsidiary occupations even though the earnings from their craft is insufficient to lead a reasonable standard of living. Generally speaking, compared to female labourers, male labourers go for other occupations like coolie, running teashop, engaging in other manual works, tailoring, selling fish, driving, jewellery works, working in tile factory, running workshop and mason works. The percentage of labourers seeking other works is practically absent among wooden furniture labourers. Women labourers in pottery prefer to stick on to their traditional labour even though the return from their craft is not that rewarding. The tendency to seek other occupations is widely seen among the younger generation, irrespective of all household handicraft.

5.2. The Social setup of Household Handicraft Labourers – An Analysis

Our field survey was also aimed at identifying the position of household handicraft labourers in the society. The picture shows a grim scenario because they lack many of the pre requisites for climbing up the social ladder. Majority of them are not properly educated, the leadership qualities and the social life are limited and self centred. The schemes offered through the government for arousing social awareness failed to reach these sections of the society. We have taken two indicators for determining the social progress of the four categories of handicraft labourers, namely, education and involvement in socio-political organisations.

5.2.1. Educational Status of Household Handicraft Family Members

For studying the educational status of the respondents, we have considered 250 family units belonging to four categories of handicrafts, in Thrissur area.

Table 5.5
Educational Standard of the Respondents

Sample Handicraft Forms	Illiterate	Primary	U.P	High School	Higher Secondary	Degree	Highly Qualified	Total
Mat weaving	19	63	69	80	11	5	1	248
Bamboo basket making	37	41	21	70	13	7	2	191
Pottery	42	48	47	37	5	3	1	183
Wooden furniture making	10	27	47	72	14	12	8	190
Total	108	179	184	259	43	27	12	812

Source: Survey data.

Table 5.5 clearly shows that the educational standard of the potters is low, whereas there is great advancement in the area of education in families engaged in bamboo basket making. This is because these households which are belonging to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, enjoy educational benefits from the government. It should also be noted that illiteracy is widely seen among the bamboo basket makers belonging to old age group. The educational standard is very high among the families belonging to wooden furniture making. In this regard, mat weavers reveal a gloomy picture.

Figure 5.6

Diagram Showing the Educational Status of the Mat Weaving Group

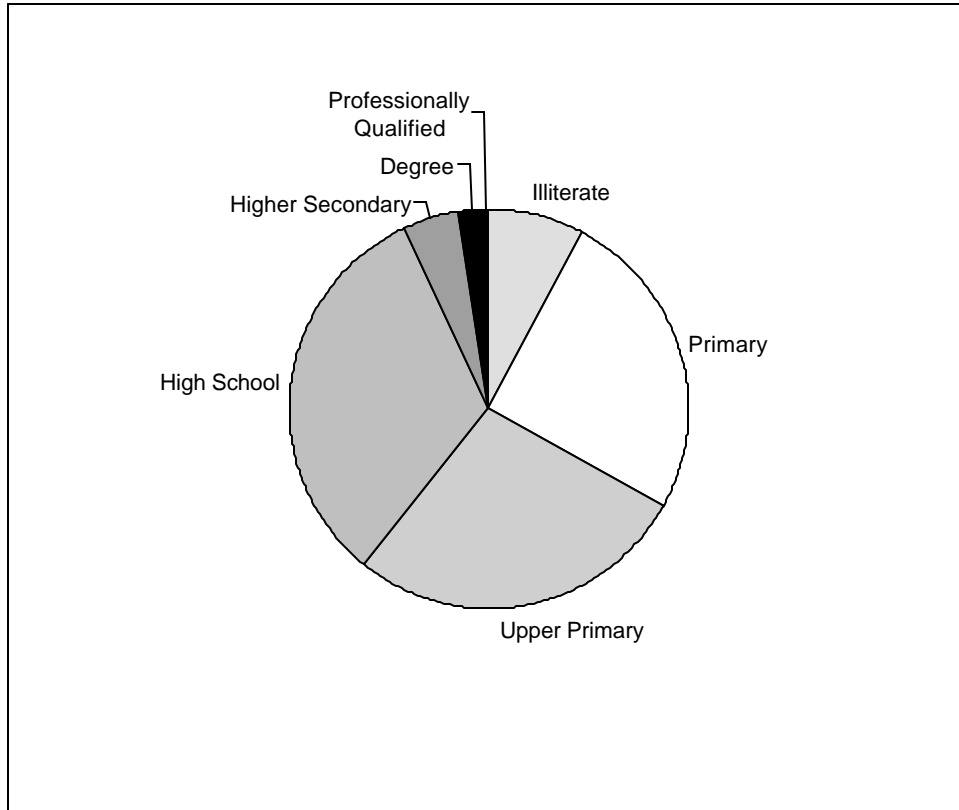


Figure 5.7

Figure Showing the Educational Status of the Basket Making Group

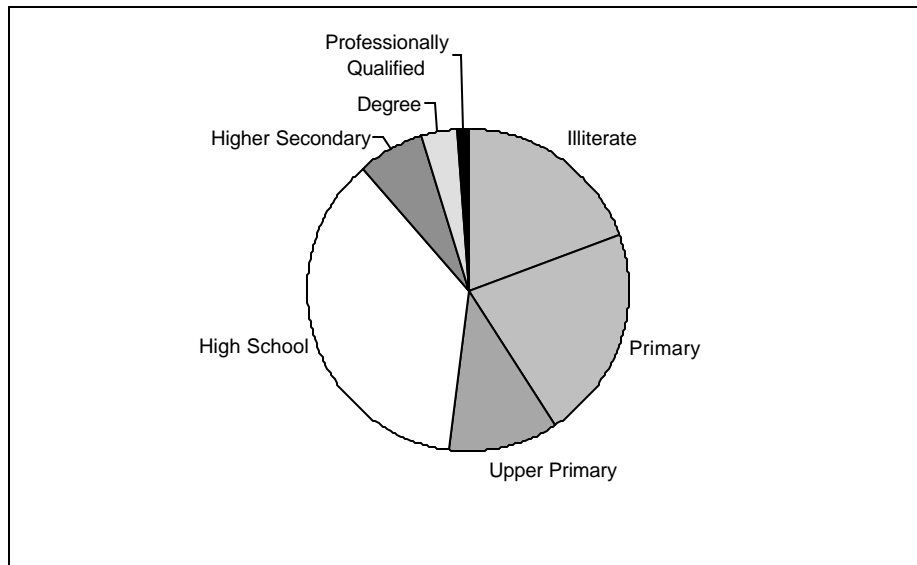


Figure 5.8

Figure Showing the Educational Status of the Pottery Group

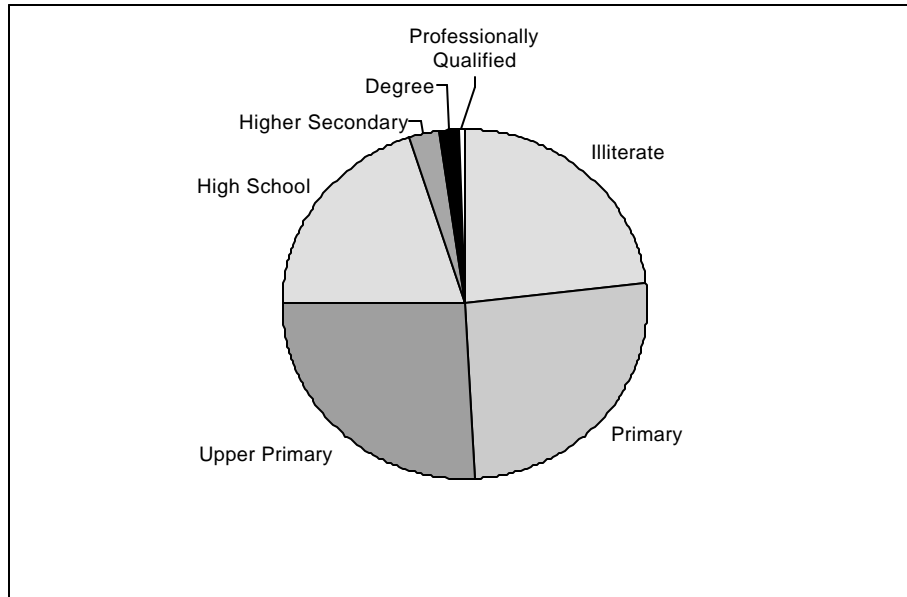
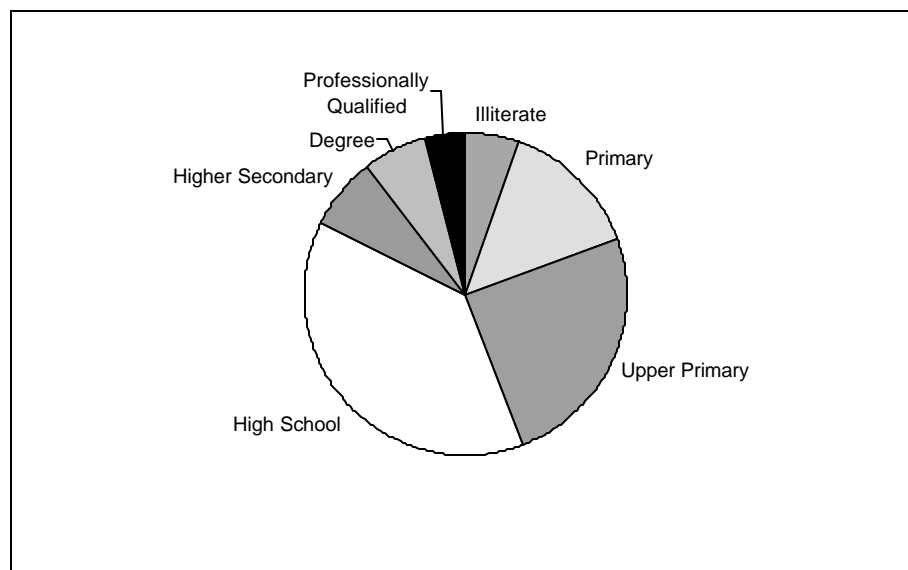


Figure 5.9

Figure Showing the Educational Status of the Wooden Furniture Making Group



But their position is comparatively better than the potters. Besides taking education as a social indicator for deciding the social status of the sample labourers, we

have also taken leadership quality as an important indicator for judging the social position of the labourers. From the field survey, which covered 250 sample units belonging to the four household handicrafts, showed that the social awareness of craftsmen and craftswomen is rather low. Their involvement in social as well as political organisations is negligible. Odan Mahasbha, an organisation for the welfare of the potters which is located in Chittisery, failed to attract more members. Some twenty years ago, minor attempts were made to organise the mat weavers and the bamboo basket makers especially in Edavilangu and Kodali area. But at present none from any households is taking any initiative in organisational activities of socio-political groups. The influence of trade unions is some what seen among wooden furniture makers. But craftsmen are not really active in any organisational activities.

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CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

The project report on ‘Economics of Labour in the Traditional Handicrafts Industries of Kerala - A Case Study of Thrissur District’, contains seven chapters. In the first chapter, we have given a brief introduction on the relevance of labour in different areas of production, particularly labour in handicrafts industries. In the same chapter we have also illustrated the significance of a labour oriented study like the present one. The importance of study on handicrafts labour is all the more relevant considering its micro as well as macro level importance since handicrafts labour enables us to get valuable foreign exchange and also provides employment to a great number of persons at the local level. The study is very important since it is focused upon house hold handicraft labour based on locally available raw materials like screw pine leaves, bamboo, clay and wood.

While reviewing literature in the introductory chapter, we have gone through the literature related with handicrafts industry. Reports, pamphlets, journals, dissertations, books and publications were the sources of secondary data.

The objectives for our study are also mentioned in this chapter. We have four objectives.

The first objective is to identify the influence of caste and community, age, and gender on household handicrafts labour. The second objective is concerned with inputs other than labour in household handicrafts production. The third objective of the study is the documentation of household handicrafts technology. Our final objective is an analysis on the socio-economic aspects of household handicraft labourers.

The methodology of the project work is given in the introductory chapter and this is followed by the limitations of the project work. The first chapter concludes with a note on the present research problem and chapterisation of the report.

In the second chapter we have documented the different forms of handicrafts in India and Kerala. By doing so, we have gathered information regarding the location of handicrafts labour in India and particularly in Kerala.

The third chapter gives an account on the labour and labourers connected with the selected household handicrafts namely mat weaving, bamboo basket making, pottery and wooden furniture making.

The analysis on the influence of caste and community, age and gender is carried out in the fourth chapter.

The next chapter deals with the inputs involved in household handicrafts production, technological aspects of household handicrafts and the involvement of labour in this technology.

The sixth chapter is concerned with the socio-economic aspects of craftsmen and crafts women, in the sample handicrafts forms. The final chapter summarises and also furnishes the major findings of the study. Important policy prescriptions are also given in the last chapter.

6.1 Major Findings of the study

Our study was restricted to one particular form of handicraft labour, namely, house hold handicrafts labour. From the available sources, we could identify six major forms of handicrafts and we have classified these handicrafts as Type I, Type II, Type III, Type IV Type V and Type VI. Under Type I handicrafts, we have included household handicraft products. Under Type II, we have included those handicraft items which are used for veneration. Type III handicrafts include items used for festivals. Musical instruments fall under Type IV handicrafts. Handicraft items used for classical

art forms are coming under Type V handicraft. Type VI handicraft includes curio items used for decorative purpose.

Since we have focused our attention only on household handicraft, findings are also directed, towards this dimensions. Again, it should also be noted that, a labour oriented study of this kind, is a deep rooted one for which it requires a lot of commitment for its full fledged clarity. Our study is restricted to a small span of time period within which we could gather certain ideas connected with household handicrafts labour.

6.2 Caste and community, Age, Gender And its influence on household handicrafts labour

Household handicrafts labour is highly tradition-bound. This labour has a great influence of caste and community. For instance, Ezhava Community more or less specializes in mat weaving, odanmars in pottery, scheduled caste and scheduled Tribes in bamboo basket making. The carpentry work used to be traditionally carried out by Asaris, but of late, there has been a tendency of labourers belonging to other caste and community to enter into this areas. Thus, only in wooden furniture making there is an intermixing of laboureres irrespective of caste and community. The participation of high caste community is practically nill in the case of mat weaving, bamboo basket making and pottery.

Age wise, it is observed that except in wooden furniture making , younger generation has only a small representation in house hold handicraft labour of mat weaving, bamboo basket making and pottery. This is mainly because of the inadequate returns from these household handicrafts. In bamboo basket making due to reservation rights and advancement in education, they go for other jobs and occupations. In wooden furniture making, young labourers are more involved.

Gender-wise, it is noted that, except in wooden furniture making, there is a great domination of female labour. In pottery works, there is an equal participation of both male and female workers.

6.3 Inputs other than labour

Locally available raw materials are observed to be the main input for household handicraft. Although these raw-materials were available free of cost in olden times at present they are acquired on a commercial basis. Another observable fact about the raw-material is its rapid rise in prices. Again, these raw-materials are supplied by contractors as well as on lease basis also. Only in wooden furniture making, electricity is used as an input because in this craft mechanization is seen in almost all stages of production.

6.4 Technology of household handicraft industry

House hold handicraft technology remains to be a highly labour intensive technology. The state of technology remains to be the same through out. But in wooden furniture making there is a great trend towards technological change. Changes are highly noticeable in sketching and designing. Generally speaking household handicraft technology can be considered as an indigenous technology since it is based on locally available labour, raw-materials and other inputs. Among the four household handicrafts, the most expensive technology is that of wooden furniture technology. Technology and technique of production are the cheapest for mat weaving. An important finding about the labour participation in comparison with other inputs, is that capital is predominant in wooden furniture making. And in the case of Pottery there is fifty-fifty participation of labour in comparison with other inputs. With regard to the mat weaving and bamboo basket making, there is a 75% participation for labour.

The main primary factor effecting this variation in labour – other inputs participation is the input cost.

6.5 Socio -Economic aspects of Crafts men and Crafts women

The socio-economic profile on crafts men and the crafts women shows a gloomy picture. The socio economic standards of these labourers are poor and very low. Among these labourers, the social position of the potters are far from satisfactory. Women are far behind in education and making a career Leadership activities are more or less dormant among the potters and their involvement in voluntary organizations is also negligible. The living standard of the majority of the potters is substandard. Female alcoholism is another peculiarity among the potter families.

The mat weavers, with highly female labour orientation also show a low profile on socio-economic side. Educational standards among them are very low. and they play only a passive roles in social activities and their living standard is very poor. They have a far accessibility towards modern standard of living. Although the scheduled caste and scheduled tribes engaged in bamboo basket making are enjoying the benefits of reservation, these people fail to climb up the social ladder. The labourers in wooden furniture making have a comparative advantage over the rest of the sample handicraft laborers but, these labourers, are also inactive in social and political activities.

The labour trend data of household handicrafts shows that there is a great tendency for these labourer to leave their traditional occupation and seek works elsewhere

6.6 Policy Prescriptions

1. As a policy measure household handicraft societies should be formed at panchayath levels for helping the craftsmen and crafts women in getting raw-materials, credit and other inputs at subsidized rate.
2. Again, these societies should be a centre place for marketing their products.
3. Small exhibitions should be organised by Kairali and Surabhi in rural areas for identifying experienced, talented craftsmen and crafts women. Awards and

recognition should also be given at Panchayath level for boosting the morale of these labourers.

4. At Schools, College level, as a part of youth festivals, competition should also be held in making house hold handicrafts.
5. For popularizing the use of household handicrafts among all sections of the society, proper propaganda measures should be initiated through media net works.

Thus the labour, labourers and the industry should be maintained encouraged and boosted through governmental measures as well as by the active participation of the people at the local level.

The study clearly shows that the house hold handicrafts industry is adversely affected due to the internal as well as external competition. Again, there is a steady fall in the domestic demand for traditional household handicraft items. This hazardous tendency definitely affect thousands of crafts men and crafts women living in the different parts of the state. The writing is already on the wall, and urgent steps and measures are needed to protect the labour and the labourers belonging to the household handicraft industry. Protectionism should be the watch word in these times of globalisation.

Table 3.2
Details of the Field Survey

Sample Household Handicraft	Sample Units	Sample Area	Taluk	Block	Panchayath	Sample Raw Materials	Sample Products
Mat Weaving	70	Edavilangu, Kothparambu, Perinjanam, Moonnu Peedika, Ballivattam	Mukundapuram	Kodungallur, Mathilakam, Vellangallore	Edavalinge, Perinjanam, Vellangallore	Screw pine leaves	Mat
Bamboo Basket Making	60	Kodali, Nayarangai, Kaduppassery, Nadavarambu, Vellikulangara	Mukundapuram	Chalakudy, Vellangallore	Kodassery, Pariyaram, Vellkara, Mattathore	Bamboo	Bamboo Baskets and Bamboo Mats
Pottery	60	Cherur, Chittissery, Annallur, Chengaloor, Kodakara	Mukundapuram, Thrissur	Kodakara, Chalakudy, Irinjalakuda Municipality	Pudukkad, Kodakara, Aloor, Vellangallore	Clay	Household pots
Wooden Furniture Making	40	Chevoor, Cherpu, Thrikkur, Ammadam, Chapara	Thrissur, Kodungallore	Kodakara, Cherpu	Cherpu, Paralam, Edavilangue	Wood	Carved Wooden Furniture

LIST OF FIGURES

1. 3.1 Pie Diagram showing the caste and community wise distribution of labour in Mat weaving.
2. 3.2 Pie Diagram showing the caste and community wise distribution of labour in wooden furniture making.
3. 3.3 Percentage Bar Diagram showing Gender wise distribution of labour.
4. 3.4 Subdivided Bar diagram showing Age wise distribution of labour.
5. 4.1 Figure showing sources of capital.
6. 5.1 Figure showing land ownership pattern of the respondents.
7. 5.2 Subdivided Bar diagram showing housing condition
8. 5.3 Figure showing the electrified and non electrified houses.
9. 5.4 Bar diagram showing the Average working hours.
10. 5.5 Bar Diagram showing average income.
11. 5.6 Figure showing the educational status of the Mat Weaving Group.
12. 5.7 Figure showing the educational status of the Mat Weaving Group
13. 5.8 Educational Standard of the Pottery Group
14. 5.9 Educational Status of the Wooden Furniture Making Group

LIST OF TABLES

- 2.1 Handicraft labour centres in India
- 2.2 Handicraft labour centres in Kerala

- 3.1 District population on the basis of taluks
- 3.2 Details about field survey
- 3.3 Distribution of labour on the basis of caste and community
- 3.4 Gender-wise distribution of handicrafts labour
- 3.5 Age-wise distribution of handicraft labour
- 3.6 Type and nature of handicrafts of labour
- 4.1 Inputs other than labour used in sample handicrafts
- 4.2 Sources of capital
- 4.3 Labour capital share in house hold handicrafts
- 5.1 Land ownership of the sample handicraft labourers
- 5.2 Housing condition
- 5.3 Home appliances used by sample households
- 5.4 Labour earnings
- 5.5 Educational standard of respondents

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE RELATED TO LAB OUR AND LABOURERS IN HOUSEHOLD HANDICRAFTS OF THRISSUR DISTRICT

Sl. No	Handicraft form	Sample units	Taluk	Block	Panchayat	Households surveyed
1	Mat weaving with screw pine leaves	Edavilangu, Kothaparambu, Moonnupeedika, Vallivattam, Kodungallur	Kodungallur	Kodungallur, Mathilakam, Vellangallur	Edavilangu, Perinjanam, Vellangallur	70
2	Pottery	Amballur, Chengalur	Mukundapuram	Kodakara, Chelakudy	Pudukad, Kodakara	60

		Chengalur, Kodakara, Paingode and Irinjalakuda		Chalaky, Irinjalakuda	Kodakara, Aloor, Vellangallur	
3	Bamboo basket making	Nayarangadi, Kodali, Kaduppasseri, Nadavaramba, Vellikulangara	Mukundapuram	Chalaky, Vellangallur	Kodassery, Velukara, Mattathur	70
4	Wooden furniture making	Cherpu, Chevoor, Thrissur, Ammadam, Chappara	Thrissur, Kodungallur	Cherpu, Kodakara	Cherpu, Paralam, Edavilangu	60

I. Caste & Community, Age, Gender, Type and Nature of Labour

1. Caste and Community :
2. Age :
3. Male/Female :
4. Total No. of family members :
5. Full time/part time/ contract/
daily/household

II. Inputs other than labour

1. Other inputs used :
2. Sources of capital :
3. Availability of inputs :
4. Price of inputs :

III. Technology of household handicraft

1. Different phases of production :
2. Changes in methods and
technique of production :
3. Labour-capital share in the
technology

IV. Socio-economic aspects of the labourers

A. Economic Aspects

1. Earnings from the craft :
2. Type of house
(thatched, tiled, or concrete) :
3. Electrified or not :

4. Possessed land area :
5. Saving :
6. Other sources of income :

B. Social aspects

1. Education
2. Investment in socio-political organisations
3. Handicraft form

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