

**PROTECTION AND REVIVAL OF
TODA TRIBAL EMBROIDERY OF NILGIRI HILLS IN THE
ERA OF COMMERCIALIZATION OF INDIGENOUS CRAFTS**

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of the requirements for the award of the degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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DECLARATION

I, Anupama M N, hereby declare that the dissertation entitled “Protection and Revival of Toda Tribal Embroidery of Nilgiri Hills in the Era of Commercialization of Indigenous Crafts” submitted by me in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY is my bonafide work and that it has not been submitted so far in part or full, for any degree or diploma of this university or any other university

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Dedicated to my younger self

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Conceptual Framework

Todas are one of the six Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)¹, predominantly located in the Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu. According to the 2011 Census, there are 2002 Todas in the state of Tamil Nadu out of which a majority are settled in the Nilgiris (Census of India, 2011d). The Todas (also known as Todawars or Torawurs) are considered to be the original inhabitants of the Nilgiris (Shortt, 1868). This position and rights are not only claimed by the tribes themselves but also conceded to them by other hill tribes. Todas have been a point of interest ever since the Nilgiris opened up over 200 years ago. Their culture primarily revolved around herds of buffaloes and their unique '*Putkuli*' cloaks have been a significant part of their identity (Chhabra, 2000).

The Todas used to be a pastoral community. However, their interaction with civilization has caused lifestyle changes including the sidelining of buffalo herding and increasing ventures into agriculture and other occupations (Census of India, 2011a) (Walker A. R., 2012). Toda embroidery, known as *Pukhur* or *Pugur* (meaning flower) is a craft that has been transferred from generation to generation predominantly as the core of their social, community and cultural interaction (Sharma & Bhagat, 2018). This unique style of embroidery is done on a woven cloth with black, red and occasionally blue thread or woollen yarn. *Pukhur*, prepared by Toda women is the most striking feature of Toda clothes (Emeneau, 1937b). *Putkuli* is the traditional shawl or cloak of the Todas crafted with this technique and worn on all special occasions by the members of the Toda community.

Today, with the rise in tourism, Todas and their unique craft have been gaining popularity. The geographical location of the tribes coinciding with one of the top tourist destinations in Tamil Nadu has paved way for the commercialization of the craft.

¹ The Ministry of Tribal Affairs identifies certain tribes as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) based on conditions such as “pre-agricultural level of technology, stagnant or declining population, low literacy and subsistence level of economy” (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21).

Although this commercialization was initiated by missionaries in the past, Todas now take pride and play an active role in sharing a part of their culture with the external audience. Commercialization has led to changes in the craft in terms of innovations and diversifications in the embroidered goods produced and offered.

Presently, women from Toda hamlets (known as *Munds*) across Nilgiris have been organizing themselves in Self Help Groups to make an earning from their craft, while simultaneously upholding their culture. Central and State Governments alongside Non-Governmental Organizations such as Nilgiri Adivasi Welfare Association and Cooperative societies have been working with the community for the protection and revival of this unique craft. Toda embroidery was formally granted the GI certificate by the Government of India in August 2013 (Annexure 1). This has provided the craft with an added economic value through conveying a cultural identity with the help of the region of origin. This in turn has also inspired the socio-economic development of this indigenous community.

1.2 Definition of Handicrafts

UNESCO-UNCTAD/WTO² defines handicrafts as “products that are produced by artisans, either completely by hand or with the help of hand tools or even mechanical means”. The “direct manual contribution of the artisan” is the most significant component in such finished products (UNESCO-UNCTAD/WTO, 1997).

Even as millions of people in India make a living producing handcrafted goods with their knowledge of traditional techniques and skills, there are issues pertaining to their categorization. The terms ‘craftsperson’ and ‘artisan’ are commonly used synonymously. Terms such as ‘handicrafts’, ‘cottage industries’, ‘household industries’ or ‘traditional industries’ are also used. This vagueness that exists across various data sources makes data comparison and compiling tough (Liebl & Roy, 2003).

² At the International Symposium on "Crafts and the International Market: Trade and Customs Codification" held at Manila, Philippines in 1997

While there is no singular universally approved definition for handicrafts, the following are common features associated with them (WIPO, 2016):

- i) They are produced by artisans entirely by hands, hand tools or machinery.
- ii) The artisans' manual contribution to these products is significantly high.
- iii) These expressions or representations are often demonstrative of the artisan's culture.
- iv) They are often functional, appealing, artistic, creative, culturally attached, ornamental, traditional or religiously and socially emblematic and significant.
- v) Every piece created is typically unique with no limit on the production quantity

In addition to the aforementioned characteristics, traditional handicrafts are unique in that they are often transferred from one generation to the next. Such handicrafts are often linked to a certain indigenous or local community (WIPO, 2016).

1.3 Definition of Indigenous Knowledge

Indigenous knowledge as defined by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the “knowledge that is held and used by people who identify themselves as indigenous of a place based on a combination of cultural distinctiveness and a priori territorial occupancy relative to a more recently arrived population with its own distinct and subsequently dominant culture” (UNEP, 1996) (Mugabe, 2001).

UNESCO defines local and indigenous knowledge as “understandings, skills and philosophies developed by societies with long histories of interaction with their natural surroundings. This knowledge is fundamental to a cultural complex that also encompasses language, systems of classification, resource use practices, social interactions, ritual and spirituality” (UNESCO) (Kuriakose, 2010). While terms such as ‘knowledge’, ‘belief’ and ‘tradition’ are often distinguished to mean factual data, religious concepts and practices respectively, these are also used interchangeably to define Indigenous epistemologies (Bruchac, 2014).

For communities who maintain, practise and develop them, traditional cultural expressions are treasured cultural, social, historical and economic assets (WIPO, 2016). This knowledge is conveyed via social encounters, spoken traditions, ritual practices and other activities among kin groups and communities (Bruchac, 2014).

1.4 Commercialization of Indigenous Crafts

In a stratified society consisting of dominant and conquered strata, the latter is said to produce two types of arts – inwardly directed arts and arts made for the dominant or external world. The latter kind is significant because it helps present an ethnic image to the outside world. This image needs to be protected and projected as a “boundary-defining system” (Graburn, 1976). When ethnic crafts are produced for an external audience, it often turns into a new ‘cultural marker’. These products provide the ethnic group with an outward image and identity which is henceforth considered a significant consequence of the commercialization of such crafts (Cohen, 1989).

Traditional Knowledge (TK) and Traditional Cultural Expressions (TCE) being economic assets may be “used, traded or licensed” for revenue generation and economic development (WIPO, 2016). The process of commercialization of ethnic crafts is not uniform or isolated. The alignment of a complexly interlinked range of factors (economic, religious, cultural and political) determines its course to a great degree (Cohen, 1989). As noted by Joshi & Chelliah (2013), “The commercialization of traditional knowledge starts with scouting for traditional knowledge, validation, value addition, product and enterprise development, Intellectual property rights protection, licencing and diffusion of the knowledge or innovation” (Joshi & Chelliah, 2013).

Cohen (1989) considers two factors while trying to understand this process of commercialization – i) the vitality of the local ethnic culture and ii) the source of initiative for commercialization. By the former, he means whether the craft in question has been vital and flourishing or in a state of general decline under the influence of external factors when commercialization set in. Secondly, he considers whether the commercialization process was instigated by the native people in the hope of opportunities or induced by an external force or agency for reasons that may be commercial or humanitarian. Cohen points out traders, exporters, government officials, missionaries etc. as examples of such external agencies (Cohen, 1989).

1.5 Types of Commercialization of Indigenous Crafts

Cohen defines four kinds of commercialization when it comes to ethnic crafts namely “Complementary Commercialization”, “Substitutive Commercialization”, “Encroaching Commercialization” and “Rehabilitative Commercialization” (Cohen, 1989).

Table 1.1 Types of Commercialization of Ethnic Crafts (Cohen, 1989)

| Culture | Source of Initiative | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | Spontaneous | Sponsored |
| Vital | A) Complementary Commercialization | C) Encroaching Commercialization |
| Declining | B) Substitutive Commercialization | D) Rehabilitative Commercialisation |

Source: Adapted from (Cohen, The Commercialization of Ethnic Crafts, 1989)

A) **Complementary Commercialization** is when the traditional crafts persons continue to make their crafts for the internal audience and occasionally offer these to outsiders (traders, tourists) who visit their settlements. Here, there is usually no discrimination in the type of products offered for both parties. With time, however, they may begin to make a distinction between the products made for local use and those made for sale to the external audience. This differentiation is often very minimal.

If practised correctly, this type of commercialization does not disturb the local culture and social relations according to Cohen (1989). Nevertheless, if left unchecked, this may lead to the products offered for sale degenerating into items without any ethnographic value as the prospective customers have little to no knowledge about the same (Cohen, 1989).

B) **Substitutive Commercialization** occurs when native crafts persons are driven out of business owing to external interferences such as political disturbances, missionary intrusions and industrial goods. This leads to a decline in their numbers, quality of work and specialization owing to the drop in the younger generation's interest in pursuing the same (Cohen, 1989).

However, the increased contact with the outer world may also bring in alternative outlets for their products, leading to the revitalisation of these crafts or the emergence of new ones. The producers of these spontaneously commercialized products adapt to what they see as the taste of the external audience. While this could be profitable in the initial stages with more customers being attracted to it, it also draws additional producers who lack the sufficient knowledge or skills for the same. With the lack of promoting agencies, the market faces the threat of stagnation (Cohen, 1989).

C) **Encroaching Commercialization** is when native crafts persons are hired by an external sponsoring agency for the production of marketable products. This happens when the said community is relatively in isolation and lacks direct access to the tourist market (Cohen, 1989). This type of commercialization may take place even if the craft is flourishing. Cohen points out that as long as this type of commercialization is limited in scope, the cultural impact it has will be insignificant while simultaneously providing the economy with an income, although moderate. In cases where such agencies operate out of purely monetary motives, the local skills are bound to be exploited to create 'standardized' handmade products (Cohen, 1989).

D) **Rehabilitative Commercialization** is the most common type of commercialization. This occurs when external markets and economic forces come to play in reviving a declining craft of a particular ethnic group. In such cases, sponsoring agencies act as intermediaries to manufacture products for an external market. The impact this commercialization has on the local culture will be less serious, considering the already declining state of the craft. On the contrary, the probability of the extinction of the craft is high if this commercialization fails to take place (Cohen, 1989).

1.6 Statement of Problem

Handicrafts are “traditional cultural expressions” (TCEs) and owing to the skills and know-how required used in creating handicrafts, they often embody traditional knowledge. The knowledge and expression in the form of handicrafts are treasured cultural, social and historical possessions of the societies that uphold, practise and advance them (WIPO, 2016). Craft production acts as a medium of communication through which an external audience is educated about the ethnic community, in terms of their customs, historical experiences and current state (Cohen, 1989).

The handicraft sector in India is considered to have huge potential in terms of the economic development of the country. The sector is the largest generator of employment in India following agriculture, despite being undertaken by households in the unorganized sector (Craft Council of India, 2011) (All India Artisans and Craftworkers Welfare Association, 2017). Employment in the handicraft sector had a growth rate of 7.3 per cent during the Eleventh Plan period with an increase from 58.50 lakh persons in 2008-09 to 72.30 lakh in 2011-12 (Planning Commission, Government of India, 2013).

Pukhur or Toda embroidery is a traditional craft practised by women belonging to the Toda tribal community in the Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu. Owing to the dwindling population of the tribes and lack of proper revival and protection measures, the craft is facing the risk of decline. Over the years, attempts have been made by several governmental and non-governmental organizations to revive the craft. This is mostly carried out via means of promoting the commercialization of the craft and by providing the community with support in the form of marketing and capacity building.

Tourism in the Nilgiris and the associated commercialization have helped provide the craft with new meanings. The Nilgiris being a tourist destination with rich tribal crafts such as Toda embroidery, Kota pottery, Kurumba paintings, basketry and bamboo works holds potential for craft tourism. In this study, we are seeking to understand the present standing of the Toda embroidery and the process of its commercialization. We will be examining the influence of tourism if any on the practice and whether the location of these Toda settlements impacts the persistence of the craft. We shall also be looking at the commercialization process in the light of the types of commercialization as defined by Cohen (1989). The roles played by various stakeholders in the supply chain in the commercialization process are taken into consideration. Finally, the existing protection and revival measures initiated at various levels are inspected.

1.7 Review of Literature

Commercialization of ethnic, indigenous or folk art or crafts has been a topic of interest internationally. Several scholars have discussed this matter with regards to the factors that lead to it, the changes such arts or crafts undergo over time and the stakeholders in the process of commercialization.

In the introduction of his book, Nelson H H Graburn defines The Fourth World as “the collective name for all aboriginal or native peoples whose lands fall within the national boundaries and techno-bureaucratic administrations of the countries of the First, Second and Third Worlds. As such they are peoples without countries of their own, peoples who are usually in the minority and without the power to direct the course of their collective lives” (Graburn, 1976). He separates Fourth world art from “primitive” art to look at them as “changing arts” in terms of the ethnicities that are emerging, identities that are transforming, and the commercial and colonial stimuli and authoritarian actions. The

book contains descriptions of several societies that have undergone change or acculturation in some form. Graburn attributes the perseverance of traditional arts and crafts to a handful of aspects. This includes the obtainability of traditional raw materials, persistent demand for the items, knowledge of the skills, availability of time, recognition from community members and the part it plays in upholding the belief systems (Graburn, 1976).

In cases where the preferences and needs of the consumer become more central than the artist's and the traditionality of the craft, "tourist" arts come into being. This happens as a result of aesthetic standards getting overpowered by profit motive (Graburn, 1976). Ben-Amos (1977) in her paper "Pidgin Languages and Tourist Arts" points out the trends in research that have started to consider the manifestation of tourist arts as "creative adaptation". She writes about how tourist arts can be considered a system of communication. Considering tourist arts as a communicative system, she explores questions such as how and why these forms develop, how the communication takes place and the rules surrounding the construction and approval of these fresh manifestations inside the system. She looks into some processes of change and takes the case of Benin Ebony Carvings to explore the aforementioned questions. Some of the parameters of change she explores are Standardization, changes in scale, expansion of motifs and employment of additional communicative systems.

Different aspects compel the commercialization of crafts. According to Chutia & Sarma (2016), countries focus on the commercialization of crafts either for the welfare of these communities or to revive dying traditions. They opine that in such cases of commercialization, the commoditization and transformation undergone by crafts are influenced by the extent of interaction between the customer and the producer. Here, the authors speak of the interconnectedness of tourism and commercialization.

According to Cohen (Cohen, 1989), Commercialization often leads to the creation of an external identity of the ethnic group as these wares begin to be produced for an external audience. This newly created identity that becomes a means of identification is soon internalized by the community themselves. In his words 'They may well begin to see themselves as producers of such and such line of embroideries or carvings although those may have been revived and changed through the demands of the tourist market, or even newly created in response to such demands'.

The impact of tourism on local communities and their cultures has been widely discussed. While many scholars have looked at tourism in a negative light with regards to how it can lead to the degradation of certain crafts and exploitation of communities, some studies focus on how tourism and the associated commercialization can help revive certain crafts and economies. The changes underwent by the craft as a result of it, and the impact it has on the 'authenticity' has also been a matter of discussion.

Greenwood (1977) in his paper points out that even as tourism may provide a significant boost to the local and national economy, it also results in uneven distribution of wealth. According to him, tourism is a diverse industry and its differentiation is vital in understanding the impact it has on the local communities. He points out that in circumstances of ethnic tourism, the local culture itself is treated as a commodity. Writing regarding The Alarde ritual of Fuenterrabia, he opines that commoditization essentially takes away from people, the meaning by which their lives are organized.

Contrary to Greenwood's view, Cohen (1988) in this paper has a different take on authenticity and its meaning in tourism. Cohen looks at authenticity as a negotiable as opposed to a primitive concept. He argues that even though commoditization may alter or add new meaning to cultural products, they do not necessarily destroy their meaning. In his article "The Commercialization of Ethnic Crafts" (Cohen, 1989), Cohen critiques the idea of declaring the commercialization of ethnic crafts as exploitative. According to Cohen, a re-examination of commercialization is necessary while we attempt to reconstruct our understanding and appreciation of commercialized products. He stresses the need to look at ethnic minorities in a broader light considering the several global forces that influence and modify their world. The article talks about four different types of Commercialization – Complementary, Substitutive, Encroaching and Rehabilitative and their cultural consequences on such communities.

It is not uncommon for ethnic products to change as a result of the commercialization process. In his case study, Cohen (1988b) attempts to understand the much critiqued grey area between authentic ethnic products and modern popular culture. He mentions how "authentic" ethnic products, usually of the "Fourth World" people (as Graburn defines them) enter the modern popular culture usually after a series of alterations. He coins the term "boutiquisation" to refer to the practice of assimilation of tribal elements into pop fashions which predominantly are preferred by post-modern youth. Cohen notes that,

even though “hybridization” or incorporation of tribal elements into pop fashions may easily be written off as exploitation of the community and the craft by outsiders, they also open up a market, thereby boosting its production. He adds how the simplicity of these small standardized products provided even less-skilled producers with access to the market.

While prior studies focused on remote and exotic indigenous contexts where tourism induced changes in crafts, Markwick (2001) in her study takes the case of the Maltese Islands which has a history of tourism. Here, she looks at the link between tourism and handicraft production with reference to commercialization. In Malta and Gozo of the Maltese Islands, the growth in the craft industry is attributed to the growth in the tourism sector in the mid-1960s, after the political independence. In this case, ‘complementary commercialization’ (Cohen, 1989) had led to the decline of traditional crafts such as lace-making as they were replaced by factory-produced products to satisfy the influx of tourists. Despite this, the author makes an interesting observation wherein the skilled lace makers were relatively less exploited because tourists on the lookout for ‘authentic experiences’ continued to buy from them. According to the author, as the traditional lace took on new meaning within the culture, it almost became ‘decommercialized’.

Biasio (2009) in her paper studies the transformation of contemporary Ethiopian paintings in Addis Ababa from church-based art to tourist art. The paper looks into the changes in terms of training of these artisans, marketing, style, purchasers etc. In Addis Ababa, the process of commercialization is said to have accelerated alongside the booming tourism between the 1950s and early 1970s. The commercialization and the increasing demand for these paintings had led to their production in an assembly-line fashion. The author also notes a shift in demand from canvas to parchment for these paintings in the early 1940s.

Commodities are defined as multifaceted social forms and distributions of knowledge by Arjun Appadurai in his book (Appadurai, 1986). He broadly identifies two kinds of knowledge – knowledge that is put into the production of a commodity and the one that goes into the appropriate consumption of the same. Knowledge of the market, the consumer and the end destination of the commodity comprises another dimension of production knowledge. While this knowledge is direct and complete with regard to internal consumption in traditional societies, it is relatively irregular and incomplete when

it comes to external demand. He points out how traders and his agents play the role of translating this external demand to these local producers that may lack direct contact. There have been studies concerning the role of various organizations in the commercialization and as a result, the revival of traditional crafts. These stakeholders often employ varying marketing channels to bring the products to the market.

Chen (1984) in their article writes about the revival of Kantha and Jamdani textile traditions of Bangladesh after the decline it underwent for over a century. The author attributed the decline of the Kantha in the 1970s to a multitude of forces. These included poverty and the consequent loss of leisure time, Hindu migration to India and external influences. Modernization led to the introduction of commercialized versions of the craft with a mixture of traditional and non-traditional motifs to suit the external demands. Here, the revival measures were spearheaded by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC). According to BRAC, a stable market for handicrafts would be possible only if they reflected indigenous traditions that are expanded overtime to keep up with the shifting demands and tastes. As a part of its activities, the poor and disadvantaged populations were organized into groups to plan, initiate and manage control group activities in social and economic sectors.

A few major initiatives taken by the BRAC were the promotion of handcrafted items, particularly baskets, mats, block-printing, embroidery lace, silk spinning and weaving; Establishment of a Rural Craft Centre to promote traditional crafts through a retail outlet and provide design and other support to the artisans; Streamlining the organization's research and documentation of these crafts by setting up Textile Design and Service Workshop and introduction of Traditional Craft Development Scheme to revive Bangladeshi crafts such as Kantha and Jamdani.

Similarly, The Thai government had attempted to commercialize crafts of the mountain tribes of Northern Thailand to incorporate them into the State (Cohen, 1988b). Cohen in his study mentions the role of national and foreign religious and humanitarian non-profit organizations, individual producers and middlemen in the commercialization process.

Marketing of handicrafts is done via multiple channels, whether done directly or with the help of external agents. Berma (1996) in their study examines small scale rural industrialization in Sarawak, Malaysia and the possibilities of employment expansion

through the same. Here, marketing is done through direct selling to individual consumers, Chinese traders, retailers, tour agencies, state-owned agencies or exporters (Berma, 1996). In tourism-rich areas, the producers are quick to commercialize their crafts as opposed to other regions (Chutia & Sarma (2016). Supplementing the views of Cohen (1989), Chutia and Sarma look at the role of NGOs in connecting the producers and customers thereby leading to “sponsored commercialization”. They cite the example of ‘Phulkari’ embroidery of Pakistan where NGOs helped revive it from extinction.

While the commercialization of handicrafts, particularly in indigenous communities is common in today’s era, it also calls for adequate measures for their protection. Orozco & Poonamallee (2014) in their article discuss the appropriation and commercialization of indigenous knowledge in the light of ethics. Here, indigenous knowledge is looked at as having the capability of being monetized, much like any other form of capital. It further examines the importance of Intellectual Property Rights in recognizing the rights of the people besides protecting them.

Given its rich history in handicrafts, the transactions made in cloth, as well as the wearing of new cloth or clothes, were a significant part of every major ritual surrounding the life cycle in preindustrial India (Baile, 1986). Adding to this, cloth played an important role in reaffirming political alliances and worship. Baile distinguishes three uses of cloth in the social process – to symbolize status or change in the same; as a transformative tool and as a promise for future protection. These attached meanings and uses, according to the author affect the artisan and service communities in the supply chain as much as it affects the recipient and the donor.

Several scholars have examined various Indian handicrafts and the impact of commercialization on the same. According to (Chutia & Sarma, 2016), commoditization in India is directly influenced by tourism. Some of the studies examining the commercialization of Indian handicrafts are Mohapatra (2005)’s paper on the Craft of Pipli in Orissa and the changes it has undergone, Naik & Vastrad (2008)’s study on the protection and revival of Kasuti embroidery of Karnataka, Paul (2017)’s study on the commercialization of Muga Silk of Assam, Chutia (2017)’s study on the impact of commercialization on the traditional sector of brass and bell metal in Assam and others.

Liebl & Roy (2003) in their paper examines the untapped potential of the Indian handicraft industry despite its performance in the global market and the efforts channelled towards its development over time. The paper is a summary of the findings and conclusions of a detailed report made on the Indian handicrafts sector in 2000-01 that was commissioned by Policy Sciences Center, Inc. The paper points out the Gujarat-Rajasthan cluster and Uttar Pradesh as home to the most commercially fruitful Indian crafts in terms of export, market development and infrastructure, long-distance trade and innovations. This success is attributed to flourishing tourism, comparatively low wages, a history of patronage for craftsmanship and governmental support in Rajasthan and Gujarat.

The authors take the case of Jaipur, Rajasthan where we can observe a unique collaboration of tourism, craft traditions, culture accommodating private enterprises, solid NGO movement and cooperation between government, NGOs and enterprises. Similarly, the handicraft boom in Jodhpur is attributed primarily to the efforts of a few individual dealers. In comparison to these states, the output in eastern and northeastern states continues to be largely made for domestic and rural consumption. In addition to this, they lack infrastructure, effective policies (especially prioritizing crafts), strong NGOs, tourism expansion, and governmental support for private enterprises.

Datta & Bhattacharyya (2016) in their study highlights the importance of the handicrafts industry as a contributor to the Indian economy. The study looks into its growth, markets and the various issues it faces. According to them, textile-based handicrafts alongside designers, block makers and weavers generate about half a million employment opportunities.

Mohapatra (2005) in his article 'Changing Patterns in the Applique Craft of Pipli' takes the case of the applique craft of Orissa and the changes it underwent in the recent decades. The makers of this craft (Darji caste) attribute this change to commercialization and the transient taste of customers. In addition to this, the change of the craft from being a secondary source of income to the primary source has diverted the attention of these artisans towards commercial work as opposed to classical work. He mentions two different categories of products made out of traditional applique work. There are products such as Chandua, Chhati, Alata, Trasa etc. used during religious ceremonies and products such as Batua (bag used to carry betel leaves) and Pasa-Pali (dice-mat) made for domestic

and individual use. However, they are getting replaced by products that are demanded by tourists such as wall hangings, cushion covers, lamp sheds and letter bags. Similarly, attractive motifs are getting replaced by monochrome and patchworks owing to their increasing demand. He observes that even as the craft undergoes a lot of changes, certain products endure owing to their connotation with religion and culture, similar to what (Markwick, 2001) observes in his study.

With regards to crafts in India that have received the GI tag, Sarkar (2007) has done a study on the impact of globalization on Madhubani Paintings, the folk art of Mithila in Bihar, India. Madhubani art received the GI tag from the Government of India in 2007, owing to its concentration in a particular area over several years. This gave the artists the exclusive monopoly over the art and knowledge is passed from generation to generation (Singh, 2020). According to Sarkar, commercialization in the case of Madhubani art has affected not the form of the painting but the place of creation. While it traditionally filled up the walls and floor spaces, they began to be made on paper, canvas and other materials (Sarkar, 2007).

Another embroidery craft that has received the GI tag is Kasuti embroidery of Karnataka which received the tag in 2006. Naik & Vastrad (2008) in their paper takes the case of Kasuti and discusses the efforts made towards the revival and preservation of the traditional Negi motif used in the same. They point out outdated technologies, disorganized production system, lack of working capital, traditionalist product range, inability to withstand the competition from the mill sector and the lack of progress in manufacture and sales as some of the major problems faced by the handloom sector.

The gradual disappearance of the Negi stitch is attributed to its requirement of skill, persistence, proficiency and sophistication, which many contemporary commercial embroiderers find hard to achieve. Here, an attempt to revive is made via means of mechanization and computerization. The authors opine that this accelerated the production process and made 'traditionality' accessible even for middle and low-income groups.

Jena (2010) in his article examines the impact of globalization on Indian handicrafts and craftspersons. He looks into concerns such as whether localness is truly sustained when it meets with the 'global'. He examines this in the light of two discourses – i) globalization

spreads the dominant culture across the world, making it homogenous and ii) globalization leads to heterogeneity owing to the diversity and plurality because of the interface created between global and local. According to the author, the fragmentation and increased diversity brought about by globalization promote plurality.

He opines that the increased significance of consumption patterns in the market economy makes way for innovations which in turn is a threat to originality. Innovations happen as the artisans are challenged to create fresh designs at lower costs. There is dependence on middlemen and trader entrepreneurs despite the increasing demand for their products in the global market. The author attributes this to the decreased bargaining power of the artists in a relatively competitive and liberalized market. When it comes to the implementation of developmental schemes, the dearth of knowledge about artisans and handicrafts units poses a major issue.

Paul (2017) in his study on the commercialization of Muga Silk looks at the process of acquisition, development and dissemination of indigenous knowledge among Muga farmers in Assam. It also looks into the existing indigenous practices, the process of commercialization and the various innovations that have been adopted by these farmers. Further, he looks at the prospects of the commercialization process and its impact on empowering Muga silk weavers in the study area

Chutia (2017) in his study looks at the extent and influence of commercialization of major crafts of Assam. In the era of global competition, handicraft artisans tend to compete with machine-made products for their sustenance. Chutia & Sarma (2017b) in their article takes the case of the traditional sector of brass and bell metal of Sarthebari and Hajo in Assam State of India. It looks at how the artisans were compelled to change certain traditional characteristics to keep up with the requirements and aesthetic orientation of modern customers.

The Nilgiris is perhaps the most intensively studied part of rural Asia (Hockings, 1989). Shortt (1868) in his book "An account of Hill Tribes of Neilghiris" describes Nilgiris as a stretch of land between 76 and 77° east and 11 and 12° of north latitude. Owing to the altitude and geographical location, the climate is influenced by both the monsoons. The Europeans are said to have established their sanitarium here once they discovered the

climatic advantages. Ross King describes the Nilgiris as an almost impassable belt of forest which was unexplored till the year 1819 (King, 1870).

Shortt (1868) mentions four hill divisions existing among the hill tribes. The plateau is divided into four Naads: 1) Paranganaad or Porkhorr 2) Mayknaad or Khorrorr 3) Koondanaad or Mheur 4) Tudanaad or Muzzoor. He mentions the five tribes inhabiting the hills – Todawurs, Badagas, Kotas, Kurumbas and Irulas. Out of these, Todawurs or Torawurs are considered aborigines, were leaf clad and roamed as unrestrained lords of the soil leading a pastoral nomadic life. Badagas on the other hand appeared later in the period and occupied the lower elevations. They engaged in tillage and cultivation of the soil. Studies pertaining to the Nilgiris have always mentioned these tribes. We get insights into these tribes from the accounts of Harkness (1832), Ouchterlony (1847), Metz (1864), Shortt (1868), Ross King (1870), Brecks (1873), Grigg (1880), Mandelbaum (1989 &1941), Noble (1968), Hockings (1989), Bird-David (1994) and others.

Harkness (1832) in his book, “A Description of a Singular Aboriginal Race” describes Todas as a people who may be considered the original inhabitants of the Nilgiri hills. It throws light into the organization of the tribe around dairies and the traditions surrounding it. Further, it gives us a brief idea about their costume, ornaments, settlements and dwellings, household duties, values, religion and language. In addition, the book also gives us insight into the life of hill tribes such as Badagas, Irulars, Kotas and Kurumbas. His book mentions the role of missionaries in encouraging Toda women to practise the craft, providing them with raw materials and wages for the embroidery work produced. The finished products were then sold through their centres.

In his report, Grigg (1880) provides an exhaustive description of the Nilgiris district. It goes into the general physiological characteristics, demographic characteristics, climate etc. In Chapter IX of this report, he provides an ethnological description of the hill tribes - The Todas, Koras, Kurumbas, Irulas and The Badagas.

In the article “Culture Change among the Nilgiri Tribes”, Mandelbaum (1941) writes about 4 tribes namely, Badagas, Kotas, Kurumbas and Todas who are mutually interdependent while being isolated together. William Ross King in his paper points out that when Todas and Kotas occupied the higher ranges of this hill whereas Irulas and

Kurumbas the lower ranges (King, 1870). Mandelbaum observes how they remain culturally distinctive even while being exposed to foreign customs and the causes for these differences among them. He mentions how Todas have been comparatively more exposed to the whites and points to how two of their villages are located within the bounds of the biggest English settlement (Mandelbaum, 1941).

Their geographical location had led them to form a social enclave remote from the plains and the Hindus of the lowlands. The discovery of the plateau and its favourable climate by the English soon led to the influx of lowland Hindus, Mohammedans, servants and merchants besides the British administrators and vacationists. This impacted the native tribes on two levels – Hindu and European. Each tribe acquired and rejected certain aspects from both these sources according to their tastes and inclinations (Mandelbaum, 1941).

Before the European influx, the cultural exchange among the tribes had a different picture. Despite their close interaction, the tribes remained distinct in terms of culture and language. This was because each of these tribes operated on entirely different economic bases. While the Toda life revolved around buffalo herds, Kotas and Badagas had to do with smithy and crop welfare respectively. The transactions between Kurumbas and Kotas and Badagas took place outside the bounds of the village. Kota musicians formed an integral part of the Toda ceremonies. However, the band was prohibited from coming close to a Toda dairy. In addition to this, any attempt to mimic unique tribal traits by members of another was violently resisted (Mandelbaum, 1941).

The statistical records in terms of physiology, climate, demographics, culture and other aspects of the Nilgiris can be found in Ouchterlony (1847)'s report. Here, he had recorded about 85 Toda Munds during the period, located mostly in the Todanaad division (Ouchterlony, 1847).

Johann Friedrich Metz was a German Protestant from the Basel Evangelical Mission Society who was interested in the community. The mission had established a base in Ketti, a Badaga village for its preachers in 1846 (Walker A. R., 1991). His records have been published as 'Tribes Inhabiting the Neilgherry Hills' in 1856 which was later republished in 1864 (Metz, 1864). As a part of his activities with regards to the said missionary, he has written about the five major races who occupied the tableland and

slopes of the Nilgiri Hills. The account throws light on the various customs of these tribes as well as the interrelationship among them. Another missionary, the Church of England Zenana Mission Society linked to Miss Catherine F Ling was successful in getting their first convert in 1904. The mission had worked with the Toda community for over forty-three years gradually leading to a small “Christian Toda” community in the Nilgiris (Walker A. R., 1991). In her book (Ling, 1919), she writes about the tribes and the missionary’s efforts in the gospel work. Then, Todas numbered around seven hundred and thirty-six only and buffalo herding was their main occupation. Noble (1968) in his study examines the interactions of the five ethnic communities and their landscape utilization in the Nilgiri district. He notes down the main aspects of the Toda economy as buffalo rearing, sale of milk and clarified butter, land rental, farming, gathering, sale of embroidered clothes, occupations such as gardening and nursing and income from tourists.

Todas consists of five subdivisions namely Peiky, Pekkan, Kuttan, Kenna and Tody. Although they do not have the institution of caste, these sects are similar to the Hindoos of the plains in that they refrain from intermarriage and there are differences in their ceremonies, social habits and customs (Shortt, 1868). Even though they are not great in number, Ross King describes Todas as the most important, interesting and ancient of the tribes in the Nilgiris, from an anthropological point of view. He compares the Todas to the Romans and mentions how they are similar, not only in their features but also in their demeanour and the robe they wear. This robe made out of coarse cotton cloth often had red stripes or borders and was embroidered along the corners with blue thread (King, 1870).

Brecks (1873) in his book provides accounts of The Todas, Kotas, Kurumbas and Irulas. While writing about the Todas, Brecks (1873) mentions the coarse kind of embroidery done by Toda women, using blue and red threads obtained from the plains to decorate their clothes. He also briefly mentions how Putkuli plays an important role in Toda ceremonies such as death and birth. He mentions how early betrothals are common amongst the Todas. Additionally, in Appendix B of his book, he lists a descriptive catalogue of the clothes, ornaments and implements used by the Tribes including the Todas.

Emeneau (1937a) has written about the artistic activities of the Todas. In his paper, he has stressed the significance of Songs in the Toda culture. Not only are songs rapidly composed in the community, but they are also known to people in the community within a matter of days, signifying their popularity. Many of these songs throw light on the Toda life such as funeral ceremonies, the building of dairies, their relationship with other tribes etc. In his paper “Ritual Structure and Language Structure of the Todas” (1974) writes about the Toda language structure, the tribe’s organization around buffalo herds, dairies and related operations.

“Blue Mountains: The Ethnography and Biogeography of a South Indian Region” (Hockings, 1989) is a compilation of several serious and original research conducted on the Nilgiris. The book covers several ethnic tribes in the Nilgiris – Kotas, Todas, Badagas, Kurumba, Naikens, Irulas and Mullu Kurumbas. This synthesis was made in an attempt to incorporate the advances in knowledge about the region and politico-economic transformations undergone since the publication that preceded it by almost eighty years.

Bird-David (1994) in her paper compares the “inter-tribal relationships” of Nilgiri-Wynaad and the organisation of the Nilgiri plateau, where tribesmen are considered to interact more so than in any other regional social world. According to her, the perspective of twentieth-century local people regarding the ‘traditional’ inter-tribal world is devoid of the impact of British colonization which was not minimal. Instead, she points out how it mostly comprised of the regional historical processes till the 19th Century.

Out of all the tribes inhabiting these hills, Todas have instilled the most interest owing to their distinct food culture, physique, polyandry, pastoralism, language and religion which do not have parallels elsewhere (King, 1870). Todas have been a point of interest ever since the Nilgiris were opened up to “civilization” (Chhabra, 2000). The tribe has stood out to the European observers and can be ranked among the “most-favoured peoples”, considering the relatively greater attention the community has received (Walker A. R., 1991).

The first westerner said to have visited the Todas is a Christian priest named Giacomo Fenicio in 1603 (Walker A. R., 1991). He holds a significant place when we look into the history of the Todas as the first noteworthy ethnographic description of the community is accredited to him. Even as his intents were evangelistic, his records throw light into the

life of Todas in the 17th Century – particularly the buffalo based economy, food, rituals, customs as well as their authority over Badaga headmen. Besides the records of missionaries and the studies mentioned above, scholars who were keen to understand Todas as a community were Marshal, Thurston, W H R Rivers, M B Emeneau, Anthony R Walker and Tarun Chhabra among others.

Marshall (1873) in his book “A Phrenologist among the Todas or The Study of a Primitive Tribe in South India” writes in detail about the Toda lifestyle. It dives deep into the history, character, customs, religion and language among other aspects. Thurston (1896) in his book has written extensively about the physical anthropology of the Todas alongside their customs and practices.

Rivers (1906) in his book ‘The Todas’ attempts to bridge the gap in the literature concerning the social organization of the Todas. Rivers stresses the importance of the genealogical method as the most treasured instrument of investigation in his study. He mentions how Toda customs have been greatly studied by scholars and deals with the religion and sociology of the tribes. He points out how they have managed to maintain a distinct set of customs and cultures, for which we would not be able to find parallels even within the Indian peninsula. Rivers owes this to the geographical isolation of the community. The ceremonial and social life of the Todas constitutes a close-knit web of practices. Besides that, Rivers notes the differences in the ritual and social customs among the two main Toda divisions.

Jervis (1920) in his article ‘The Todas’ provides a brief description of transhumance among the Todas. He describes Todas as a ‘settled pastoral’ race having a strong inclination towards permanent settlement while being forced to seasonally migrate in search of pastures. These permanent settlements called Mand/ Mund are usually accompanied by tracts of grazing ground. The tribes at certain seasons shift between Munds to obtain fresh pasture and to protect themselves from the Southwest monsoon rain and wind.

Walker (1986) in his book ‘The Toda of South India’ describes the life of Todas in detail with regards to their physical features, way of life, culture, customs and beliefs. It looks into how the community slowly transitioned from pastoralism to agriculture and the factors that led to the transformation (Walker A. , 1986). According to Walker (1991),

among the communities in the Nilgiris, Todas are the ones who have gathered the most attention. The article explores the western attitudes toward the Toda community and takes the cases of Christian missionaries, The British East India Company, explorers, adventurers, amateur ethnologists as well as the western academic fraternity. He mentions how the term 'Mund' popularly recognizes as the Toda word for village is an English form of the Badagu word 'Mandu'. In another paper (Walker A. R., 2012), he introduces Todas as 'true pastoralists' who traditionally practised horizontal transhumance along with some other Kotas and Badagas. He notes how they were the only community whose physical and cultural survival was dependent on the domestication of these buffaloes.

Tarun Chhabra, a dentist based out of Udhagamandalam has been studying the Toda culture for more than two decades. He has extensively documented the Toda culture in detail in his book and articles. Chhabra (2000) in his article explains in detail the Toda landscape and how intrinsically connected the peoples are to nature. He notes how Toda houses are inspired by the rainbows, buffalo pens from the pattern of Gaultheria bushes etc. Flowers were used by them to designate the seasons of the year by looking at their blossoming seasons. Toda Embroidery motifs too are nature-inspired.

There are brief descriptions of folklores, beliefs, rituals and practices belonging to the Todas. The paper provides us insights into how the Toda landscape has changed since the influx of outsiders into the Upper Nilgiris. He explains it in terms of how plantations, gardens, townships and reservoirs replaced the erstwhile Toda habitat. He also has works describing the medicinal and cultural significance of certain herbs and plants in the Toda life. Selvaraj (2008) in his study has extensively studied the Toda economy. The study looks into the social and demographic conditions, the social organization of the community, life cycle rituals, economic conditions, nature of the political system, religious and cultural practices and customs.

There are a handful of studies focussing on the embroidery art of Todas. Speaking of Toda arts, Rivers opines that it is little developed (Rivers W. H., 1906a). Adding to that Emeneau (1937b) in his paper identifies three arts among the Toda community – the art of Song, embellishment of wooden articles and Embroidery. He opines that while the art of the song is considered paramount, the embroidery is par excellence amongst material arts. He describes it as the most striking feature of Toda clothes and compares the same to the work of European peasant embroidery.

He describes embroidery as the most striking feature of Toda clothes. The best ones are said to be worn by men and women of importance and at festive gatherings by people who can possess them. Toda embroidery is significant for its darning technique and thread counting to form the patterns.

Walker cites Luidmila Shaponshnikova (1969) who wrote about a “Christian School and Industrial centre” in Ootacamund by the name of Dunmere. She has been very critical of missionaries who took advantage of the Toda people for profit. She mentions how Toda women visited the centre to get raw materials which they would later embroider to make tablecloths and napkins (Walker A. , 1986).

Baby & Paul (2017) in their article on Toda embroidery has documented the various motifs used and attempted to study the time required for the embroidery work. The article also explores the assistance from government and private agencies with regard to the preservation of this culture. Sharma & Bhagat (2018) in their article plan interventions for the revival of Toda embroidery. The authors focus on the significance of documentation, capacity building and creation of awareness as powerful tools in the same. They conclude that design education of the artisans at the local level can prove to be an effective step towards the preservation and revival of this culture.

1.8 Research Gap

Upon review of literature on the theme, it was observed that, at the global level, there have been a multitude of studies about the process and impact of commercialization on traditional, folk and indigenous crafts. We are also able to find several studies examining the impact of commercialization on these crafts in general and potential changes undergone by them.

When it comes to the Nilgiris region, there have been studies and reports attempting to understand the tribal communities of the Nilgiris comprehensively. These studies majorly examined Todas, Kotas, Badagas, Kurumbas, Irulas and Paniyas of Nilgiris and their interrelationship at a macro level. Studies pertaining to the Todas have been limited to their physical anthropology, socioeconomic status and lifestyle changes since the British influx. Shortt, W H R Rivers, Mandelbaum, Anthony Walker, Thurston, Emeneau, Chhabra and others have worked extensively on these areas. We are also able to find sufficient literature on the rituals, customs and culture of the Todas in general.

Although the studies by Emeneau (1937b), Baby & Paul (2017), Sharma & Bhagat (2018) give us insight into the embroidery craft of Pukhur, its history and significance in the Toda culture, literature on the impact of commercialization on the craft and the changes undergone over time is insufficient. We are also unable to find studies attempting to understand the potential influence tourism in the Nilgiris has on this commercialization process and the stakeholders that spearhead this process in the present day.

1.9 Study Area

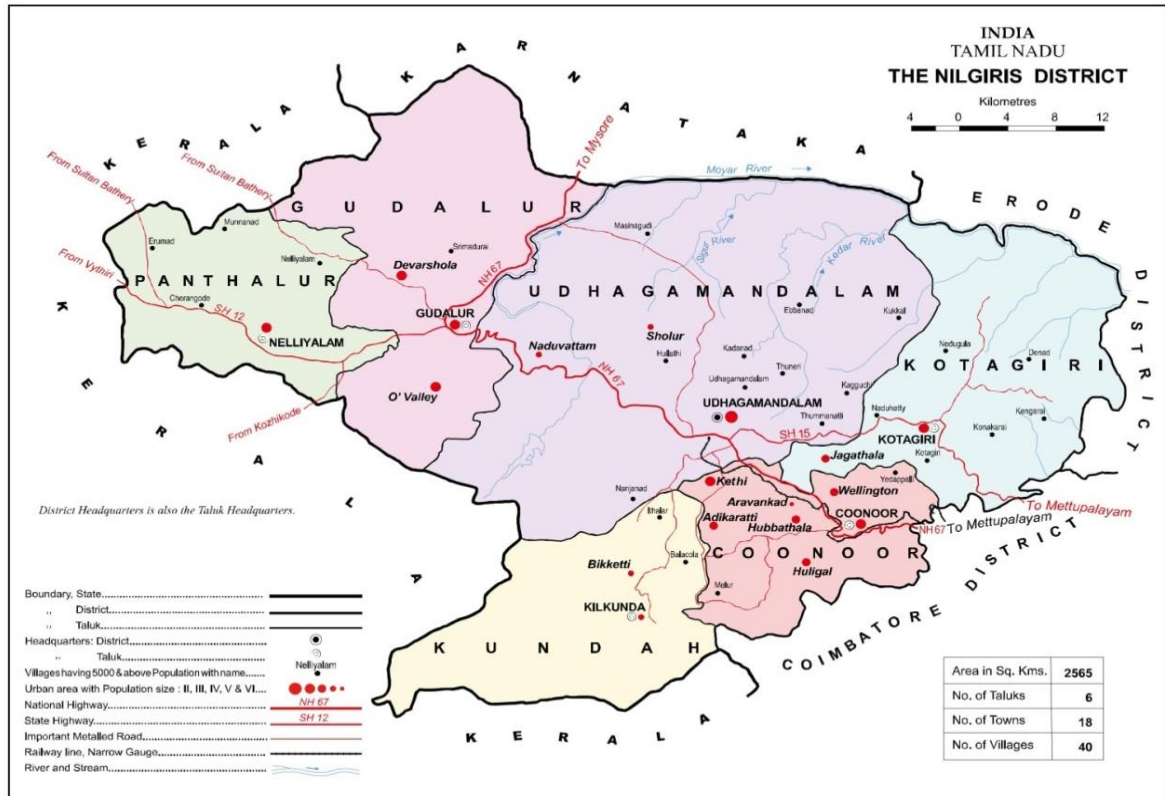
The Nilgiris is a hilly district occupying the highest and westernmost part of the state of Tamil Nadu, India. (Hockings, 1989) It extends to an area of 2565 sq. km and is situated amid 11° and 11°55' North latitudes and 76°13' and 77°02' East longitudes. Nilgiris is situated in the Western Ghats bounded by Karnataka on the north, Kerala on the West and the district of Coimbatore on the South (DHDR- The Nilgiris, 2011). The district is at an altitude of 900 to 2636 metres above mean sea level with a latitudinal and longitudinal extent of 130 km and 185 km respectively (Statistics, 2016-2017).

The Nilgiris is divided into 6 Taluks- Panthalur, Gudalur, Udthagamandalam, Kundah, Coonoor and Kotagiri, for administrative purposes. Kundah and Panthalur Taluks were carved out from Udthagamandalam and Gudalur respectively in 1998 (Census of India, 2011a).

The Nilgiris may be divided into two natural regions – the Nilgiri Plateau and the Southeast Wynaad (Hockings, 1989). A range of peaks running in the north-south direction divide this plateau. This range shelters the eastern and the western side of the plateau from the southwest monsoon and northeast monsoon respectively. Due to this reason, there is a marked difference in the climate of these two parts (Hockings, 1989).

The Nilgiris, also known as the “Blue Mountains” has developed into a niche for several ethnic communities (Lengerke & Blasco, 1989). A human enclave was formed by these indigenous groups, which was a distinctive blend of peoples, cultures and exchange systems. This enclave was isolated in terms of geography but at the same time different from the people of the region surrounding it (Mandelbaum, 1989).

Figure 1.1 Administrative Map of the Nilgiris (2011)



Source: (Census of India, 2011a)

1.10 Objectives

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- i) To review the history and significance of Toda embroidery
- ii) To understand the process of commercialization of Toda embroidery in the Nilgiri hills
- iii) To examine the role of various stakeholders in the commercialization of Toda embroidery
- iv) To understand the role and mechanism of Governmental and non-governmental organizations in the protection and revival of the craft

1.11 Research Questions

- i) What is the importance of Toda embroidery in Toda culture and its significance today?
- ii) What is the role of Toda embroidery as a means of income in Toda households?
- iii) What is the part played by tourism in the commercialization of Toda embroidery?

- iv) Does the proximity of Toda Munds to tourist spots influence the practice of the craft?
- v) Does the proximity of Toda Munds to the centre influence the practice of the craft?
- vi) Who are the stakeholders in the supply chain and how do they function?
- vii) What is the role of external agencies in the commercialization of the craft?
- viii) What are the challenges faced by Toda artisans?
- ix) What are the changes brought about in the embroidery practice by the commercialization process?
- x) What are the existing protection and revival measures pertaining to Toda embroidery?

1.12 Methodology

The research methods used in the study are discussed under the following subheadings.

i) Locale of Study

Kotagiri and Udthagamandalam Taluks of Nilgiris were chosen for the study as the majority of the Toda population is settled in these taluks. Fifteen Toda Munds or settlements were identified out of which four were located in Nanjanad Panchayat, three each in Town Panchayat, Sholur Panchayat and Kodanad Panchayat and two in Hullathy Panchayat. The names of the Toda Munds, their respective Taluk and Panchayat and the number of households have been provided in Table 1.2.

ii) Selection of Sample

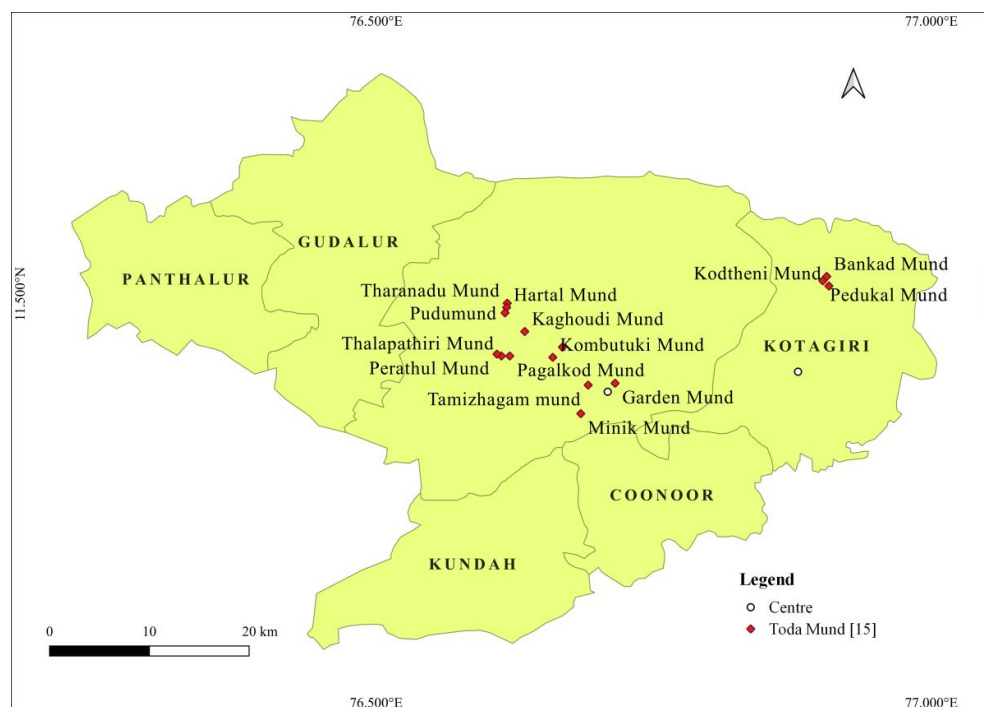
For this study, non-probability sampling method was utilized. 15 Toda Munds were identified in Udthagamandalam and Kotagiri and all the units of these settlements were surveyed. A total of 113 households were picked wherein 175 Toda artisans were identified.

Further, organizations that were contributing to the commercialization of the craft within Nilgiris were located. These included NGOs and semi-governmental organizations based in the Nilgiris. These were Shalom Self Help, Ooty, Kotagiri Women's Cooperative Industrial Society, Nilgiri Adivasi Welfare Association, Mahalir Thittam and Sangamam Federation. The resource persons of these organizations were contacted and information was collected via personal interviews and questionnaires.

Table 1.2 Toda Settlements under Survey

| Sl. No. | Name of Toda Settlement | Taluk | Panchayat | Households |
|---------|-------------------------|----------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1 | Garden Mund | Udhagamandalam | Town Panchayat | 22 |
| 2 | Tamizhagam Mund | Udhagamandalam | Town Panchayat | 9 |
| 3 | Minik Mund | Udhagamandalam | Town Panchayat | 5 |
| 4 | Kombutuki Mund | Udhagamandalam | Hullathy Panchayat | 3 |
| 5 | Muthunad Mund | Udhagamandalam | Hullathy Panchayat | 10 |
| 6 | Pagalkod Mund | Udhagamandalam | Nanjanad Panchayat | 5 |
| 7 | Kaghoudi Mund | Udhagamandalam | Nanjanad Panchayat | 3 |
| 8 | Thalapathiri Mund | Udhagamandalam | Nanjanad Panchayat | 4 |
| 9 | Perathul Mund | Udhagamandalam | Nanjanad Panchayat | 4 |
| 10 | Tharanadu Mund | Udhagamandalam | Sholur Panchayat | 18 |
| 11 | Hartal Mund | Udhagamandalam | Sholur Panchayat | 8 |
| 12 | Pudumund | Udhagamandalam | Sholur Panchayat | 8 |
| 13 | Pedukal Mund | Kotagiri | Kodanad | 3 |
| 14 | Bankad Mund | Kotagiri | Kodanad | 3 |
| 15 | Kodtheni Mund | Kotagiri | Kodanad | 8 |
| | TOTAL | | | 113 |

Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

Figure 1.2 Location of Toda Munds in the Nilgiris

Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

1.13 Tools used for Data Collection

Two questionnaires were prepared for this study - One for Toda Households (Appendix V) and another for the organizations associated with the marketing and commercialization of the craft (Appendix VI).

1.14 Collection of Data

i) Textual Analysis

Information regarding the history and background of the Toda tribes was collected through textual analysis. The available literature on the Toda community- their social, cultural and economic life was studied extensively. This included previously conducted studies in the form of books, journal articles, reports, and published and unpublished research theses. International and national studies related to the commercialization of ethnic crafts and the processes associated were referred to. Census data and information from annual reports with regards to Nilgiris district and Toda tribes published by various ministries under the Government of India were analysed. Further, additional resources in the form of journal and newspaper articles and web resources were also referred to.

ii) Personal Interviews and Questionnaires

The main mode of collection of primary data was through personal interviews. In cases where personal interviews were not possible, telephonic interviews were conducted or the questionnaires were made to be filled by the respondents.

Personal and telephonic interviews were conducted with resource persons in these organizations alongside field visits to comprehend their functioning and role in the commercialization of the craft. In circumstances where personal interviews were not plausible, the questionnaires were mailed to collect the required information via digital means.

iii) Survey

A total of 113 Toda households were surveyed. As a part of the sample survey, several Toda artisans were interviewed to understand their take on the commercialization of the craft and their contributions towards the same. This also helped study how artisans organized themselves locally and the role of Self Help Groups at the grass-root level. This

survey also helped throw light on the contemporary life of the tribe and how they merged with the non-tribal people in these regions. The field visit helped provide a geographical perspective to this study and also allowed observing the role of tourism in the commercialization of the craft.

iv) Field Observation

Non-participatory field observation was carried out to supplement the information collected. This included visits to Toda households, places of work and sale. Further, the geographical coordinates of the Toda Munds under study, major tourist spots and places of sale were collected.

1.15 Data Analysis

i) Statistical Techniques

Various statistical techniques such as percentage analysis, frequency distribution, mean, weighted average and Pearson's correlation coefficient were utilized to analyze the tabulated data. The calculations were performed in the Stata software for accuracy.

ii) Data Visualization

In addition to this, data visualization techniques such as tables, bar graphs, pie diagrams, and line graphs were employed. Maps were created on the QGIS software, based on the data collected. Multiple buffer analysis was carried out in the QGIS software to understand and interpret the relationships between aspects such as the location of Toda Munds, their proximity to the centre, places of sale and the location of major tourist spots. SWOT analysis was done to understand the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats concerning the protection and revival of Toda embroidery.

1.16 Scope of the Study

This study looks at the process of commercialization of Toda embroidery from a geographical perspective. This study will help understand the distribution of Toda artisans in Nilgiris and the role of location in the process of commercialization. Further, it looks into the supply chain of Toda embroidery and the important stakeholders in its commercialization process. In addition to these, it looks at the protection and revival strategies employed at various levels. These aspects can prove valuable while developing

equitable developmental policies in the region. This may also encourage similar studies across various cultures, crafts and geographical locations.

1.17 Limitations of the Study

A major task involved in this study was to locate the Toda tribes in the Nilgiris for the survey. Their limited population is spread across several hamlets or 'Munds' in Ooty, Kotagiri and other regions in insignificant numbers. Each Mund, located several kilometres apart consists of barely 5 to 10 households each. Some of these hamlets are located deep within the woods with little or no connectivity in terms of transport or communication. Hence, collecting a considerable sample size for the survey was challenging.

Owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, few outlets that were offering Toda embroidered products were not functioning. Hence, information from the accessible organizations was gathered. While most respondents were welcoming, there were cases where respondents in certain Toda hamlets were sceptical about providing information as they believed it could be used against their favour. In addition to this, owing to the language barrier, Tamil language was used to converse with Toda respondents. Hence, this dissertation has been brought out with the available resources we could gather.

Chapter 2

Study Area

2.1 Introduction

The Nilgiris of Tamil Nadu was chosen as India's first biosphere reserve under the 'Man and Environment program' launched by UNESCO in 1980. Ever since, the region has attracted scholastic attention from a wide range of disciplines (Bird-David, 1994).

The term Nilgiris means Blue hills (derived from '*Neelam*'- Blue and '*Giri*' – Hill or mountain). The earliest reference to this term can be found in the Tamil epic '*Silappadikaram*'. Nilgiris was part of the kingdoms ruled by a majority of South Indian rulers such as Cheras, Cholas, Pandiyas, Rashtrakutas, Gangas, Pallavas, Kadambas and the Hoysalas. It was under the regime of Hoysala king Vishnuwardhana that Nilgiris were conquered, later converting it into a city (DHDR- The Nilgiris, 2011). From 1336 to 1565, the Nilgiris used to be a part of the Vijayanagar kingdom after which its control went over to the Mysore rulers. From 1760 to 1799, it was under the Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan. In 1799, the Nilgiris was acquired by the British East India Company (India C. o., 2011) (Walker A. R., 1991).

The interior of this plateau that rises abruptly from the surrounding plains comprises rolling grassy hills and valleys, often having a swamp or stream with surrounding shola forests (Hockings, 1989). There are 18 towns and 49 villages in this district. Udhagamandalam block has the highest surface area (1063 sq. km) followed by Gudalur (855.82 sq. km.) and Kotagiri(377.41). Udhagamandalam, commonly known as Ooty is where the administrative headquarters of the district is located.

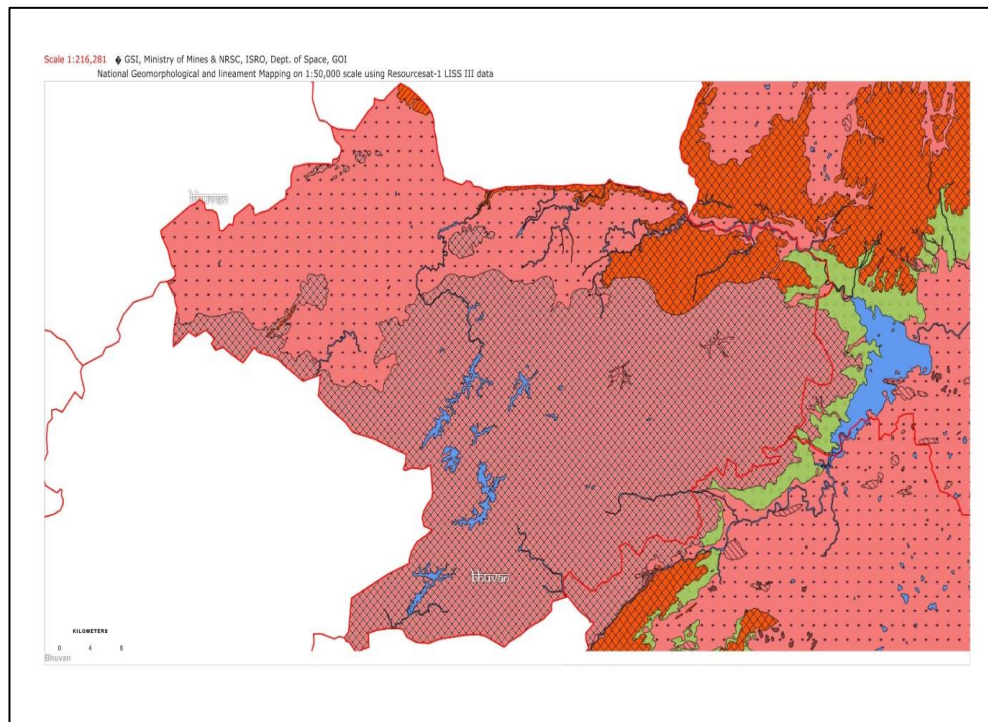
Nilgiris is bounded by Karnataka on the north, Kerala on the West and the district of Coimbatore on the South (DHDR- The Nilgiris, 2011). The district is at an altitude of 900 to 2636 metres above mean sea level with a latitudinal and longitudinal extent of 130 km and 185 km respectively (Statistics, 2016-2017).

2.2 Nilgiris: Physical Characteristics

2.2.1 Terrain

The Nilgiri plateau stands out from the surrounding areas owing to its sharp rise. A range of peaks running in a north-south direction dissect this plateau (Hockings, 1989). The plateau exhibits a variety of morphological features owing to its polycyclic development (Lengerke & Blasco, 1989).

Figure 2.1 Geomorphology of the Nilgiris District, Tamil Nadu (2005-06)



| Geomorphology | |
|---------------|--|
| | Structural Origin - Highly Dissected Hills and Valleys |
| | Structural Origin - Moderately Dissected Hills and Valleys |
| | Structural Origin - Low Dissected Hills and Valleys |
| | Denudational Origin - Highly Dissected Hills and Valleys |
| | Denudational Origin - Moderately Dissected Hills and Valleys |
| | Denudational Origin - Low Dissected Hills and Valleys |
| | Denudational Origin - Pediment - Pediplain Complex |
| | Fluvia - Origin- Active Flood Plain |
| | Fluvia - Origin- Bajada |
| | Anthropogenic Origin- Anthropogenic Terrain |
| | Waterbodies |

Source: (Bhuvan Thematic Services, 2005-06)

The majority of the terrain of the Nilgiris, except in the Gudalur and Panthalur taluk in the northwest, comprises highly dissected hills and valleys of denudational origin. The Northwest of Nilgiris on the other hand is characterised by pediment-pediplain complex of denudational origin. Towards the northeast of the district, there is a strip of highly dissected hills and valleys of structural origin (Bhuvan Thematic Services, 2005-06) (Refer to Figure 2.1).

The Doddabetta range, running North-South with an elevation of 8640 feet divides the district into two parts (India C. o., 2011). Doddabetta or 'big mountain' is the second-highest peak in Peninsular India (Lengerke & Blasco, 1989). Club Hill, Elk Hill and Snowden are other prominent peaks in this range. Kundah Range is located in the southwest. Mukurthi peak (8380 ft.) and Nilgiris peak (8118 ft.) are located to the North of the Kundah range (India C. o., 2011).

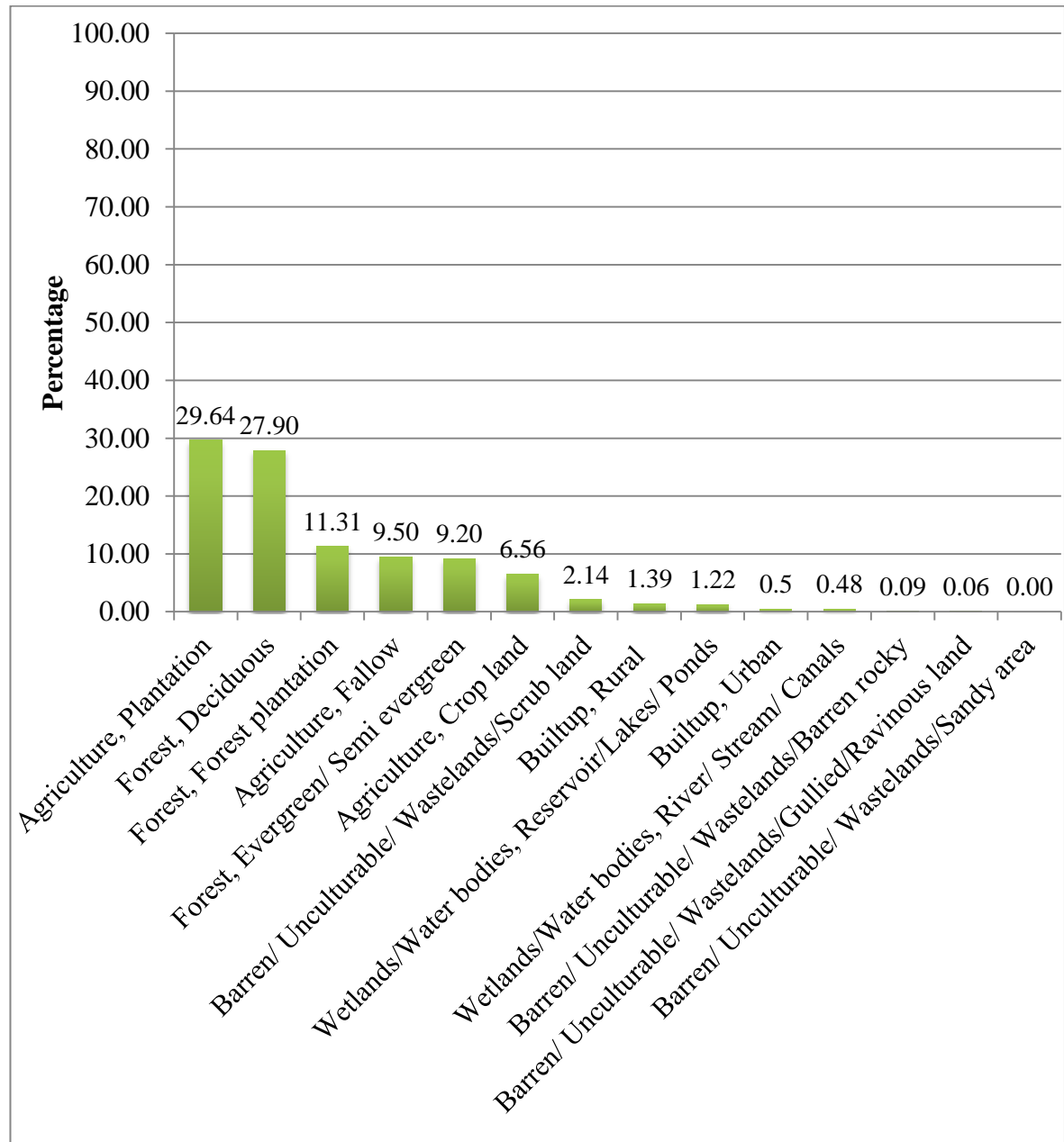
The Nilgiris belongs to the Archean continental landmass of the Indian peninsula geologically. It is comprised of Pre-Cambrian rocks that are primarily metamorphic, such as Gneisses, Charnockites and Crystalline Schist (Lengerke & Blasco, 1989).

2.2.2 Land Use and Cover

The highest share of land in the Nilgiris is either under some kind of agriculture or forest cover. The total area under forest in the district is recorded as 1425.77 sq. km. Out of the total forest cover, 1371.92 sq. km are 'Reserved Forests' whereas 33.12 sq. km are 'Unclassified forests' (Census of India, 2011a).

Plantation Agriculture (29.65 per cent) has the highest share followed by deciduous forest (27.9 per cent) and Forest plantations (11.31 per cent). Fallow agricultural land and semi-evergreen forests cover 9.5 per cent and 9.2 per cent respectively (Bhuvan Thematic Services, 2011-12).

The built-up area constitutes the least area owing to the undulating the topography and vegetation. There is a relatively lesser urban built-up area (12.82 sq. km.) as compared to the rural built-up area (35.47 sq. km). They cover only 0.50 per cent and 1.39 per cent of the land respectively. Wetlands and water bodies take up 1.7 per cent of the land.

Figure 2.2 Percentage of Land Use and Cover in the Nilgiris (2011-12)

Source: (Bhuvan Thematic Services, 2011-12)

Table 2.1 Land Use and Cover in the Nilgiris (2011-12)

| Land Use and Land Cover | Area (Sq. Km) | Percentage |
|---|----------------------|-------------------|
| Builtup, Urban | 12.82 | 0.50 |
| Agriculture, Crop land | 167.16 | 6.56 |
| Agriculture, Fallow | 242.26 | 9.50 |
| Forest, Deciduous | 711.22 | 27.90 |
| Barren/ Unculturable/ Wastelands/Gullied/Ravinous land | 1.49 | 0.06 |
| Barren/ Unculturable/ Wastelands/Sandy area | 0.03 | 0.00 |
| Wetlands/Water bodies, River/ Stream/ Canals | 12.17 | 0.48 |
| Builtup, Rural | 35.47 | 1.39 |
| Agriculture, Plantation | 755.47 | 29.64 |
| Forest, Evergreen/ Semi evergreen | 234.57 | 9.20 |
| Forest, Forest plantation | 288.36 | 11.31 |
| Barren/ Unculturable/ Wastelands/Scrub land | 54.61 | 2.14 |
| Barren/ Unculturable/ Wastelands/Barren rocky | 2.29 | 0.09 |
| Wetlands/Water bodies, Reservoir/Lakes/ Ponds | 31.1 | 1.22 |
| Total | 2549.02 | 100 |

Source: (Bhuvan Thematic Services, 2011-12)

2.2.3 Climate

The climatic conditions of the Nilgiris are differentiated spatially and temporally owing to five interrelated factors – the latitudinal position near the equator with relatively lesser variation in the length of the day and solar radiation; longitudinal position; the position with regards to the Indian ocean, the relief features and the human intrusion with the ecology (Lengerke & Blasco, 1989).

Table 2.2 Rainfall in the Nilgiris (2009)

| South West Monsoon | | North East Monsoon | | Winter Season | | Hot Weather | |
|---------------------------|--------|---------------------------|--------|----------------------|--------|--------------------|--------|
| June-Sep '09 | | Oct-Dec '09 | | Jan-Feb '10 | | Mar-May '10 | |
| Actual | Normal | Actual | Normal | Actual | Normal | Actual | Normal |
| 1265.2 | 1060.0 | 893 | 367.7 | 20.1 | 30.8 | 190.3 | 237.2 |

Source: (District Census Handbook: The Nilgiris, 2011)

The natural altitude provides the Nilgiris with the influence of both the monsoons and is known for having a climate (Statistics, 2016-2017). The climatic conditions are marked by seasonality in terms of hygric conditions (Lengerke & Blasco, 1989)

While the western portions of the district fall under the influence of the Southwest Monsoon, the Eastern part receives the Northeast Monsoon. In 2009, the district received a normal rainfall of 1695.7 mm (Refer to Table 2.2). The maximum and minimum temperatures in the hill station are 26°C and 5°C respectively (India C. o., 2011)

2.2.4 Drainage

Bhavani and Moyyar are the two major river systems originating from the district, that drain into the Cauvery Basin in Tamil Nadu. These water resources serve not just the local rural and urban communities, but also provide water to four river basins in the states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala (Census of India, 2011a).

Some of the important rivers that drain into Bhavani and Moyar are Pykara, Sigur, Kundah, mudukadu, Grathala Halla, Coonoor, Kateri, Kalakumbai, Pannapuzha, Kalipuzha, Kallailadi and Chikmoyar. Parson Valley Dam, Avalanche Dam and Upper Bhavani dam are the major dams located in the district (Census of India, 2011a).

2.2.5 Soil

The soils found here are classified into clay, clayey loam, red loam, black soil, sandy coastal, red sandy soil, alluvium and laterite sub-soil. In terms of geology, no noteworthy characteristics have been found in the district. Quartz, Iron, Mica and Peat are found alongside building stones and laterite (Census of India, 2011a). The hilly terrain means that the soil thickness does not go beyond one metre on the slopes. This leads to soil creep and erosion (Census of India, 2011a).

While the soil is shallow on the higher slopes, we can find black peaty soil, deep rich loams and yellow ochrous soils on the lower slopes. Due to this reason, the higher slopes are put to use for tea plantations as it is unsuitable for crop cultivation (Hockings, 1989).

2.2.6 Vegetation

The four types of forests found here are – Deciduous forests of the slopes, moist evergreen forests of the slopes, woods of the Plateau and Grassy lands of the Plateau. Timber, Pulpwood, Bamboo, Wattle bark, Date leaves, Echem grass, gallnut, Nelli, Soapnut, Seegai and Tamarind are some of the prominent forest produce in this district. (Census of India, 2011a). Irul, Venteak, Teak, Sandalwood and White Cedar are some of the major timber species found here besides Iron Wood, Red Cedar and Ebony (Census of India, 2011a).

2.3 Nilgiris: Economic Characteristics

2.3.1 Agriculture

The influence of both North-East and South-West monsoon makes the location favourable for various crops. Major crops cultivated here are either high yielding or local rice varieties. There are 77520 hectares of land under agriculture. Potato, pepper, garlic, ginger and orange in addition to crops such as cabbage, carrot, radish, peas, beetroot, beans etc. are cultivated here. The climate makes it favourable for the cultivation of Eucalyptus, acacia, rubber, lime grass, silver oak and Seegai (DHDR- The Nilgiris, 2011).

The average size of agricultural land was 1.26 hectares as per the survey in 2005-06. Tea and Coffee are the two principal plantation crops cultivated in the district. Tea is grown in nearly 70 per cent of the cultivated area. Wells are the dominant source of irrigation, irrigating around 300 hectares of agricultural land. Besides wells, the Moyyar River is another source of irrigation (Census of India, 2011a).

The Nilgiris is also known for its Horticulture. A botanical garden covering 55 acres was established in 1847. It houses rare species of trees, flowering bushes and plants. Agri Export Zone for Horticulture set up under the Department of Horticulture by the Government of Tamil Nadu has been working towards the development of horticulture in the district. Even though the sericulture practice is not popular, there are sericulture units at Coonoor, Masinagudi and Masakkal (Census of India, 2011a).

In terms of animal husbandry, the total milk production in the Nilgiris during the period 2009-2010 stands at 92 lakh litres. As of 2009-10, there were 53075 cattle, 3412

buffaloes and 18841 goats in the district. With regards to pisciculture, the production of inland fish during 2009-10 stands at 5.4 tonnes (Census of India, 2011a).

2.3.2 Industries

Several large, small and cottage industries generate income for the people in the district. Tea processing industries account for the most employment generation. Besides this, there are other industries such as Eucalyptus oil extraction Industries, Cordite factory at Avankadu and Hindustan Photofilm Industry. Needle Industry at Ketty, Rallies India Industries at Sandynalla, Hindustan Unilever at Ketty, SIDCO at Ooty etc. are some of the most important industries established in the district (Census of India, 2011a).

Photograph 2.1 Tea Plantations in Udhagamandalam



Photograph: Researcher

The number of registered working factories and trade unions is 223 and 126 respectively. Factories accounted for 25.87 lakh man-days of employment in the year 2011 (State Planning Commission, 2017).

2.3.3 Trade and Commerce

Local produce such as tea, coffee, potatoes, timber, eucalyptus oil, wattle bark, garlic and pepper are locally sold and taken out of the district by producers as well as traders. They are also marketed at Ootacamund and Mettupalayam, Coimbatore. Coffee is mostly purchased by the Coffee board (Census of India, 2011a). Food items such as rice, grains, pulses and consumer goods like clothes are brought from the plains (Census of India, 2011a).

2.3.4 Transport and Communication

Nilgiri Ghat roads connect the district with neighbouring cities in Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Major State Highway roads connect all taluks in the district. The Nilgiri Mountain Railway connecting Mettupalayam and Udthagamandalam is a well-known tourist attraction and also a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It benefits the population of Coonoor, Wellington, Aruvankadu, Ketti, Lovedale and Ooty. The nearest airport is Coimbatore Airport (Census of India, 2011a). There were 2220 km of surfaced and unsurfaced roads in the district as of 2009-10. Lengths (in km) of roads of various categories are provided in Table 2.3 (Census of India, 2011a).

Table 2.3 Roads and their Lengths in the Nilgiris (2009-10)

| Category of Road | Length (in km) |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| National Highways (from 20.06.2005) | 109.2 |
| State Highways (from 20.06.2005) | 114.6 |
| Major District Roads | 141.97 |
| Other District Roads | 714.60 |
| Municipal Roads | 210.73 |
| Town Panchayat and Township Roads | 532.02 |
| Panchayat Union and Panchayat Roads | 670.88 |
| Forest Roads | 184 |

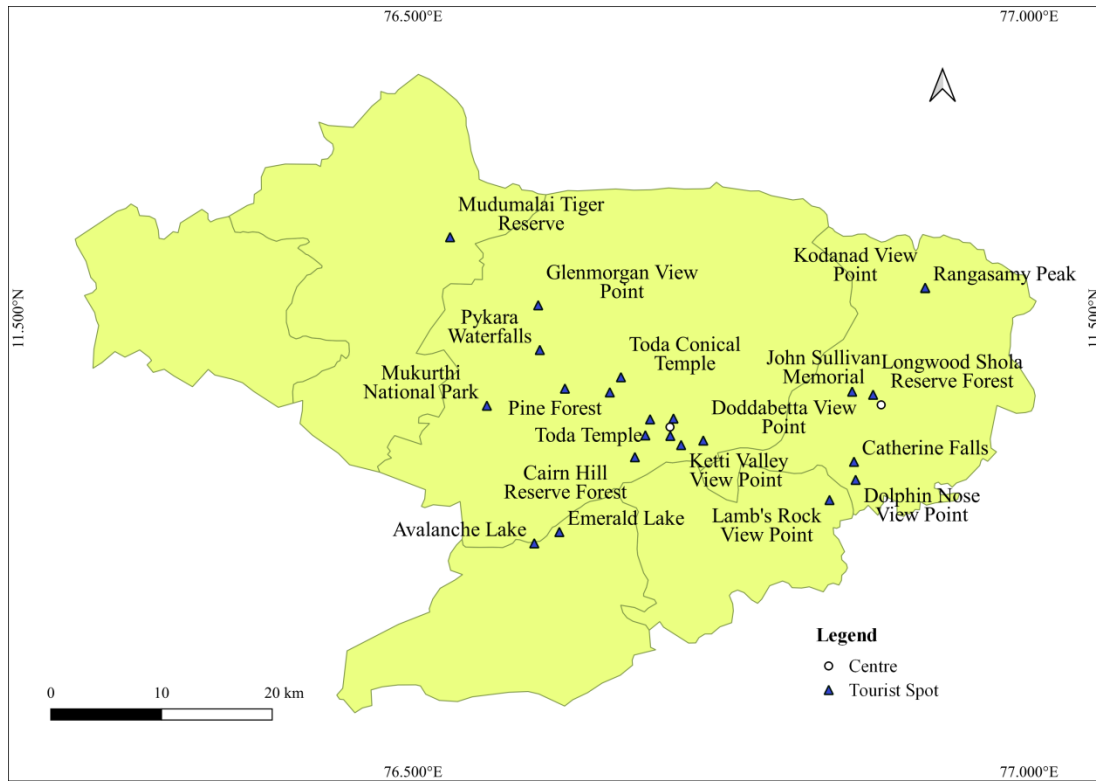
Source: (Census of India, 2011a)

2.3.5 Tourism

The tourism sector acts as a significant source of revenue for the Nilgiris district. The hill station (Udthagamandalam) attracts tourists every year, especially during summers. Some of the popular tourist attractions are the Mountain train, Mudumalai National Park, Botanical Garden and its flower show organized by the State Government, Mukurthi National Park, etc. (State Planning Commission, DHDR- The Nilgiris, 2011) (Planning Commission, 2005).

There are numerous peaks and associated viewpoints such as Kodanad View Point, Glenmorgan Viewpoint, Ketti Valley Viewpoint, Lamb's Rock Viewpoint and Dolphin Nose Viewpoint in the Nilgiris. Lakes such as Emerald Lake, Avalanche Lake, Ooty Lake and Pykara Falls also attract tourists every year. Refer to Figure 2.3 for the location of these tourist spots.

Figure 2.3 Tourist Spots in the Nilgiris



Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

Photograph 2.2 Avalanche Lake and Pykara Falls, Ooty



Photograph: Researcher

2.4 Nilgiris: Demographic Characteristics

2.4.1 Population

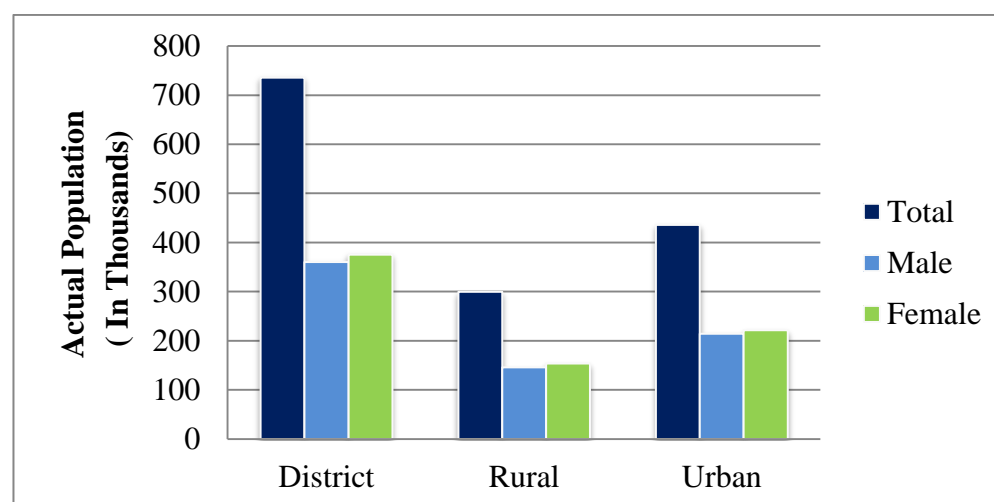
The Nilgiris ranks 31st in terms of population in the state of Tamil Nadu, with a population of 7,35,394. This population size is the 2nd least among the districts in the state. Out of the total population, 49 per cent are male and 51 per cent are female. 59.2 per cent of the population is located in the urban areas while 40.8 per cent of them are in the rural areas. The population density of the district stands at 287 persons per sq. km (Census of India, 2011a).

Table 2.4 Proportion of Population in the Nilgiris (2011)

| Population | Total | Percentage | Male | Percentage | Female | Percentage |
|--------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|
| Total | 735394 | 100 | 360143 | 49.0 | 375251 | 51.0 |
| Rural | 299739 | 40.8 | 145909 | 40.5 | 153830 | 41.0 |
| Urban | 435655 | 59.2 | 214234 | 59.5 | 221421 | 59.0 |

Source: (District Statistical Handbook - The Nilgiris, 2016-2017)

Figure 2.4 Population in the Nilgiris (2011)



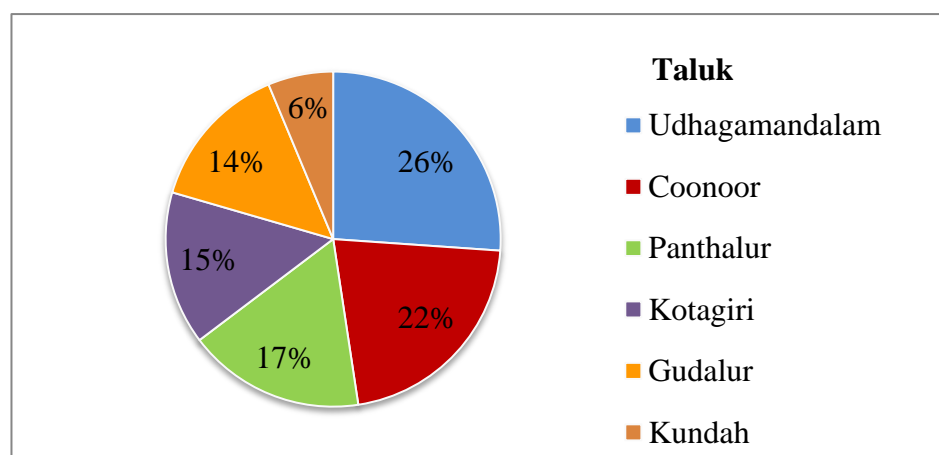
Source: (District Statistical Handbook - The Nilgiris, 2016-2017)

Among the 6 taluks in the district, the highest proportion of the population is located in Udhagamandalam (26.1 per cent) followed by Coonoor (21.5 per cent) and Panthalur (17.1 per cent). Kundah taluk located in the southern part of the district houses the least proportion of the population (6 per cent). The sex-wise distribution of the population in the 6 taluks is provided in Table 2.7.

Table 2.5 Taluk-Wise Population Distribution in the Nilgiris (2011)

| Name of Taluk | Total | Percentage |
|----------------|--------|------------|
| THE NILGIRIS | 735394 | 100 |
| Udhagamandalam | 191960 | 26.1 |
| Coonoor | 157744 | 21.5 |
| Panthalur | 125931 | 17.1 |
| Kotagiri | 108684 | 14.8 |
| Gudalur | 104768 | 14.2 |
| Kundah | 46307 | 6.3 |

Source: (Census of India, 2011a)

Figure 2.5 Taluk-Wise Population Distribution in the Nilgiris (2011)

Source: (Census of India, 2011a)

Rural-Urban Distribution of Population

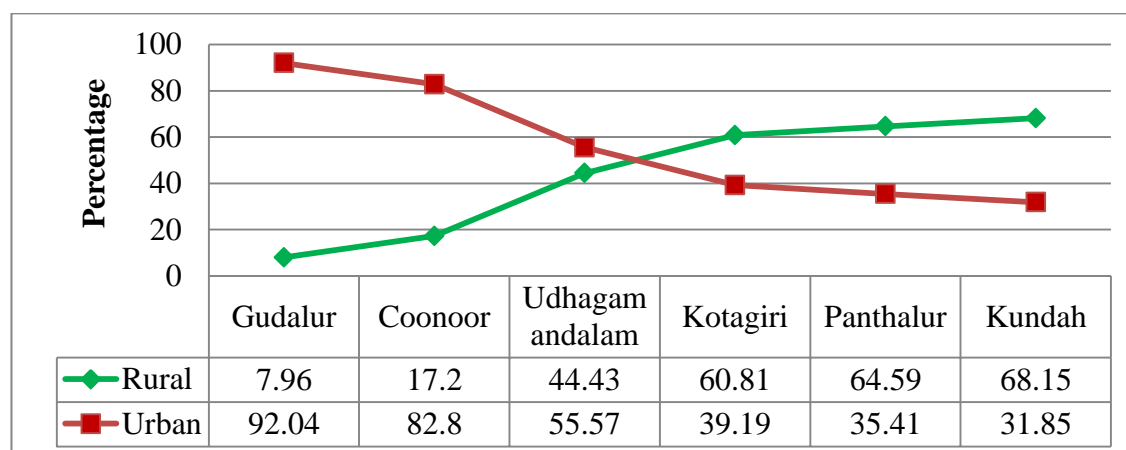
The Nilgiris ranks top 8th in terms of the share of the urban population in Tamil Nadu (Census of India, 2011b). With a population density of 287 persons/ sq. km., the Nilgiris is the least densely populated district in the state. It is the only district in the state of Tamil Nadu with a negative decadal population (2001-2011) standing at -3.5 per cent (Census of India, 2011b).

Gudalur and Coonoor taluks have a significantly high proportion of urban population standing at 92.04 per cent and 82.8 per cent respectively. Udhagamandalam, the district headquarters has an urban population of 55.57 per cent. On the other hand, Panthalur, Kotagiri and Kundah taluks have a higher proportion of rural population standing at 64.59, 60.81 and 68.15 per cent respectively (Refer to Table 2.6).

Table 2.6 Rural-Urban Distribution of Population in the Nilgiris (2011)

| Name of Taluk | Total | Rural | Percentage | Urban | Percentage |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Panthalur | 125931 | 81341 | 64.59 | 44590 | 35.41 |
| Gudalur | 104768 | 8336 | 7.96 | 96432 | 92.04 |
| Udhagamandalam | 191960 | 85280 | 44.43 | 106680 | 55.57 |
| Kotagiri | 108684 | 66094 | 60.81 | 42590 | 39.19 |
| Coonoor | 157744 | 27131 | 17.20 | 130613 | 82.80 |
| Kundah | 46307 | 31557 | 68.15 | 14750 | 31.85 |
| District Total | 735394 | 299739 | 40.76 | 435655 | 59.24 |

Source: (Census of India, 2011a)

Figure 2.6 Rural-Urban Distribution of Population in the Nilgiris (2011)

Source: (Census of India, 2011a)

Table 2.7 Male-Female Population Distribution in the Nilgiris (2011)

| Name of Taluk | Male | Percentage | Female | Percentage |
|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| District Total | 360143 | 48.97 | 375251 | 51.03 |
| Udhagamandalam | 93663 | 48.79 | 98297 | 51.21 |
| Coonoor | 78343 | 49.66 | 79401 | 50.34 |
| Panthalur | 61637 | 48.95 | 64294 | 51.05 |
| Kotagiri | 52668 | 48.46 | 56016 | 51.54 |
| Gudalur | 51497 | 49.15 | 53271 | 50.85 |
| Kundah | 22335 | 48.23 | 23972 | 51.77 |

Source: (Census of India, 2011a)

2.4.2 Sex Ratio

Nilgiris has a favourable sex ratio of 1042 females per 1000 males, which is the highest in Tamil Nadu. In the rural and urban areas, it is 1054 females and 1034 females per 1000 males respectively (Census of India, 2011b).

The Scheduled Caste sex ratio in the Nilgiris stands at 1035, which is the second-highest in Tamil Nadu following Tirunelveli (1038). The district has the highest rural and urban child sex ratio standing at 979 and 984 females per 1000 males respectively (Census of India, 2011b).

The Scheduled Tribe sex ratio stands at 1039, which is the fourth largest in the state of Tamil Nadu following Thiruvarur (1070), Kanniyakumari (1049) and Thanjavur (1048). In terms of the decadal change in sex ratio (2001-2011) in the rural areas, the Nilgiris has the highest rate in Tamil Nadu standing at 29 per cent. In the urban areas, Nilgiris stands 8th with a decadal change of 26 per cent (Census of India, 2011b).

Table 2.8 Sex Ratio in the Nilgiris (2011)

| | Sex Ratio (Females per 1000 males) | Rural | Urban |
|------------------------|---|--------------|--------------|
| Total Sex Ratio | 1042 | 1054 | 1034 |
| Child Sex Ratio | 985 | 979 | 984 |
| SC Sex Ratio | 1035 | 1032 | 1037 |
| ST Sex Ratio | 1039 | 1037 | 1043 |

Source: (Census of India, 2011c)

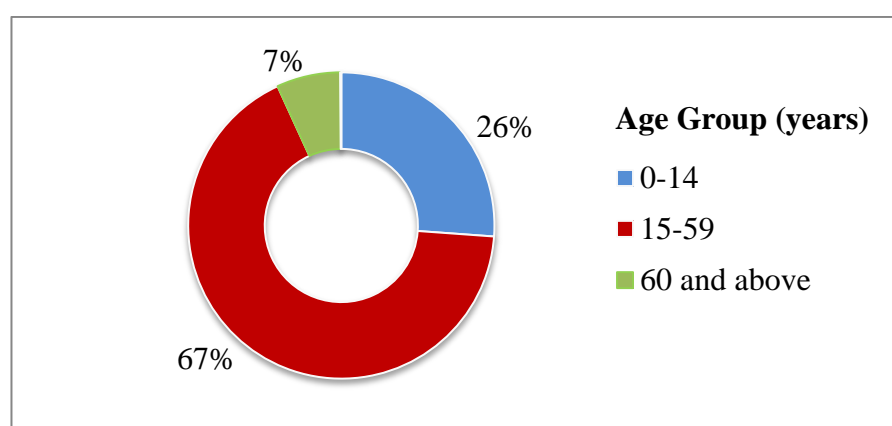
2.4.3 Age Distribution

A relatively high share (67.01 per cent) of the population in the district belongs to the age group of 15-59 years. This is followed by the age group of 0-14 years (26.14 per cent). The age group of 60 years and above constitutes 6.7 per cent of the total population in the Nilgiris. As of 2011, the proportion of child population (0-6 years) by residence stands at 9.1 per cent (Statistics, 2016-2017).

Table 2.9 Population Distribution by Age Group in the Nilgiris (2011)

| Age Groups (years) | Population (in '000') | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 0-14 | 199 | 26.14 |
| 15-59 | 510 | 67.01 |
| 60 and above | 52 | 6.7 |
| Age not stated | 1 | 0.13 |
| Total | 762 | 100 |

Source: (Statistics, 2016-2017)

Figure 2.7 Percentage Share of Population by Age Group in the Nilgiris (2011)

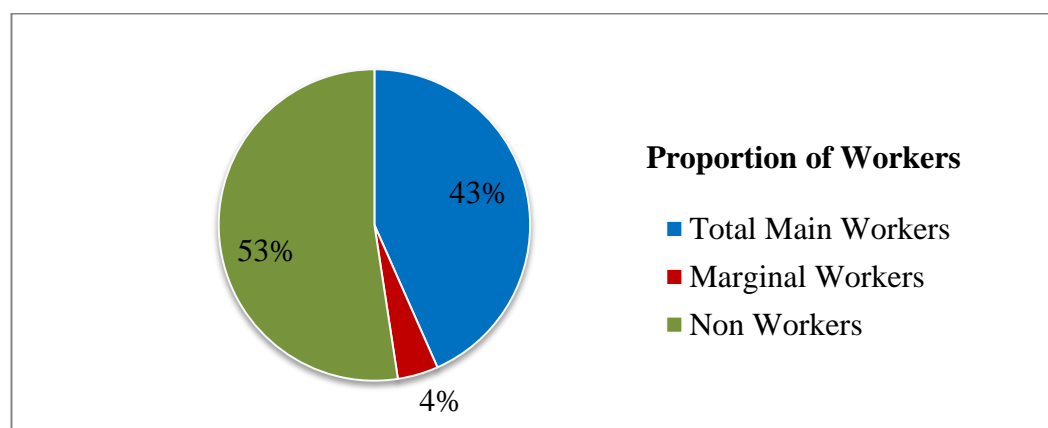
Source: (District Statistical Handbook - The Nilgiris, 2016-2017)

2.4.4 Literacy Rate

The Nilgiris has a literacy rate of 85.20 per cent, out of which male and female literacy rate stands at 91.72 per cent and 78.98 per cent respectively. The literacy rate of the district is higher than that of the state of Tamil Nadu (80.1 per cent) (Census of India, 2011a).

2.4.5 Occupational Structure

As per the Census of India, 'work' is defined as 'participation in any economically productive activity with or without compensation, wages or profit' (Census of India, 2011a). Out of the total population in the Nilgiris, 47.6 per cent constitute the total workers and 52.4 per cent are Non-workers. The total working population in the district is 349,974. Out of this, 91.12 per cent are Main workers and 9.7 per cent are Marginal workers. The distribution of workers among various categories is shown in Table 2.10 and Table 2.11.

Figure 2.8 Proportion of Workers in the Nilgiris (2011)

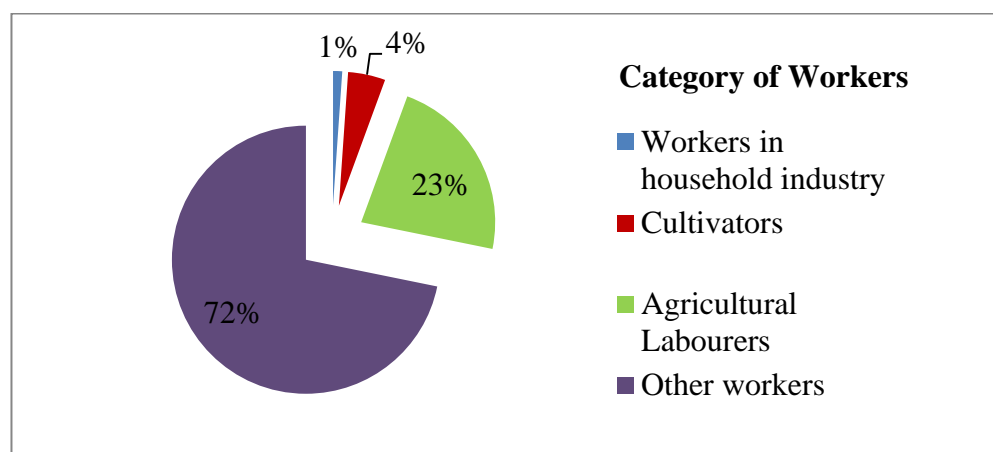
Source: (Statistics, 2016-2017)

Table 2.10 Occupational Structure in the Nilgiris (2011)

| Sl.No. | Industrial Category | Persons | Percentage |
|--------|--|---------------|------------|
| 1 | Total Main Workers | 318924 | 91.12 |
| | Agricultural Labourers | 71738 | 20 |
| | Household Industry, Manufacturing, Processing, Servicing and Repairs | 3019 | 0.86 |
| | Other workers | 229575 | 46.86 |
| 2 | Marginal Workers | 31050 | 9.7 |
| | Total Workers | 349974 | 100 |
| 3 | Non Workers | 385420 | |
| | Total Population | 735394 | |

Source: (District Statistical Handbook - The Nilgiris, 2016-2017)

The majority of main and marginal workers (71.9 per cent) are engaged in economic activities other than cultivation, agricultural labour or household industry (Figure 2.8). This is followed by agricultural labourers and cultivators constituting 22.6 per cent and 4.5 per cent of the working population respectively. Only 1.1 per cent of the workers are engaged in household industries.

Figure 2.9 Share of Workers in Various Sectors in the Nilgiris (2011)

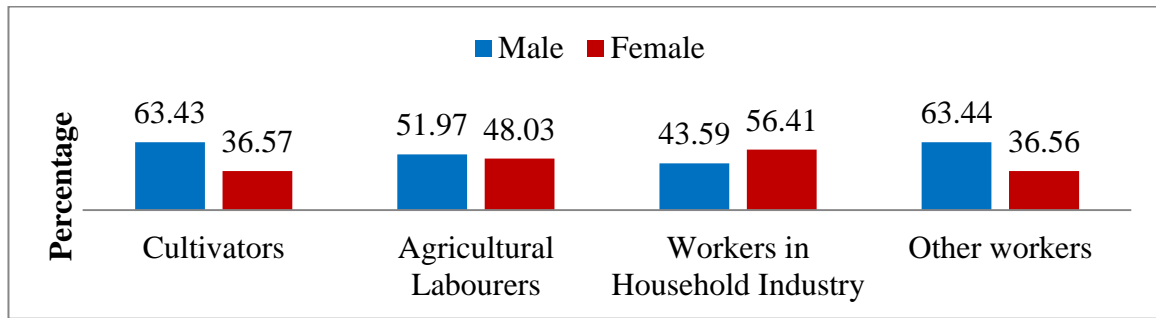
Source: (Census of India, 2011a)

Table 2.11 Male- Female Distribution of Workers in the Nilgiris (2011)

| Category of Workers - Main and Marginal | Total | Percent age | Male | Percent age | Female | Percent age |
|---|---------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| Cultivators | 15645 | 4.5 | 9923 | 63.4 | 5722 | 36.57 |
| Agricultural Labourers | 79100 | 22.6 | 41112 | 52.0 | 37988 | 48.03 |
| Workers in Household Industry | 3895 | 1.1 | 1698 | 43.6 | 2197 | 56.41 |
| Other workers | 251334 | 71.8 | 159439 | 63.4 | 91895 | 36.56 |
| Total Workers | 349974 | 100.0 | 212172 | 60.6 | 137802 | 39.4 |

Source: (Census of India, 2011a)

Out of the total workers in the Nilgiris, 60.6 per cent are males whereas 39.4 per cent are females. The categories of cultivators, agricultural labourers and other workers are mostly dominated by males. The share of the male population in these categories stands at 63.4 per cent, 52 per cent and 63.4 per cent respectively. On the other hand, workers in the household industry show a relatively high proportion of female participation (56.41 per cent) (Census of India, 2011a).

Figure 2.10 Male-Female Composition of Workers in the Nilgiris (2011)

Source: (Census of India, 2011a)

2.4.6 Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Profile

According to the Census of India 2011, the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population in the Nilgiris comprises 32.07 per cent and 4.46 per cent of the total population in the district (Census of India, 2011a).

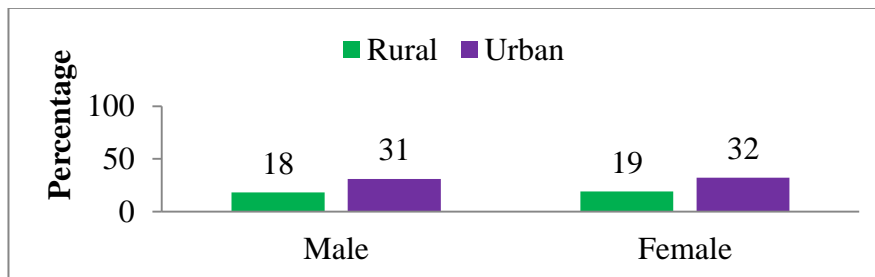
i) Scheduled Castes

There are 76 Scheduled Castes in the district. Out of the total SCs in the district, males and females comprise 48.14 per cent and 50.8 per cent respectively. 63.2 per cent of the SCs in the Nilgiris reside in urban areas whereas 36.8 per cent of them reside in rural areas (Census of India, 2011a).

Table 2.12 Scheduled Caste Population in the Nilgiris (2011)

| SC Population | Male | Female | Total | Percentage |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| Rural | 42691 | 44062 | 86753 | 36.8 |
| Urban | 73226 | 75899 | 149125 | 63.2 |
| Total | 115917 | 119961 | 235878 | 100.0 |

Source: (Census of India, 2011c)

Figure 2.11 Scheduled Castes Population in the Nilgiris (2011)

Source: (Census of India, 2011c)

ii) Scheduled Tribes

With a population of 1045.46 lakh comprising 8.6 per cent of its total population, India is home to several indigenous communities. There are over 700 notified Scheduled Tribes in India located in 30 States/ UTs (Census of India, 2011d).

Before the British influx in 1818, the Nilgiris was home to numerous tribes who depended on natural resources for a living. The district soon enough became a melting pot of different cultures as the outside population began moving into the region (Census of India, 2011a). Presently, there are 5 dominant tribes in the Nilgiris namely, Paniyan, Irular, Kurumbas, Kattunayakan and Toda. Besides these five tribes, there are about 20 other tribes whose population combined only comprises about 6 per cent of the total ST population in the Nilgiris (Refer to Table 2.14).

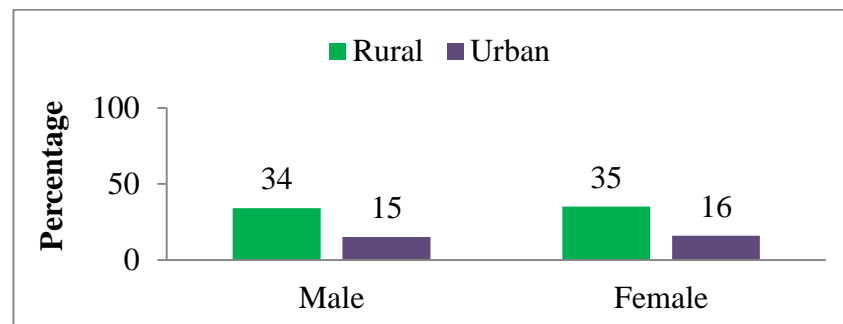
Table 2.13 Scheduled Tribes Population in the Nilgiris (2011)

| | Male | Female | Total | Percentage |
|--------------|-------|--------|-------|------------|
| Rural | 11167 | 11585 | 22752 | 69.3 |
| Urban | 4924 | 5137 | 10061 | 30.7 |
| Total | 16091 | 16722 | 32813 | 100.0 |

Source: (Census of India, 2011a)

Tamil Nadu has a Scheduled Tribe population of 7, 94,697. The Nilgiris stands at the 9th position with a Scheduled Tribe population of 32,813, which is 4.46 per cent of the total population in the district (Census of India, 2011e). Out of the total STs in the Nilgiris, 22752 (69.3 per cent) resides in the rural areas whereas, 10,061 (30.7 per cent) in the urban areas.

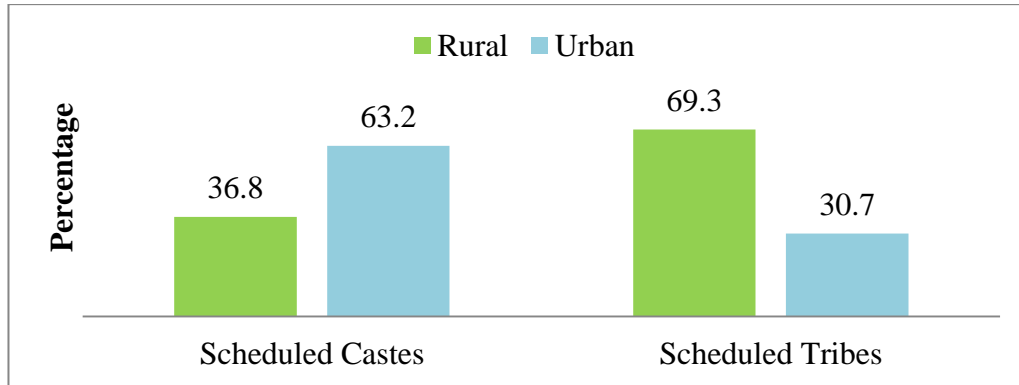
Figure 2.12 Scheduled Tribes Population in the Nilgiris (2011)



Source: (Census of India, 2011a)

If we look at the rural-urban distribution of SCs and STs in the Nilgiris, we will be able to see an inverse trend. While the Scheduled Caste population tend to be higher in the urban areas (63.2 per cent), Scheduled Tribes tend to be located rurally (69.3 per cent).

Figure 2.13 Rural-Urban Distribution of SC-ST Population in the Nilgiris (2011)

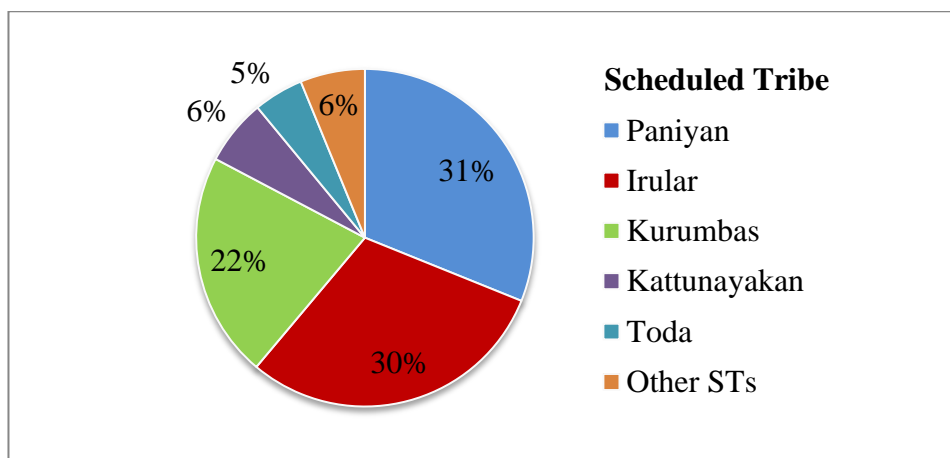


Source: (Census of India, 2011a)

Out of the 36 Scheduled Tribes located in Tamil Nadu, six are classified as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups by the Government of India. They are namely Todas, Kotas, Kurumbas, Irulas, Paniyas and Kattunayakas (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India). These tribes are majorly located in the Nilgiris district.

Todas, Badagas, Kotas and Kurumbas are culturally and linguistically distinct yet mutually interdependent tribes that are isolated together in the Nilgiri Hills (Mandelbaum, 1941). He attributes this to their varying economic bases.

Figure 2.14 Scheduled Tribes in the Nilgiris



Source: (Census of India, 2011e)

Table 2.14 Scheduled Tribes and their Population in the Nilgiris (2011)

| Sl. No. | Name of ST | Male | Female | Total | Percentage |
|---------|---------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| | Total ST Population | 16091 | 16722 | 32813 | |
| 1 | Paniyan | 4741 | 5083 | 9824 | 29.939 |
| 2 | Irular | 4662 | 4818 | 9480 | 28.891 |
| 3 | Kurumbas | 3380 | 3443 | 6823 | 20.794 |
| 4 | Kattunayakan | 992 | 997 | 1989 | 6.0616 |
| 5 | Toda | 720 | 789 | 1509 | 4.5988 |
| 6 | Malai Vedan | 387 | 360 | 747 | 2.2765 |
| 7 | Kurumans | 251 | 269 | 520 | 1.5847 |
| 8 | Uraly | 111 | 118 | 229 | 0.6979 |
| 9 | Sholaga | 67 | 65 | 132 | 0.4023 |
| 10 | Adiyan | 40 | 45 | 85 | 0.259 |
| 11 | Kota | 31 | 28 | 59 | 0.1798 |
| 12 | Malasar | 29 | 27 | 56 | 0.1707 |
| 13 | Malai Pandaram | 11 | 14 | 25 | 0.0762 |
| 14 | Kondareddis | 9 | 11 | 20 | 0.061 |
| 15 | Palleyan | 5 | 11 | 16 | 0.0488 |
| 16 | Palliyar | 7 | 9 | 16 | 0.0488 |
| 17 | Kudiya, Melakudi | 7 | 6 | 13 | 0.0396 |
| 18 | Malakkuravan | 6 | 4 | 10 | 0.0305 |
| 19 | Kaniyan, Kanyan | 5 | 4 | 9 | 0.0274 |
| 20 | Kurichchan | 1 | 6 | 7 | 0.0213 |
| 21 | Muthuvan | 5 | 2 | 7 | 0.0213 |
| 22 | Mannan | 2 | 2 | 4 | 0.0122 |
| 23 | Kammara | 2 | 1 | 3 | 0.0091 |
| 24 | Konda Kapus | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0.0061 |
| 25 | Palliyan | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0.003 |

Source: (Census of India, 2011d)

Badagas

Even though Vadacas or Badagas are commonly classified as hill tribes but they had migrated into the hills much later from the plains lying north of the hill range, the Canarese (Chandler, 1900). They are Hindoos but their original features and dialect have changed after they moved into the region (King, 1870). Presently they are removed from the Scheduled Tribe category to be classified as Other Backward Claas (OBC)

Badagas are divided into several classes. While the wealthiest among them owned cows, oxen and buffaloes, and engage in the cultivation of grain and other agricultural products, people belonging to the lowest class used to work for the Europeans as labourers (King, 1870). They are settled near the large towns of Coonoor and Ootacamund (Chandler, 1900).

Paniyan

These tribes are mostly located in Gudalur and Panthalur Taluk in the Nilgiris. The term means ‘workers’ in Tamil and Malayalam languages. Paniyas used to be bonded labourers for landlords after which they were released and rehabilitated into several schemes. Presently, they work as agricultural labourers, estate labourers etc. (Census of India, 2011a).

Irular

Irulars, also known as Iruligaru, Iruliga, Iruvan, Villiar and Kadu Poojaris are spread across 67 habitations located in Kundah, Kotagiri, Coonoor and Udthagamandalam taluks of the Nilgiris. They are the second-largest tribal group located in Tamil Nadu. These tribes were hunters and gatherers. These gathered products were often exchanged for food or cloth. Irula settlement referred to as ‘*aral*’ comprises several houses built adjacent to each other. These settlements are very different from other tribal settlements (Census of India, 2011a). Irulas are considered the lowest among the aboriginal tribes of the Nilgiris. (Chandler, 1900)

Kurumbas

The Kurumba tribes are one among the Primitive Tribal Groups located only in the Nilgiris. There are seven subdivisions within Kurumbas – Alu Kurumbas, Palu Kurumbas, Betta Kurumbas, Jenu Kurumbas, Mulla Kurumbas, Urali Kurumbas and

Mudugas. They are hunters and gatherers and practice shifting cultivation. Besides, they are also considered effective sorcerers who can heal diseases. Presently, Kurumbas are engaged in activities of labour in tea or coffee plantations as well as agricultural fields. Some among the community are also expert basket weavers (Census of India, 2011a).

Kotas

The Kotas are considered to have inhabited the hills for as long as the Todas have. However, these races have little in common in terms of physical development, features or residences (King, 1870). Kota tribes are agriculturalists, musicians and artisans for other tribes. Kotas are also known by the names such as Koter, Kotharu, Kothewar, and Kohatur. They used to reside on the mountain located in Mysore, known as 'Kollimala'. Presently, they are located across seven large villages now known as 'Kotagiri'. Similar to Todas, Kotas also herd buffaloes, but for their meat rather than milk (Rivers W. H., 1906). They speak the Kota language with a mixture of Tamil and Kannada (Ganesh, Rajakumar, Acharya, Vasumathy, Sowmya, & Kaur, 2021).

Kattunayakan

Kattunayakans also belong to the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups in India. In the Nilgiris, they are spread across Gudalur and Pandalur Taluk. Traditionally, they are hunter-gatherers. The economy of these tribes surrounds the forest on which they are dependent for food, shelter and livelihood (Indigenous People's Plan - Kattunayakans). They are also known as Sikarinayakan, Kadu or Shola Nayakans. Owing to their nomadic nature, they speak mixed languages including Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam (Ganesh et. al, 2021).

2.5 Toda Tribes of Nilgiris

2.5.1 Introduction

The Todas are the chief tribes who are considered the original inhabitants of the territorial loads of The Nilgiris. This position and rights are not only claimed by the tribes themselves but also conceded to them by other hill tribes (Shortt, 1868) (Emeneau, 1958). Todas are among the five distinct tribes found in the Nilgiris, the others being Paniyan, Irular, Kurumbas, and Kattunayakan (Census of India, 2011d). Todas differ in all respects from other Indian tribes (Ouchterlony, 1847).

Origin

The incapacity to converse with the Todas and inadequate knowledge regarding their habits has led to the formation of hostile opinions regarding their origin (Metz, 1864). While some of them ascribe them to the old Scythians, others consider them to be the successors of Roman settlers. Considering that the Todas do not practice idol worship, some consider them Jews. However, these claims are barely justified if we look into their language and religion (Metz, 1864). As per some traditions, they are believed to have forefathers who were subjects of Raven. It is believed that they took shelter in the forests after cruelties were imposed on them (Harkness, 1832).

Todas consists of five subdivisions – Peiky, Pekkan, Kuttan, Kenna and Tody. While Peiky and Pekkan are closely associated, they do not intermarry (Marshall, 1873). These sects are similar to the Hindoos of the plains in that they refrain from intermarriage and their ceremonies, social habits and customs differ although negligibly. However, unlike the Hindoos, they do not have the institution of caste.

2.5.2 Demographic Characteristics

Todas are among the top 5 Scheduled tribes located in the Nilgiris in terms of population with a population of 1509; others being Paniyan with a population of 9824, Irular (9480), Kurumbas (6823) and Kattunayakan (1989) (Census of India, 2011).

According to the Census of India (2011), Toda Population in Tamil Nadu is 2002³, out of which the population of males and females stand at 957 (47.8 per cent) and 1045 (52.2 per cent) respectively. 11.6 per cent of this population belongs to the age group of 0 to 6 years. The Nilgiris has the highest share of Todas with a population of 1509 (75.37 per cent), followed by Salem and Kancheepuram consisting of 4.7 per cent and 4 per cent of the Toda population respectively. The rest of the districts in Tamil Nadu have less than 3 per cent of the Toda population (Census of India, 2011e).

Out of the total Toda population in the Nilgiris, 61.3 per cent are located in the rural areas and 38.7 per cent are located in the urban areas. There is a higher proportion of females (52.3 per cent) as compared to males (47.7 per cent) belonging to the Toda community in

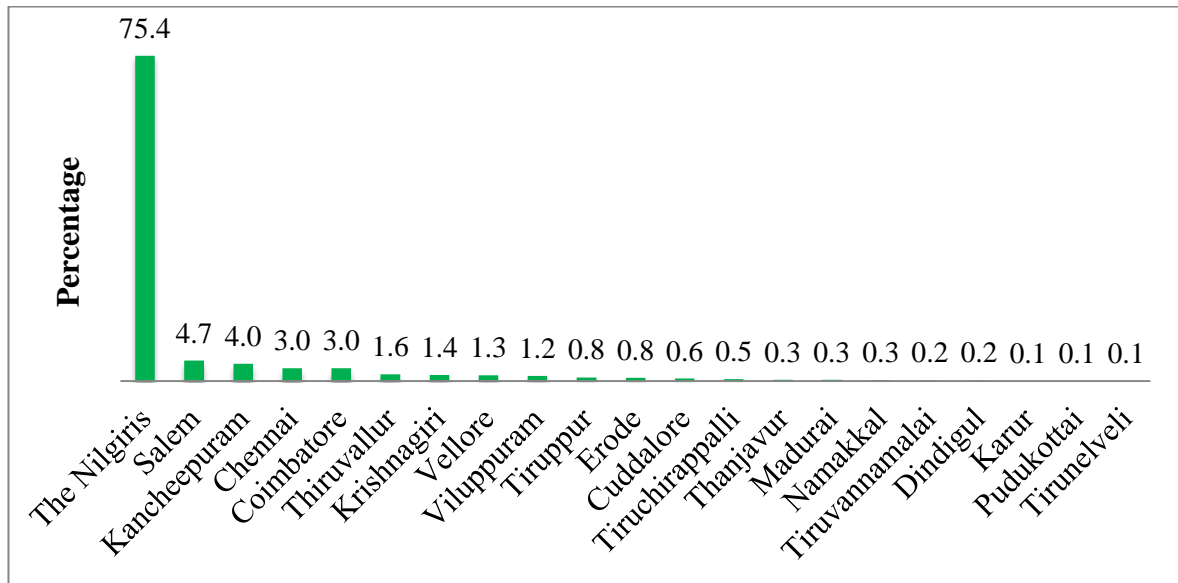
³ This number excludes Kanyakumari district and Shenkottah taluk of Tirunelveli district as per Census of India 2011

this district. Female infanticide was formerly prevalent, which ended during British Rule. This is attributed to an attempt to keep the population low as they did not have the means to support the children (Marshall, 1873) (Thurston, 1896).

Table 2.15 Toda Population in Tamil Nadu (2011)

| | Male | Female | Total | Percentage |
|---------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| TAMIL NADU | 957 | 1045 | 2002 | |
| The Nilgiris | 720 | 789 | 1509 | 75.37 |
| Salem | 47 | 48 | 95 | 4.745 |
| Kancheepuram | 41 | 40 | 81 | 4.046 |
| Chennai | 27 | 33 | 60 | 2.997 |
| Coimbatore | 33 | 27 | 60 | 2.997 |
| Thiruvallur | 11 | 21 | 32 | 1.598 |
| Krishnagiri | 12 | 17 | 29 | 1.449 |
| Vellore | 12 | 15 | 27 | 1.349 |
| Viluppuram | 11 | 14 | 25 | 1.249 |
| Tiruppur | 8 | 9 | 17 | 0.849 |
| Erode | 11 | 5 | 16 | 0.799 |
| Cuddalore | 6 | 6 | 12 | 0.599 |
| Tiruchirappalli | 4 | 6 | 10 | 0.5 |
| Thanjavur | 3 | 3 | 6 | 0.3 |
| Madurai | 2 | 4 | 6 | 0.3 |
| Namakkal | 2 | 3 | 5 | 0.25 |
| Tiruvannamalai | 2 | 2 | 4 | 0.2 |
| Dindigul | 2 | 1 | 3 | 0.15 |
| Karur | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0.1 |
| Pudukottai | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0.1 |
| Tirunelveli | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0.05 |
| Others | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Source: (Census of India, 2011e)

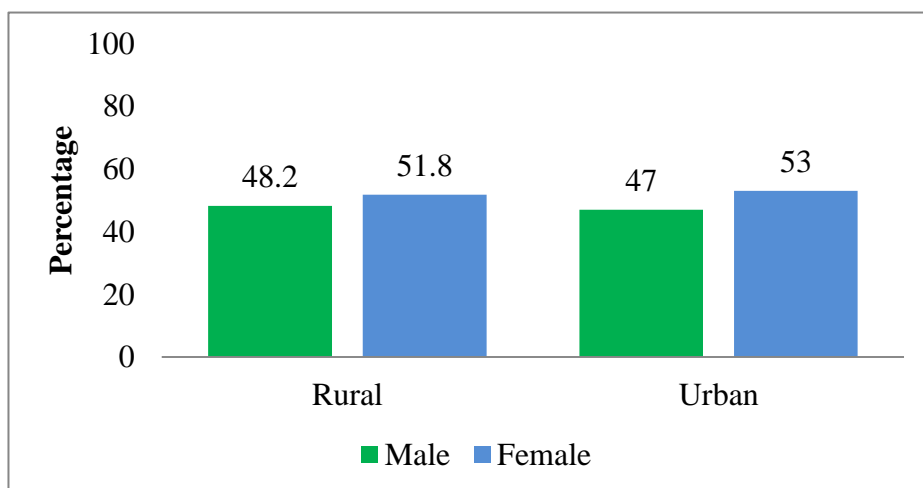
Figure 2.15 District-Wise Distribution of Toda Population in Tamil Nadu (2011)

Source: (Census of India, 2011e)

Table 2.16 Toda Population in the Nilgiris (2011)

| | Male | Female | Total | Percentage |
|--------------|------|--------|-------|---------------|
| Rural | 446 | 479 | 925 | 61.3 % |
| Urban | 274 | 310 | 584 | 38.7 % |
| Total | 720 | 789 | 1509 | |

Source: (Census of India, 2011e)

Figure 2.16 Rural-Urban Distribution of Toda Population in the Nilgiris (2011)

Source: (Census of India, 2011e)

2.5.3 Literacy

Out of the total Todas in Tamil Nadu, 74.3 per cent are literate whereas 25.6 per cent are illiterate. Out of the literate population 51.2 per cent are males whereas 48.8 per cent are females (Census of India, 2011d). The rural-urban distribution of the literate population is provided in Table 2.17.

Table 2.17 Literate Population of Todas in Tamil Nadu (2011)

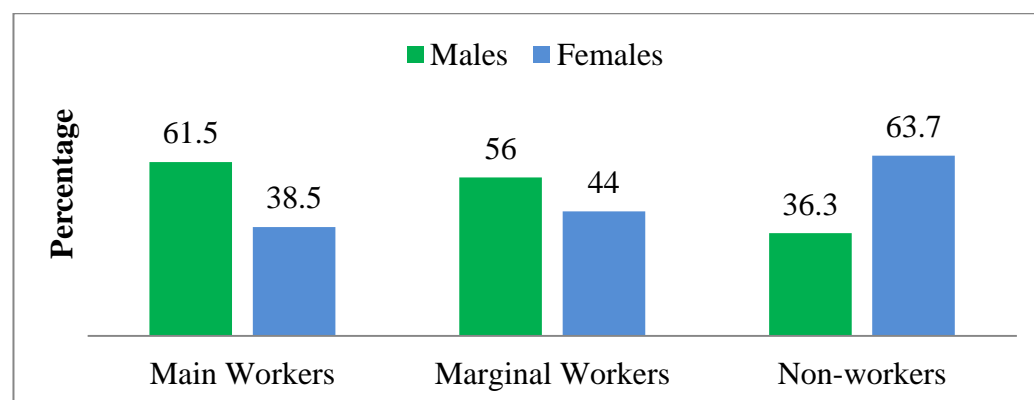
| | Males | Females | Total |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Total | 762 (51.2 %) | 727 (48.8 %) | 1489 (74.3%) |
| Rural | 426 | 377 | 803 |
| Urban | 336 | 350 | 686 |

Source: (Census of India, 2011d)

2.5.4 Occupational Structure

If we consider the argument that ‘true pastoralists’ are only those groups whose cultural and physical subsistence is connected to the attainment and upkeep of tamed animals, Todas *were* the only true pastoralists in the Nilgiri mountains. The Todas, among some Kotas and Badagas, are said to have traditionally practised “horizontal transhumance” (Walker A. R., 2012). This means that they had permanent settlements and moved from pasture to pasture to benefit from the micro-climatic variations that were not necessarily linked to elevation (Walker A. R., 2012).

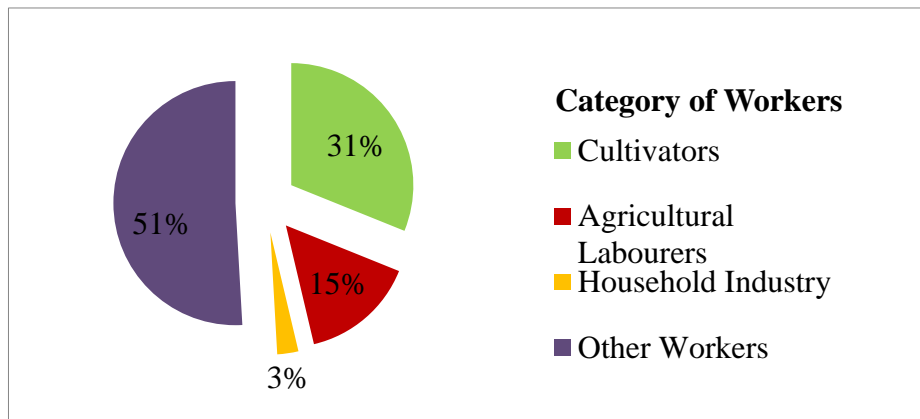
Figure 2.17 Toda Workers in Tamil Nadu (2011)



Source: (Census of India, 2011d)

Out of the total Toda population, 46.4 per cent are workers and 53.5 per cent are non-workers. 61.07 per cent of the total Toda workers in Tamil Nadu are males whereas 38.9 per cent are females. Among the category of non-workers, there is a higher share of females (63.7 per cent) as compared to males (Refer to Figure 2.17).

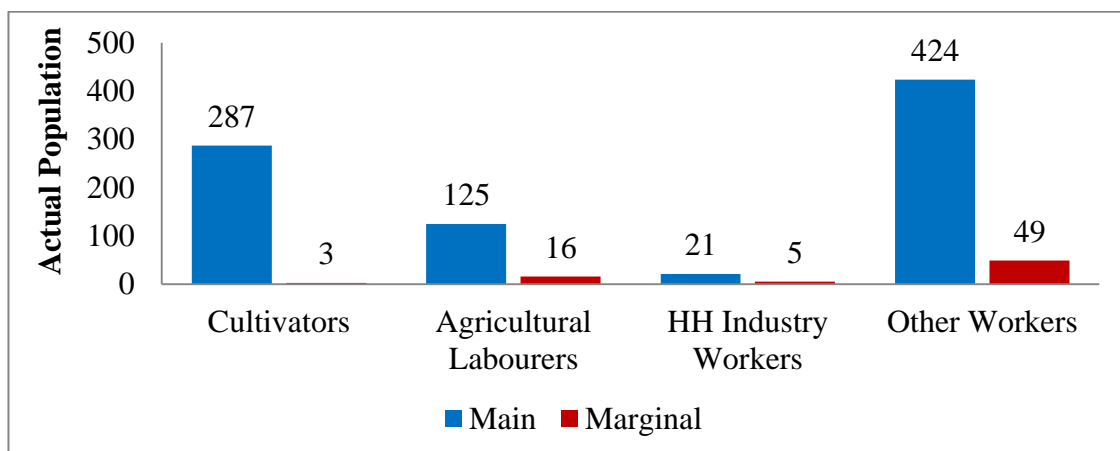
Figure 2.18 Category of Toda Workers in Tamil Nadu (2011)



Source: Annexure 11A, (State Primary Census Abstract for Individual Scheduled Tribes, 2011d)

A majority of the Toda workers (51 per cent) in the state of Tamil Nadu are engaged in economic activities other than cultivation, agricultural labour or household Industry. This is followed by the category of cultivators who comprise 31 per cent of the working population and agricultural labourers who comprise 15 per cent of the total Toda workers. Household Industry Workers comprise 3 per cent of the total Toda workers in Tamil Nadu (Refer to Figure 2.18).

Figure 2.19 Share of Main and Marginal Toda Workers in Tamil Nadu (2011)



Source: Annexure 11A, (State Primary Census Abstract for Individual Scheduled Tribes, 2011d)

Table 2.18 Category of Toda Workers in Tamil Nadu (2011)

| | Total | Male | Female |
|-------------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| Total Workers | 930 | 568 | 362 |
| Main Workers | 857 | 527 | 330 |
| Cultivators | 287 | 191 | 96 |
| Agricultural Labourers | 125 | 69 | 56 |
| HH Industry Workers | 21 | 0 | 21 |
| Other Workers | 424 | 267 | 157 |
| Marginal Workers | 73 | 41 | 32 |
| Cultivators | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| Agricultural Labourers | 16 | 8 | 8 |
| HH Industry Workers | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| Other Workers | 49 | 28 | 21 |
| Non workers | 1072 | 389 | 683 |

Source: (Census of India, 2011e)

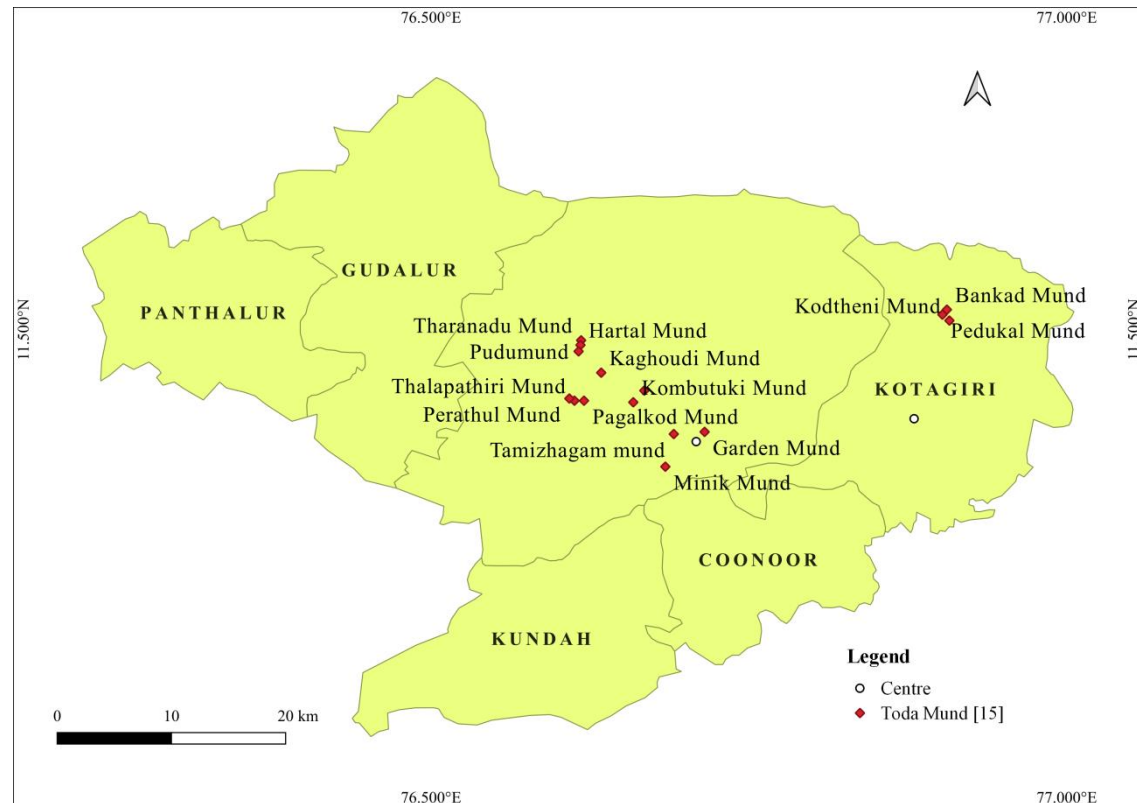
2.5.5 Settlements

Toda families reside in villages commonly known as *Mand* or *Mund*. Although the term is widely recognized as a Toda term, it is derived from the Badagu term '*Mandu*'. The Toda name for a village is '*Mad*' (Walker A. R., 1991) (Rivers, 1906). Toda villages, clans, diaries and ceremonies are commonly known to the Europeans (or outsiders) by their Badaga names instead of the Toda names (Rivers W. H., The Todas, 1906a). Appendix III of (Rivers W. H., 1906a) lists down the names of Toda villages, clans associated with them alongside their Badaga alternatives. For example, *Akirsikodri* is the Toda name for the village now known as Tharanadu Mund, occupied by the *Nidrsi* clan of Todas. It may be noted that, during my survey in these villages, the Badaga names were commonly used. Refer to Figure 2.20 for the Toda Munds under study and the Badaga names they were known by.

Toda huts are built in clusters of three or four houses only (King, 1870). However, there are exceptions. Garden Mund and Tharanadu Mund, two of the largest Toda hamlets in Udhagamandalam comprise over 15 Toda households. There are numerous Toda Munds scattered across the Nilgiri hills (Chandler, 1900) (Walker A. R., 1989). The Nilgiri

plateau consists of grassy hills separated by usually wide valleys with streams and swamps. Toda settlements are located usually close to small woods near the hollows of these hills (Rivers W. H., The Todas, 1906a).

Figure 2.20 Toda Munds under Current Study, Nilgiris



Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

Every *Mund* usually has a surrounding tract of grazing ground. Every family has a house and a share of the village land, which may vary from village to village (Marshall, 1873). In the sample survey conducted in Toda hamlets, it was observed that Muthunad Mund, located in Hullathy Panchayat, 35 acres of land is shared among 11 families, on which they practised agriculture. In Garden Mund near Botanical Garden, every family has approximately a share of 1 acre each. The same applies to most Toda Munds located across the Nilgiris.

These family clusters or Munds are located at a substantial distance apart from each other. They also tend to migrate from one to another in search of pasture (Rivers W. H., The Todas, 1906a). Ross King in his account recalls how in the three years he had spent on the hills, several Munds were deserted for a few months only to be reoccupied later (King, 1870). Besides houses, there are usually other buildings of importance in these

settlements – one dedicated to their deity, which is also their dairy and a large circular pen or enclosure called *Tooel* or *Tu-el* where buffaloes are confined at night (Harkness, 1832) (Ouchterlony, 1847) (King, 1870).

Photograph 2.3 Toda Houses at Tamizhagam Mund, Ooty



Photograph: Researcher

Toda Houses

The traditional Toda hut or *ars* is shaped like a half-barrel with a small front door that slides open on the inside. These huts usually have roofs projecting for a significant distance beyond the front portion (Rivers, 1906). The size of the huts also varies greatly. While some of them are roomy enough for people to move around, some are small and stuffy, in which case the smoke from cooking inside makes the place uncomfortable for those not used to it.

There are usually raised portions called “*kwottun*” on either side of the front door and similar features inside the huts called “*tiin*” wherein they sleep (Rivers, 1906). In contemporary Toda villages, however, we can find houses in shapes other than the half-barrel. We can rarely come across traditional Toda homes today. Modern-day Toda homes are made out of brick, cement and tiled roof (Walker A. R., 2004) some of them still preserving the traditional shape (Refer to Photograph 2.3).

2.5.6 Society and Customs

The Toda society is based on patrilineal descent. This means that people consider themselves related if they can trace their descent through male members to the same male ancestor. Toda culture revolves around herds of buffaloes and 'Putkuli' cloaks have been a significant part of their identity (Chhabra, 2000).

Todas are a closed, but well-knit community. Even though their villages are often located kilometres apart, the majority of adult respondents were conscious of the other members of the community. Rivers (1906) points out in his book how the Todas preserve the names of their relatives and ancestors dating back for generations, in their memory. This is because of several reasons. Firstly, being a small community numbering about 1500, being related by blood or otherwise is not uncommon. Women after marriage often move from their village or *mund*, to that of their husbands'. Secondly, Todas gather together during important ceremonies or festivals. If there is a death in one of the villages, the information is quickly passed on to others. Regardless of the distance, Todas from all the other villages often vacate entirely to attend the ceremonies in the said village. This was something we could witness during our field visits. These gatherings often renew their bonds among themselves.

There exist two endogamous classes among the Todas- *Khootas* or *Tardas* and *Terrallees* (also known as *Peikies*), out of which the latter holds all sacred offices (Harkness, 1832) (King, 1870). Endogamy is said to have been slowly discontinuing in recent years (Harkness, 1832).

i) Marriage

Engagement with the first husband is often done at a very early age by the respective male parents of the bride and groom. Despite the dearth of women in the community, marriages are not contracted with other tribes. The shortage of women is believed to be a result of the formerly prevalent practice of female infanticide (King, 1870). This is said to have been practised up until the visit of John Sullivan when only one female child was allowed to live in each family. The practice prevailed upon the belief that they did not have the means to support more than one girl child (Metz, 1864).

Polyandry used to be a prevalent custom among the Todas. Toda women tended to have a plurality of husbands who were usually brothers of the same family (Ouchterlony, 1847). (Metz, 1864) (King, 1870) (Chandler, 1900). This practice of Polyandry alongside endogamy amongst the various classes is ascribed to be the reason for the lesser number of children in Toda families. In such cases, children if any were ascribed to fathers in terms of seniority (Metz, 1864). This practice has however faded in the community today.

ii) Funerals

In case there is a death of a male in the community, the immediate relatives observe fast, cut their hair short and take off their jewellery as a symbol of mourning. In the case of female death, men are not obliged to do the same. Terrallees are exempt from observing any of these customs (King, 1870).

There are two funeral rites performed by the Todas– one performed immediately after death and the other approximately twelve months later (Metz, 1864). The first, called the “green funeral” comprises of burning of the corpse by laying it on a funeral pyre. Buffaloes are also slaughtered to accompany the spirit and provide them with milk. The ashes are later collected and preserved. The latter known as the “dry funeral” is considered more important where Badagas, Kotas and Kurumbas are invited to take part. Buffaloes were hunted down and beaten to death as a part of this ceremony (Metz, 1864)(Rivers, 1906).

Identical customs are often recognized in races, even if they are geographically apart and diverse ethnologically. However, the customs and ceremonies of Todas are unique in that we are likely not to find equivalents elsewhere in the world. Even though we could point out resemblances in other races within the Indian peninsula, these similarities are often found as we go into the details (Rivers, 1906). W H Rivers attributes this nature of Toda customs to the tribe’s geographical location being isolated from the rest of the world.

iii) Language

Metz describes the languages of Todas, Kurumbas, Kotas and Badagas as dialects of Canarese. According to him, the language could be picked up easily by anybody familiar with that tongue (Metz, 1864). Todas have a peculiar language with no parallels anywhere in Southern India (Ouchterlony, 1847).

King (1870) describes the Toda language as “deep-toned, harsh and difficult of pronunciation, and without written character”. He remarks how the language is neither comprehended nor spoken by other hill tribes located there despite being in constant contact with the Todas. The Toda tongue is said to differ widely from Sanskrit or Tamil despite having some terms of that origin. It also is quite different from any known tongue in India or any other country. There are certain similarities with Tamil in terms of grammatical structure. However, King (1870) attributes it to the exposure to it for a considerably long period.

The Toda language is an independent language belonging to the South Dravidian family, affiliated with Tamil-Malayalam (Mandelbaum, 1941). Owing to the difficulty in comprehension, most investigations on Toda customs have been made using Tamil or Badaga language as means of communication (Rivers W. H., 1906).

iv) Religion

Todas' religious beliefs revolve around the existence of an imperceptible and supreme spirit. Todas also pay respect to hills, forests and the rising sun, although they are not necessarily worshipped (King, 1870). The Toda religion is considered to be a simple faith that has been passed on from one generation to another. In the present times, we will be able to see a hint of Hinduism in it (Thurston, 1896).

The Toda Gods are supposed to have lived in this world before man came into existence and are anthropomorphic beings (Rivers W. H., 1906). Man and buffalo are believed to be created by the gods and Todas also believe that the three coexisted in the Nilgiris at some point. The gods have been associated with the hills and are believed to dwell on hill summits since the earliest times. Teikirzi is considered to be the most important Toda deity (Rivers W. H., 1906) (Walker A. R., 2018). According to some accounts, Teikirzi is the eldest sister of On and ruled over the Todas after On left for the world of the dead-Amnodr. Several Toda ceremonies and customs are practised till are considered to have been ordained by Teikirzi (Rivers W. H., 1906).

The Mukurthy Peak is considered very sacred and is believed to be the “residence of keepers of the portals of heaven” (Metz, 1864). According to their beliefs, the departed souls of Todas along with the buffaloes that are sacrificed to accompany them, take a leap from this point to enter the celestial regions (Metz, 1864). *Pithi* is considered the earliest

of gods whose son *On* along with his wife went on to create several Todas and their buffaloes. *Teipakh* and *Pakhwar* are two river gods connected with the two major streams of the district (Rivers W. H., The Todas, 1906a).

Photograph 2.4 Toda Temple at Tamizhagam Mund, Ooty



Photograph: Researcher

Toda religion is organized around sacred places allied with the community's dairy temples and buffalo herds. Pho is the most ancient and sacred worship place for the Todas. It is located in Muthunad Mund in Udhagamandalam Taluk (Census of India, 2011a) (Metz, 1864). In every Toda village, a man is assigned to the priestly office. His duties comprise milking the buffaloes and performing dairy-related activities.

Todas have happened to incorporate plenty of beliefs and practices from Hinduism. Christian ideology was also propagated among them by the missionaries which led to the formation of the community of Toda Christians. Regardless, the sacred dairy cult continues to be the central aspect when it comes to most Toda ritual activities. It is remarkable to note this trait, despite the diminishing significance of buffaloes in the existing economic life of Todas (Walker A. R., 2018).

v) Food

Todas are vegetarians and they herded buffaloes for the sake of their milk (King, 1870) (Walker A. R., 1989). For the Todas, milk in its natural state or otherwise is the principal

diet. Badagas distributed all vegetable food except wild fruits such as yellow blackberries, wild plums etc. which the Todas themselves gathered (King, 1870).

The Toda diet is said to consist of rice boiled in whey, rice and jaggery boiled in water and broth/ curry cooked with vegetables (Thurston, Toda, 1909). Buffalo milk is put to use generously to make butter, buttermilk, yoghurt etc. (Praseetha M S, 2019).

vi) Relationship with other tribes

It is believed that Todas are the original inhabitants of the Nilgiris and the other tribes had arrived later from the plains (Shortt, 1868) (Thurston, 1896). Todas enjoy a privileged position amongst other tribes located in the area due to the tradition of them being “lords of the soil” (Rivers W. H., 1906).

Even as Badagas, Kotas, Kurumbas and Todas have been dwelling on the hills, they have been mutually interdependent (Mandelbaum, 1941). The peculiar relationship between Todas, Kotas and Badagas who share the plateau is one of the most interesting characteristics of the social life of the Nilgiris. (Rivers W. H., 1906).

When Kotas come in contact with a Toda, the former kneels and raises the feet of the Toda to their heads in respect. It is from the Kotas that Todas acquire their iron tools and earthenware utensils. Kotas being musicians often perform at Toda ceremonies, for which they are paid in buffaloes and rice (Thurston, 1896).

Kotas are indigenous artisans and are vital to the other tribes. They make gold and silver ornaments, pottery, agricultural tools, etc. besides engaging as musicians. While the Todas paid them in the form of Buffaloes, Badagas paid them in grain and other produce. Interestingly, they offered their mechanical labour solely to these two tribes besides their own (King, 1870).

Kurumbas and Irulars are wild dwarfish tribes inhabiting the jungles on the hill slopes (Rivers W. H., 1906a). Todas and Kurumbas are not on good terms. Upon meeting, Kurumbas bend forward and Todas place their hand on the former’s head. Since Kurumbas are believed to be sorcerers, Todas are afraid of them casting an evil eye on them, making them fall ill or die (Thurston, 1896). Irulars also saluted the Todas the same way as Kurumbas but there is little communication between the two communities (Thurston, 1896).

Chapter 3

Toda Tribal Embroidery

3.1 Historical Background

Graburn points out a few aspects which may influence the perseverance of traditional arts and crafts. Persistent demand for the items, obtainability of traditional raw materials, availability of time to work, Knowledge of the skills, recognition from members of the community and the role played in upholding the belief, ritual or gift-exchange systems are some of these (Graburn, 1976).

Emeneau identifies three arts among the Todas – the art of song, embellishment of wooden articles and Embroidery. Toda Embroidery is the most striking characteristic of Toda clothes and most Toda cloaks have a certain amount of embroidery done on it (Emeneau, 1937b).

Toda Embroidery, locally known as Pukhur is practised by the women in the community and is a craft that has been passed on from generations primarily as a hub of their social, community and cultural interaction (Sharma & Bhagat, 2018). This unique style of embroidery is done on a woven cloth with black, red and occasionally blue thread or woollen yarn. Even though one simple technique is used, these create very delicate patterns that are often mistaken for a woven product instead of handmade. Emeneau (1937b) compares them to the work of European peasant embroiderers.

3.2 Significance of the Craft in Toda Culture

3.2.1 Traditional Costume

The traditional clothes worn by the Todas are identical to all sexes (Marshall, 1873). The peculiar costume of the Todas has been discussed by several scholars. Harkness in his book describes the clothing of Todas as comprising of a short undergarment worn around the waist and a mantle over it. This mantle with blue and red lines known as *Putkuli* is common to men and women (Harkness, 1832).

Some other scholars identify three garments that constitute the traditional Toda costume – a perineal cloth (Kuvn/Kang), a waistcloth (Tharp/Torp) and a cloak (Putkuli) (Breeks, 1873) (Marshall, 1873) (Emeneau, 1937b). While men wear all three, women only wear the latter two. Children wear merely the waistcloth until they reach puberty (Emeneau, 1937b). Kang or Kuvn is worn by men who take part in funeral ceremonies (Breeks, 1873).

The mantle or Putkuli covers the whole body except the head, legs and sometimes the right arm (Harkness, 1832). This robe is draped over the left shoulder, brought forward under the right arm to be draped over the left shoulder again (King, 1870). Female clothing similar to that of men consists of a single robe, worn differently. In their case, it is draped over both shoulders, often grasped in the front by the hand (King, 1870) (Harkness, 1832).

Photograph 3.1 Traditional Putkuli and Toda women



Photographs: Researcher and Shalom Self Help, Ooty

(Rivers W. H., *The Todas*, 1906a) notes:

“There is little difference between the dress of men and women. Each wears a mantle called the Putkuli, which is worn around the shoulders without any fastening. Under it is worn a loin-cloth called tadrp, and the men also wear a perineal band called Kuvn, corresponding to the Hindu langooti. The Kuvn is kept in position by a string around the waist called Pennar, a string which, we shall see later, is of considerable ceremonial importance”.

There are contrasting views on Toda clothing. While some philosophers find them classy, some opine that the attire makes Toda women look “unfeminine” giving them a “mummy-like” appearance (Harkness, 1832). King (1870) opines that the robes make them seem very similar to Romans.

Both Putkuli and Tadrp are said to be manufactured by Hindus from the Coimbatore district. These when obtained have red and blue lines and are often decorated with a certain kind of embroidery called Pukuru (Pukhur or Pughur). Putkuli decorated with this embroidery is known as ‘Pukuruputkuli’ (Marshall, 1873) (Rivers W. H., 1906a).

3.2.2 Role in Rituals and Customs

In preindustrial India, cloth has often played a role in reaffirming political alliances and worship. It was often used to symbolize status or change in the same, as a transformative tool or as a promise for future protection. Transactions made in cloth, as well as the wearing of new cloth or clothes, were a significant part of every major ritual surrounding the life cycle in preindustrial India (Bayle, 1986).

According to Toda respondents, elaborately embroidered garments are often a part of important Toda ceremonies such as weddings, funerals, births and temple ceremonies. The most elaborately embroidered samples are often kept aside for men and women of importance as well as to be worn at festive gatherings (Emeneau, 1937b).

As a part of funeral ceremonies, the torp or waistcloth, in its traditional style⁴ is put on the body before cremation. The body of a Toda member who has passed over will not be taken for funeral proceedings unless covered with their traditional Putkuli shawl. This particular Putkuli is called ‘Pekhadaar Putkuli’ (Sharma, 2018). Elderly people often store elaborately worked ones away for this purpose (Emeneau, 1937b).

Thurston in his account notes about a funeral ceremony where the corpse was covered with three clothes/ garments. The innermost cloth was black, similar to the one worn by dairy priests, followed by the Putkuli cloak which had blue and red embroidery. This was then covered with a plain white cloth followed by a red cloth of European manufacture

⁴ Torp used ordinarily have little to no embroidery on it and is made out of machine-made cotton. For occasions of importance such as funerals, embroidered torp made in Khaddar is used (Emeneau, Toda Garments and Embroidery, 1937b).

(Thurston, Toda, 1909). It is believed that the motifs embroidered on this shawl protect the spirit of the deceased person from being taken away by the messenger of God of death on its way to the afterworld (Sharma, 2018).

The same applies to weddings. Bridegrooms are required to wear the traditional shirt and Putkuli cloak for the ceremony. Adding to this, all guests are also required to wear their traditional Putkuli while attending important functions. According to Toda artisans belonging to Tharanadu Mund, while most women have the skills and prepare them for themselves, it is not uncommon to commission fellow Toda artisans from the village.

The embroidery even played a role in the interaction of the tribes with the Kotas. It is said that during the Toda ceremony of *marvainolkedr*, the Kotas presented the Todas with a cloak along with eight annas⁵ to pay for the embroidery work alongside other things (Rivers W. H., 1906a). As Anthony Walker notes, there is little difference in the dressing of Todas from Tamilians today (Walker A. R., 1989). Presently, it is difficult to distinguish Todas from the rest of the population as they wear similar clothes. Shirts, dhotis and pants are worn by men and salwar-kameez, frocks and sarees are worn by women. It is only on the occasion of ceremonies such as birth, death, marriage or temple festivities that we can find them in their traditional attires.

3.3 Raw Materials and Techniques

W R King mentions how Toda robes are made out of a thick coarse cotton fabric which is natively produced. This fabric, which is white when clean also sometimes, had red stripes or borders (King, 1870). Owing to the non-standardized methods of dyeing, the intensity of the colour of the stripes on the torp and Putkuli vary (Emeneau, 1937b).

Putkuli is made out of khaddar and measures three cubits wide and five and a half to six cubits⁶ long. Putkuli, Tharp and Konu used to be procured from Serumunge merchants in Coimbatore. Some other accounts mention how the material was made to order by the Chettis in Coimbatore. Satimangalam and other towns in the plains (Breeks, 1873)

⁵ Anna is a currency unit used in British India which equalled to one-sixth of a rupee.

⁶ Cubit is a measure of length. It is the length between elbow to finger-tips, usually measuring about 18 inches (Emeneau, Toda Garments and Embroidery, 1937b).

(Emeneau, 1937b). Sometimes this was also procured from the Ootacamund market after which Toda women embellished them with embroidery (Thurston, 1909).

According to a respondent from Garden Mund, the tradition of embroidering on Putkuli shawl is only as old as 50-70 years. As per several Toda respondents, traditionally Putkuli used to be a plain white shawl, occasionally with red stripes.

Back in the day, the fibre of the Nilgiri Nettle plant was used for stitching the Putkuli. The bark of the plant was added to boiling water along with ashes after which the fibre was extracted. The plant is cultivated near the Toda settlements and steel needles bought from the bazaar were used (Thurston, Toda, 1909) (Chandler, 1900).

Presently, the material used is replaced by machine-made cotton which is cheaper (Emeneau, 1937b). The authorities of retail stores offering Toda products in Ooty and Kotagiri reported that the fabric is now either sourced from Karur or vendors in Ooty. Many Toda respondents also mentioned their inability to find vendors who manufactured their traditional Putkuli.

The craft utilizes the darning technique by counting the number of threads of the cloth. (Emeneau, 1937b). Interestingly, there is no reverse side for this type of embroidery which means, utmost care is taken to make sure that the stitches come out neatly on both sides. The patterns are directly stitched onto the fabric without drawing or transferring designs. There are two sides to this embroidered fabric, one which has the loops of the threads and the other where the patterns are visible. The latter is however considered by the Todas as the reverse side (Emeneau, 1937b).

The thread used is coarsely spun typically in dark blue or black. (Emeneau, 1937b) Presently, woollen yarn is used. The primary colours used are Red, Black and occasionally Blue. These colours are symbolic of their cultural beliefs: White – purity and innocence, Red – Adolescence and Youth and Black – Maturity (Sharma & Bhagat, 2018).

The sharp ends of the needles are often rubbed blunt to prevent hurting the fingers while practising the embroidery. The woollen threads give the embroidery a raised look. These materials were brought to the Ootacamund market from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

3.4 Patterns and Themes in Toda Embroidery

Themes when it comes to Toda Embroidery are mostly geometric patterns inspired by nature and everyday activities. Following are some of the motifs in Toda embroidery and what they are inspired from (Sharma & Bhagat, 2018):

Twedhhdr: Mountains of Nilgiris

Peshk: The stripes on a squirrel's body

Kopaan: Chequered pattern on a butterfly

Kwudrkorr: Beehive

Modhery: Yellow marsh flowers

Ocvett Pukhur: Striped Cane braiding technique used in the construction of Toda temples

EhpothillykhmPukhur: Rabbit Ears

The Toda community believes in recreating traditional designs. *Twedhhdr Pukhur* is one of the oldest motifs which can be seen in *Putkuli*. When it comes to embroidery, a handful of patterns are used as the basis for all work produced (Emeneau, 1937b). These patterns are of two main classes – One, done in between the wide stripes on the long ends of the cloak and the ends of the *torp* between the woven stripes, and two, done along the length of the fabric, perpendicular to the woven stripe (Emeneau, *Toda Garments and Embroidery*, 1937b).

There are three sub-divisions of patterns in the former class. They mostly consist of several zigzag lines enclosed by dual zigzag rows of thread loops. Two of these subdivisions are namely- “eyes on the peacock's tail-feathers” and its variations and “Mat Embroidery”. The third subdivision is also made with the same principle and is distinguished in terms of the number of horizontal white threads within every line of loops (Emeneau, 1937b).

If there is a singular line of white thread enclosed by two loops, the pattern is known as “squirrel embroidery”. Every white thread that is counted is called a “grain of rice”. Hence, in the case of two lines of white threads, the pattern is known as “snake-embroidery” or “two-grains of rice-embroidery. Similarly, as the number of threads counted between loops goes up, they are known as “three grains of rice-embroidery, “four grains of rice embroidery” etc. In the case of five threads, it is also known by the name “big which is embroidery” (Emeneau, 1937b).

The second main class of pattern is done using single strands of crimson thread perpendicular to the first dyed woven strip of the Putkuli and torp. It differs from the former class in that it is done along the length, and not across the strip of the pattern. Due to this reason, there are no loops of thread showing in this.

This class of patterns has two sub-divisions. The first comprises drawing threads of the woven materials and working in a certain number of threads. Depending on the number of threads drawn and worked in, they are known by the names (here translated into English)- “chain”, “four holes in the gate-posts of the pen”, “eye” etc. In the second kind, no threads are drawn before working in the coloured threads (usually black, dark blue or crimson).

Photograph 3.2 Toda Embroidered Products at Kotagiri Women's Cooperative Society



Photograph: Researcher

Emeneau mentions of few patterns that were introduced alongside modifications of the old ones This includes the introduction of non-traditional colours such as light blue and green. He attributes this to foreign influence. In his paper, Emeneau describes a specimen of a Putkuli cloak he came across. It had crimson red fringes embellished with a few fragile glass beads in various colours. This particular one had been stored away for funeral purposes. He also notes instances of fringes made out of heavy white parcel cords and considers them to be an innovation (Emeneau, 1937b).

3.5 Time for Production

Toda embroidery is a time-taking craft. Depending on the intricacy and the area to be covered, the time demanded by each piece varies. According to the respondents, small items such as keychains and luggage tags tend to take lesser time as opposed to larger, intricate pieces such as Putkuli shawl, runners, sarees etc. According to authorities at Shalom, their best-seller Toda Sarees take up to 6 months for completion and hence are priced relatively high.

A traditional Putkuli with its elaborate embellishments takes up to 2-3 months for completion based on the time the artisan can invest on a day-to-day basis. Smaller items such as keychains and luggage tags took anywhere from a few hours to a day for completion. Table 3.1 shows the list of popular Toda embroidered products and their approximate production time.

Table 3.1 List of Toda Embroidered Products and Average Production Time

| Product | Time for Production |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| Shawl | 1 month |
| Traditional Putkuli | 75-80 days |
| Muffler | 1 week |
| Dupatta | 2 weeks |
| Keychain | 1 day |
| Purse | 2-3 days |
| Wall hangings | 4-5 days |
| Cushion Cover | 3-4 days |
| Shoulder bag | 3-4 days |

Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

3.6 Participation in the Craft

While describing women's work in the Toda society, Rivers writes about three activities – pounding and sifting grain and sweeping the floor. Besides these, Rivers also mentions how they take up activities such as mending garments and embroidery to embellish their cloaks (Rivers W. H., 1906a). There have also been occurrences in history where women were known for their exceptional skill in the craft. Rivers noted the instance of a woman

who got so proficient in the skill that she had to change her name to ‘Pukuruveli’. (Rivers W. H., The Todas, 1906a).

3.6.1 Toda Artisans

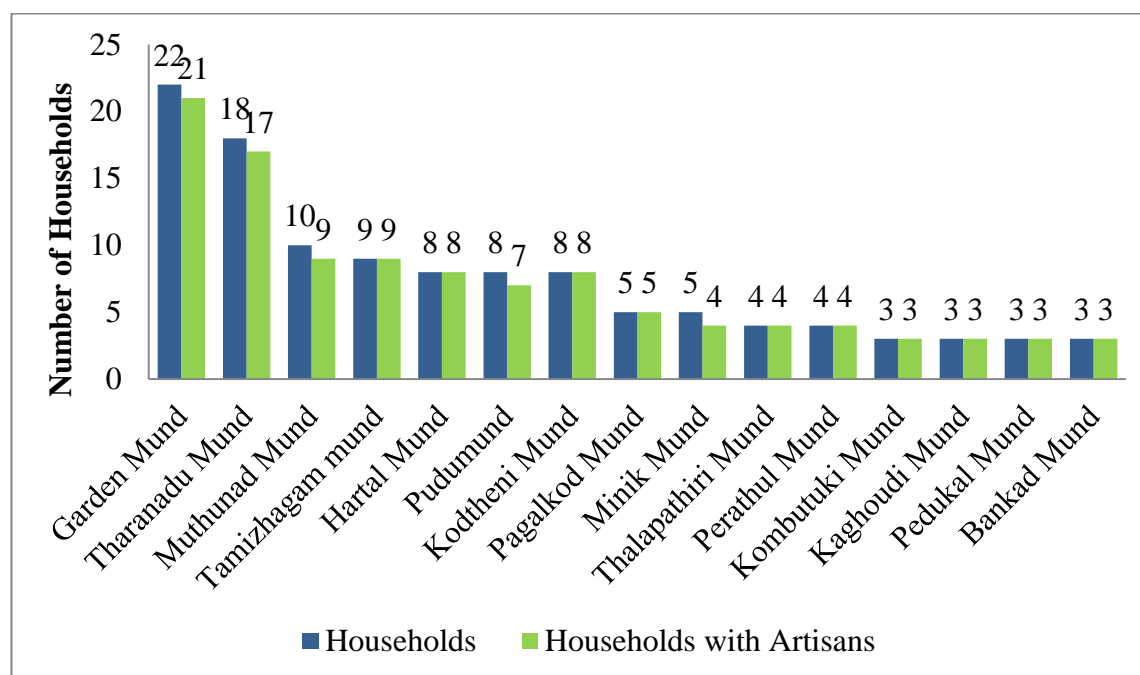
Nearly 95.6 per cent of the total Toda households surveyed had at least one practising Toda artisan. In the 15 Toda Munds surveyed across Udhagamandalam and Kotagiri, a total of 175 artisans were identified. Exceptions were found in Garden Mund, Tharanadu Mund, Muthunad Mund, Pudumund and Minik Mund. In these Munds, the reasons for the same were: i) Lack of female members ii) Sole female member discontinuing the practice due to old age-related ailments iii) Engagement in other occupations.

Other than one exception from Bankad Mund in Kotagiri, all of the artisans were females. This is attributed to the fact that Toda embroidery is traditionally a women-dominated craft in the Toda society (Rivers W. H., 1906a). All artisans practised it on a part-time basis alongside taking care of their households or their jobs.

Table 3.2 Percentage of Households with Artisans

| Sl. No. | Name of Hamlet | Number of Households | Percentage of Households with artisans |
|---------|-------------------|----------------------|--|
| 1 | Kombutuki Mund | 3 | 100.0 |
| 2 | Pagalkod Mund | 5 | 100.0 |
| 3 | Kaghoudi Mund | 3 | 100.0 |
| 4 | Thalapathiri Mund | 4 | 100.0 |
| 5 | Perathul Mund | 4 | 100.0 |
| 6 | Hartal Mund | 8 | 100.0 |
| 7 | Tamizhagam mund | 9 | 100.0 |
| 8 | Pedukal Mund | 3 | 100.0 |
| 9 | Bankad Mund | 3 | 100.0 |
| 10 | Kodtheni Mund | 8 | 100.0 |
| 11 | Garden Mund | 22 | 95.5 |
| 12 | Tharanadu Mund | 18 | 94.4 |
| 13 | Muthunad Mund | 10 | 90.0 |
| 14 | Pudumund | 8 | 87.5 |
| 15 | Minik Mund | 5 | 80.0 |
| | Total | 113 | 95.6 |

Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

Figure 3.1 Ratio of Toda Households and Households with Toda Artisans

Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

Table 3.3 Number of Toda Artisans in Toda Munds

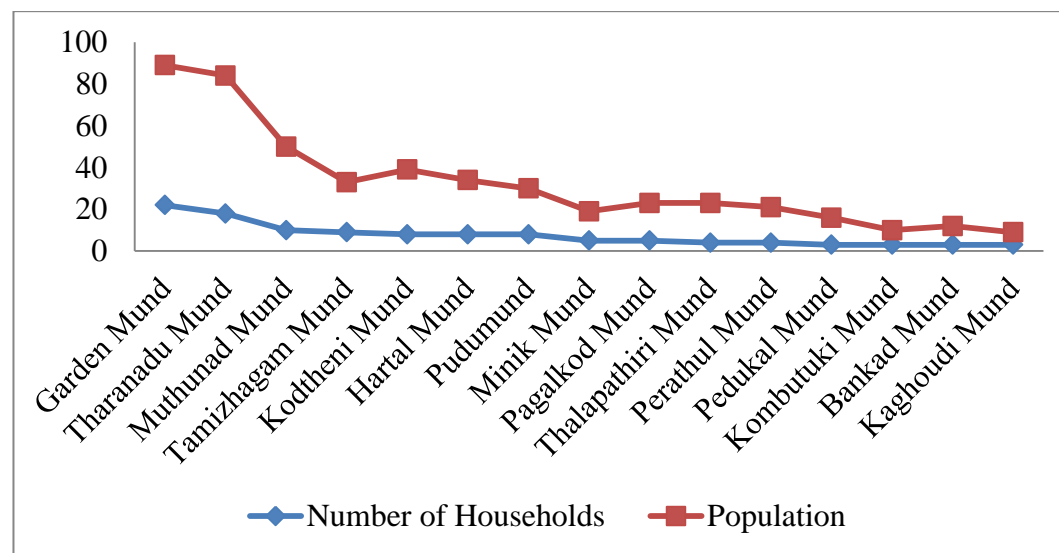
| Sl. No. | Village | Total Number of Households | Population | Number of Artisans |
|---------|-------------------|----------------------------|------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Tharanadu Mund | 18 | 84 | 32 |
| 2 | Garden Mund | 22 | 89 | 27 |
| 3 | Tamizhagam mund | 9 | 33 | 16 |
| 4 | Kodtheni Mund | 8 | 39 | 16 |
| 5 | Muthunad Mund | 10 | 50 | 15 |
| 6 | Hartal Mund | 8 | 34 | 13 |
| 7 | Pudumund | 8 | 30 | 11 |
| 8 | Pedukal Mund | 3 | 16 | 8 |
| 9 | Thalapathiri Mund | 4 | 23 | 7 |
| 10 | Minik Mund | 5 | 19 | 7 |
| 11 | Pagalkod Mund | 5 | 23 | 6 |
| 12 | Perathul Mund | 4 | 21 | 6 |
| 13 | Kombutuki Mund | 3 | 10 | 4 |
| 14 | Bankad Mund | 3 | 12 | 4 |
| 15 | Kaghoudi Mund | 3 | 9 | 3 |
| | Total | 113 | 492 | 175 |
| | Weighted Average | | 50 | 17 |

Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

Table 3.3 shows the number of households surveyed in each Toda Mund, the total population and the number of practising artisans. Tharanadu Mund in Sholur Panchayat with 18 households has a total of 32 artisans. This is followed by Garden Mund with 27 artisans. The average population in each Toda Mund is 50 persons (Weighted Average). The average number of practising artisans in each Mund is 17 (Table 3.4).

In terms of households, the average number of artisans per household is the highest in Pedukal Mund, which has an average of 3 artisans per household. An average Toda household has an average of 2 Toda artisans each (Table 3.5).

Figure 3.2 Households and Population in Toda Munds across Nilgiris



Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

i) Correlation between the Number of Households and Number of Artisans

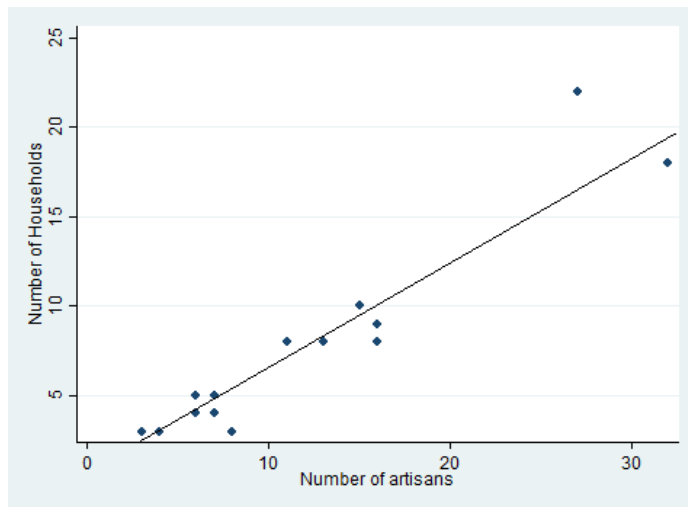
Upon running Pearson's Correlation Coefficient test on 15 Toda Munds to understand the relationship between the number of households and the number of artisans present, it was observed that there is a strong positive correlation between the both as depicted by r value of 0.9497.

This means that as the number of households in a particular Mund went up, there was a simultaneous increase in the number of artisans as well. This may imply that Toda embroidery is commonly practised in most Toda households. Garden Mund and Tharanadu Mund are the largest Toda hamlets in the Nilgiris which also have the largest share of Toda artisans (Refer to Table 3.3).

```
. pwcorr hh artisans, sig star (.05)
```

| | hh artisans | |
|----------|-------------|--------|
| hh | 1.0000 | |
| artisans | 0.9497* | 1.0000 |
| | 0.0000 | |

Figure 3.3 Correlation between Number of Households and Number of Artisans



ii) Correlation between the Total Population in the Toda Mund and Number of Artisans

It was observed that there is a strong positive correlation between the total population in the Toda Mund and the total number of artisans with the r value of 0.9660. This implies that as the total population in the Toda Mund went up, there was a subsequent increase in the number of artisans as well.

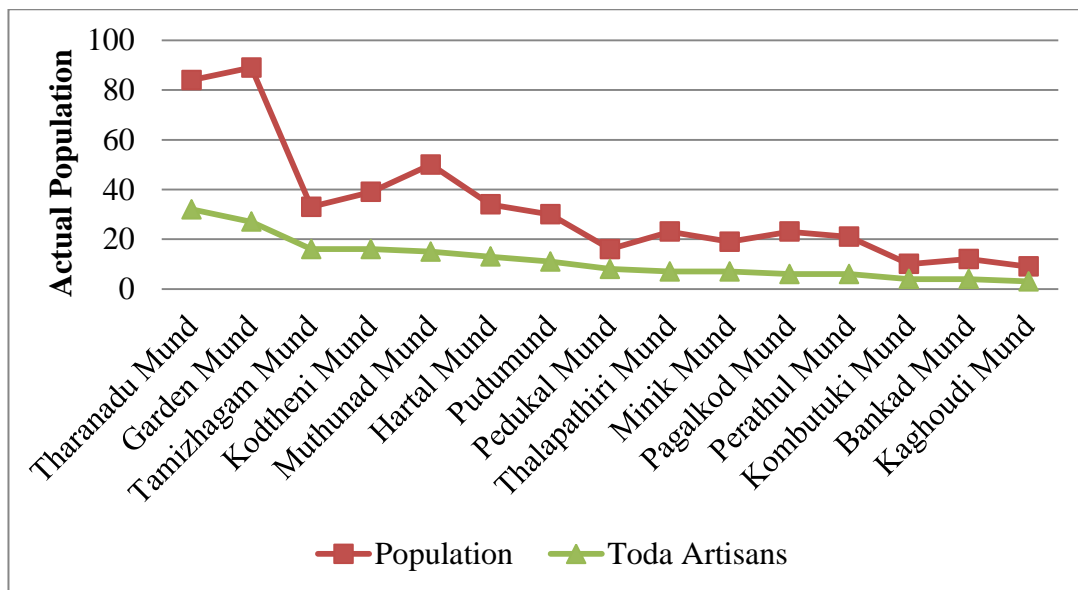
```
. pwcorr Pop artisans, sig star (.05)
```

| | Pop artisans | |
|----------|--------------|--------|
| Pop | 1.0000 | |
| artisans | 0.9660* | 1.0000 |
| | 0.0000 | |

Table 3.4 Average Number of Artisans per Household

| Village | Average Population per Household | Average Number of Artisans per Household |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Pedukal Mund | 5.33 | 3 |
| Muthunad Mund | 5 | 2 |
| Thalapathiri Mund | 5.75 | 2 |
| Perathul Mund | 5.25 | 2 |
| Tharanadu Mund | 4.65 | 2 |
| Hartal Mund | 4.25 | 2 |
| Tamizhagam mund | 3.67 | 2 |
| Kodtheni Mund | 4.88 | 2 |
| Garden Mund | 4 | 1 |
| Kombutuki Mund | 3.33 | 1 |
| Pagalkod Mund | 4.6 | 1 |
| Kaghoudi Mund | 3 | 1 |
| Minik Mund | 3.8 | 1 |
| Pudumund | 3.75 | 1 |
| Bankad Mund | 4 | 1 |
| Weighted Average | 4 | 2 |

Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

Figure 3.4 Population and Number of Artisans in Toda Munds

Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

3.6.2 Age Group of Toda Artisans

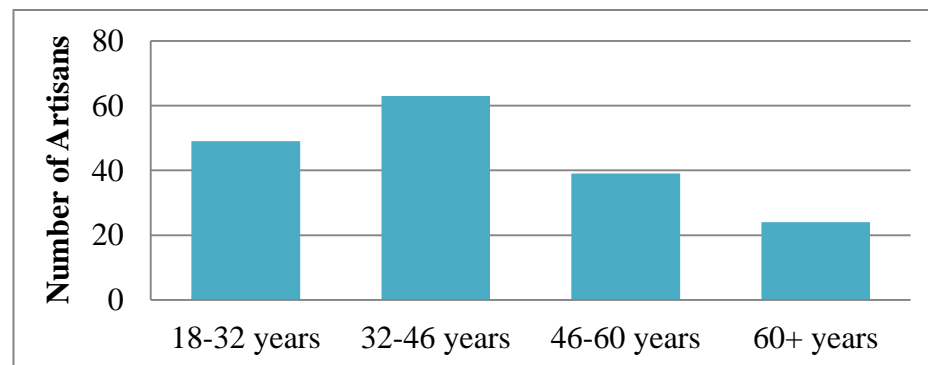
Out of the total Toda artisans surveyed, it was noticed that a majority of artisans belonged to the age group 32-46 years (36 per cent) followed by the age group of 18 to 32 years (28 per cent). There were 24 artisans (13.7 per cent) who were above the age of 60 (Table 3.5). Older women tended to stop the practice after a point due to age-associated ailments. The artisans reported having learned the craft from their mothers or grandmothers at an early age of 13-14 years.

Table 3.5 Age Group of Toda Artisans (years)

| Age group (Years) | Number of Artisans | Percentage |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------|
| 18-32 | 49 | 28 |
| 32-46 | 63 | 36 |
| 46-60 | 39 | 22.3 |
| 60+ | 24 | 13.7 |
| Total | 175 | 100 |

Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

Figure 3.5 Age Group of Toda Artisans (years)



Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

| Variable | Obs | Mean | Std. Dev. | Min | Max |
|------------|-----|----------|-----------|-------|------|
| averageage | 108 | 41.31639 | 4.401066 | 35.14 | 58.2 |

The youngest artisan in the sample was of 19 years from Muthunad Mund. The oldest artisans were of 75 years and belonged to Tharanadu Mund and Garden Mund in Udhagamandalam. The average age of artisans in each Toda Mund ranged between 35 and 58 years. The Mund-wise average age is given in table 3.6. The weighted average age of artisans, considering the number of households in each Mund is 41.3 years.

Table 3.6 Average Age of Artisans in each Toda Mund

| Name of Toda Mund | Average Age of Artisans (Years) |
|--------------------------|--|
| Thalapathiri Mund | 35.14 |
| Muthunad Mund | 36.33 |
| Perathul Mund | 37.5 |
| Pudumund | 37.5 |
| Hartal Mund | 38.3 |
| Tamizhagam mund | 38.5 |
| Minik Mund | 38.71 |
| Pagalkod Mund | 41 |
| Garden Mund | 41.7 |
| Pedukal Mund | 42 |
| Tharanadu Mund | 43.6 |
| Kodtheni Mund | 45.3 |
| Kaghoudi Mund | 48 |
| Kombutuki Mund | 48.5 |
| Bankad Mund | 58.2 |
| Weighted Average | 41.3 |

Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

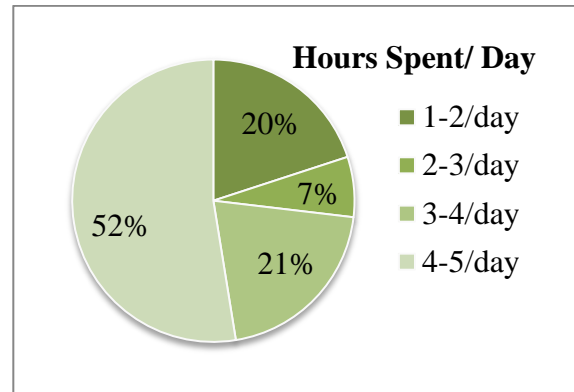
3.6.3 Time Engaged in the Craft

Being an unorganized sector, we cannot stipulate the hours the artisans engage in the craft. The values varied widely from person to person and from household to household. Aspects such as employment status, other commitments, security provided by other earning members in the family etc. influenced the hours an artisan was able to dedicate to the craft.

A majority of the artisans (52.6 per cent) reported spending approximately 4 to 5 hours per day making embroidered products. 20.6 per cent and 20 per cent of the artisans reported spending about 3 to 4 hours and 1 to 2 hours per day respectively (Table 3.7).

Table 3.7 Average Time Engaged in the Craft

| Hours Spent/Day | Number of Artisans | Percentage |
|-----------------|--------------------|--------------|
| 1-2/day | 35 | 20.0 |
| 2-3/day | 12 | 6.9 |
| 3-4/day | 36 | 20.6 |
| 4-5/day | 92 | 52.6 |
| Total | 175 | 100.0 |



Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

Unemployed women who were homemakers, as well as old women, reported spending about 3 to 4 hours per day working on embroidery projects. Employed women on the other hand were able to dedicate relatively less time to the craft. A respondent from Pagalkod Mund works a full-time job at a counter at 9th Mile Shooting Spot and takes care of her three daughters. In her case, she is only able to put in a few hours every week to work on the craft. The case is similar with most Toda artisans located near the aforementioned tourist spot as they are predominantly employed in the eco-tourism sector owing to being under Pagalkod Eco-Development Committee Centre.

3.6.4 Income from Embroidery

Today, Toda embroidered products are being created both for the internal audience as well as the external audience (tourists, visitors etc.). Since the craft is significant in all major Toda ceremonies, most Toda women are well versed in the craft. They often get commissioned by people from within the community to make the Putkuli or other items mandated by their culture. This occurs when the person is not versed or does not have the time to dedicate to creating the same.

Toda embroidery produced for the external audience is altered in ways to fit the market demands. These are made keeping in view the tastes of the tourists and visitors. Hence, Toda women earn income both from the external audience as well as from those

belonging to their community. According to authorities of Sangamam Toda Federation, for several Toda women, embroidery is the sole way of earning.

These artisans are either a part of a Self Help Group or commissioned by members thereof or other organizations for their embroidery services. In certain cases, artisans who were not part of any SHG did the work of organizing artisans from their own as well as other Toda Munds to make products which they then offered for sale to tourists. One such case was noted in Muthunad Mund.

Photograph 3.3 Toda Artisans with their Traditional Putkuli



Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

Income earned from embroidery varied from individual to individual. It is reliant on several factors such as i) the amount of time they can devote ii) the number of products they are able to make, iii) time of the year (tourist visits lead to more income) and iv) location of the artisan. According to respondents belonging to Uzhaikum Mahilar SHG in Tamizhagam Mund, the women earned somewhere between Rs. 2000- Rs. 3000 on a monthly basis. A respondent from Muthunad Mund reported earning approximately Rs.1000 weekly if they are able to produce embroidered works.

3.7 Socio-Economic Background of Artisans

In the following headings we will be looking at the socio-economic background of Toda artisans in terms of their average household income, main economic activities they take part in and landholdings.

3.7.1 Average Household Income of Artisans

In the 108 artisan households surveyed, the average annual income ranged between Rs. 1,00,000 – Rs. 1,20,000. Most of this income came from daily labour or agriculture.

3.7.2 Sources of Household Income

From the socio-economic survey conducted in Toda hamlets located in Udhamandalam and Kotagiri, it was observed that daily labour and agriculture were the two main sources of household income. Out of the 108 households with artisans, 70 (64.8 per cent) of them were dependent on daily labour, 73 households (67.5 per cent) on agriculture and 25 (23.14 per cent) on other occupations. 11.11 per cent of households earned a secondary seasonal income from buffalo rearing. Table 3.8 the number of households engaged in various economic activities in the Toda Munds surveyed. Provided below is the result of the correlation coefficient test run to examine the relationship between the number of households with Toda artisans and the number of them engaged in various economic activities.

| | artisa~h | dailyl~r | agricu~e | others | buffal~g |
|--------------|----------|----------|----------|--------|----------|
| artisanhh | 1.0000 | | | | |
| dailylabour | 0.9396 | 1.0000 | | | |
| agricultur~e | 0.4390 | 0.5724 | 1.0000 | | |
| others | 0.4333 | 0.1923 | -0.2996 | 1.0000 | |
| buffalore~g | 0.3529 | 0.3015 | 0.4556 | 0.2793 | 1.0000 |

i) Daily Labour

Dependence on daily labour as the primary source of income seems to be prevalent among Toda households located in the Nilgiris. There was observed a strong positive correlation observed between the number of artisan households and households with daily

labour as a primary source of income ($r= 0.9396$). This indicates that daily labour was predominantly the main source of income in most households with artisans.

Out of the fifteen Toda hamlets surveyed, ten hamlets showed a relatively high reliance on daily labour as the primary source of income. They are namely- Tharanadu Mund, Garden Mund, Muthunad Mund, Hartal Mund, Kodtheni Mund, Pudumund, Perathul Mund, Thamizhakam Mund, Kaghoudi Mund and Minik Mund (Refer Table 3.8).

Table 3.8 Sources of Household Income

| Name of Hamlet | Households with Artisans | Daily Labour | Agriculture * | Others ** | Buffalo Rearing |
|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Garden Mund | 21 | 16 | 2 | 5 | 0 |
| Kombutuki Mund | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Muthunad Mund | 9 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 2 |
| Pagalkod Mund | 5 | 0 | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| Kaghoudi Mund | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| Thalapathiri Mund | 4 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Perathul Mund | 4 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Minik Mund | 4 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Tharanadu Mund | 17 | 16 | 17 | 1 | 3 |
| Hartal Mund | 8 | 8 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| Pudumund | 7 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 0 |
| Tamizhagam mund | 9 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 3 |
| Pedukal Mund | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| Bankad Mund | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| Kodtheni Mund | 8 | 8 | 8 | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 108 | 70 | 73 | 25 | 12 |
| Percentage | | 64.8 % | 67.5 % | 23.14 % | 3.11% |

*Agriculture includes ones done by self as well as by providing land on lease

** Public/ Private Sector Jobs, Own Business etc.

Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

Depending on their geographical location, the kind of daily labour practised also varied greatly. In Garden Mund, located in Vanarapetty within Botanical Garden, the majority of men worked as daily labourers at the Botanical Garden. In Tharanadu Mund, Muthunad Mund and Pudumund, people engaged in daily labour in nearby forests and agricultural fields.

In the sample survey conducted, it was observed that females also engaged in daily labour, however not as regularly as the males. According to a respondent from Tharanadu Mund, they earned relatively less than males. In Botanical Garden, males earned up to Rs. 10,000 every month. According to a respondent from Tharanadu Mund, daily wages for women who worked in the forests and agricultural fields were around Rs. 250 whereas men earned Rs. 500, which further went up to Rs.1000 depending on the additional work they were able to take up.

ii) Agriculture

In the sample survey conducted, it was observed that most Toda households are in possession of some land. Toda settlements are usually surrounded by tracts of land which is used for grazing buffaloes and agriculture. Each house in the hamlet often owns a share of this land. Over 67 per cent of the Toda households with artisans were dependent on agriculture as their main source of income.

In some cases, these lands are located very far from the hamlet they are settled in. In such cases, agriculture is either not practised or the land is given out for lease where other parties do the agriculture for them. Major crops cultivated by the Todas are potatoes, garlic, onions, carrots, cabbage, etc.

iii) Other Occupations

Besides daily labour and agriculture, the Todas are sometimes involved in other occupations. These include government servants, municipal employees, teachers, factory and plantation workers, people engaged in trade and commerce, transport etc.

Over 23 per cent of the households with artisans were dependent on such activities as the primary source of income. Pagalkod Mund, Perathul Mund and Tamizhagam Mund have a higher proportion of their household income coming from such activities.

In Tamizhagam Mund, 77.7 per cent of the households are dependent on activities such as business, government services, transport etc. as their primary source of income. Pagalkond Mund EDC is one of the nine centres of the Eco-Development Committee (EDC) in the Nilgiris. This has contributed to the employment of several Toda individuals in Pagalkod Mund, Perathul Mund, Kaghoudi Mund and Thalpathiri Mund. Here, the majority of household income comes from Eco-tourism activities. Most women in Pagalkod Mund are currently working full-time at the tourism counters at the nearby 9th-mile Shooting Spot (Nilgiris Eco Tourism, 2022).

iv) Buffalo Rearing

Todas are considered ‘true pastoralists’ and their culture has revolved around the ownership and care of the Toda breed of the Indian river buffalo (*Bubalus bubalis*). The possibility of livelihood that is not based on this species of animals was explored by the Todas only recently (Walker A. R., 2012).

Photograph 3.4 Toda Buffaloes at Tamizhagam Mund and Bankad Mund



Photograph: Researcher

Animals that are highly valued by the people of the plains, such as poultry, pigs, sheep, and goats are not kept by the Todas. (Harkness, 1832) Todas consider buffalo herding and dairy activities to be the holiest occupation one can engage in, without which a Toda has no happiness (Metz, 1864). Todas produce butter and ghee, the latter of which is given out to neighbouring tribes who then transport it to the plains (Harkness, 1832).

Presently, there is a lesser number of households dependent on buffalo rearing as the main source of their income. It is also observed that they prefer to sell it directly rather

than process it to make ghee or butter (Walker A. R., 1989). In the sample survey carried out, it was found that 12 out of the 108 households with Toda artisans practised buffalo rearing as a secondary source of income. According to a respondent from Muthunad Mund, this special variety of buffalo is now decreasing in number. Muthunad Mund currently has only one of them whereas in the past they had over 800 of them.

As Walker notes, if buffalo herding had to be relied on as the sole source of wealth, a family required to have at least fifty buffaloes, which only over 6 per cent of Toda families owned around 1975 (Walker A. R., 1989).

3.7.3 Landholdings

About 94.6 per cent of the total Toda households (with artisans) surveyed had landholdings which were either offered for lease or used for agriculture. Among the households with Toda artisans, 45.4 per cent of the households owned land up to 1.5 acres. Approximately 27 per cent of these households owned between 2.5 to 3.5 acres of land.

Table 3.9 Landholdings of Households with Artisans

| Size of landholding | Number of households | Percentage |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| No land | 6 | 5.6 |
| 0-1.5 acres | 49 | 45.4 |
| 1.5-2.5 acres | 17 | 15.7 |
| 2.5 - 3.5 acres | 29 | 26.9 |
| 3.5 and above | 7 | 6.5 |
| Total | 108 | 100.0 |

Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

Chapter 4

Commercialization of Toda Embroidery

4.1 Introduction

As defined by Joshi and Chelliah (2013), “The commercialization of traditional knowledge starts with scouting for traditional knowledge, validation, value addition, product and enterprise development, Intellectual property rights protection, licencing and diffusion of the knowledge or innovation” (Joshi & Chelliah, 2013). The process of commercialization of ethnic crafts is not uniform or isolated. The alignment of a complexly interlinked array of factors (economic, religious, cultural and political) determines its course to a great degree. When ethnic crafts are produced for an external audience, it often turns into a new ‘cultural marker’. These products provide the ethnic group with an outward image and identity which is henceforth considered a significant consequence of the commercialization of such crafts (Cohen, 1989).

In this chapter, we will be looking at the process of commercialization of Toda embroidery. We will be examining it in light of the role of tourism in the Nilgiris. While trying to understand the supply chain, we shall examine the functioning of the various stakeholders starting from individuals and Self Help Groups at the grass-root level to NGOs and governmental organizations. Finally, we will try to analyse the changes undergone in the craft over the years owing to commercialization and the challenges faced by Toda artisans.

4.2 Historical Background

The earliest attempts to commercialize Toda Embroidery were initiated by missionaries established in the Nilgiris at the time. Hence, it can be classified as ‘Encroaching Commercialization’ as Cohen (Cohen, 1989) defines it. Encroaching Commercialization occurs when native or indigenous craftsmen are hired by an external sponsoring agency (missionaries in the case of Todas) to produce saleable products. In this case, it was initiated by missionaries such as the Church of England Zenana Mission in Udthagamandalam (Emeneau, 1937b) (Harkness, 1832). Emeneau in his account mentions this Mission located at Ootacamund, which collaborated with Toda women and sold

embroidered articles that were produced by them. Products were made traditionally on khaddar to make table cloths, curtains etc. and several other products were made on a European material with minimal Toda embellishments (Emeneau, 1937b).

Luidmila Shaposhnikova, a 20th-century Russian teacher in her account writes about the Christian school by the name of ‘Dunmere’ established by Catherine Ling of Zenana mission during her times. She mentions how the school functioned as an “industrial centre”, which provided Toda women with pieces of cloth on which they embroidered. Toda women were paid Rs 5 for an embroidered tablecloth which was then sold for five times the price at the Centre. Similarly, they were paid Rs. 2.5 for Toda embroidered napkins which were then sold at Rs 10 (Shaposhnikova, 1969) (Walker A. R., 1991).

Such commercialization is considered ‘indirect tourism’ which usually occurs when the location of the community is in relative isolation, without direct contact with the tourist market (Cohen, 1989). The external agencies purchase these products and offer them in tourist centres thereby opening a market for these products (Cohen, 1989) (Chutia & Sarma, 2016). According to Cohen, the cultural impact of such commercialization will be small as long as they remain limited in scope. While the income it accrues for these communities may be minimal or reasonable, it can play a significant role in non-monetized economies such as that of tribes. (Cohen, 1989)

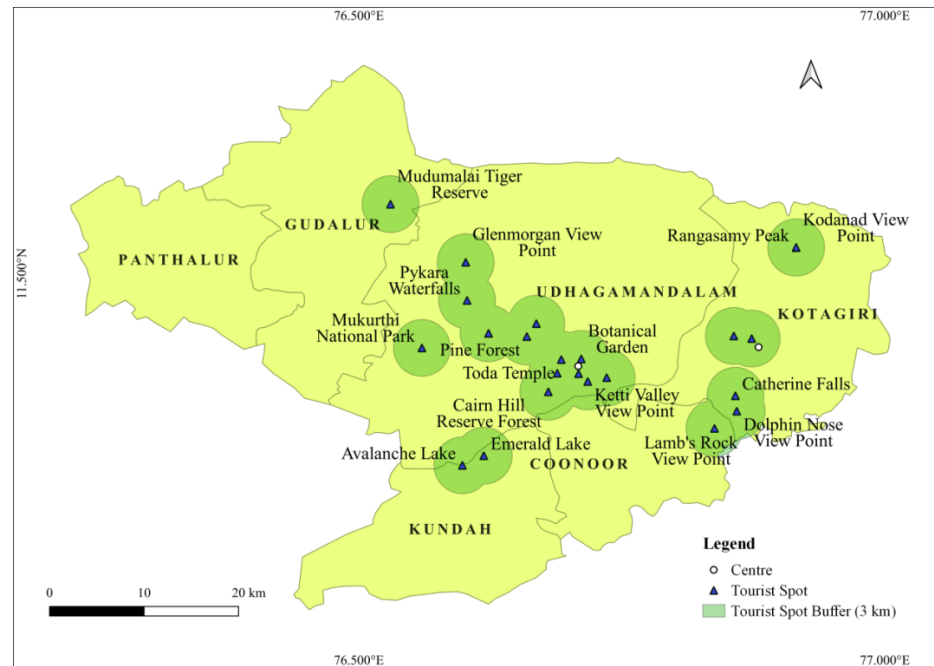
Presently ‘Complementary Commercialization’ of the craft is also prevalent in the Nilgiris. This kind of commercialization takes place when the original craftsmen begin occasionally selling their products to outsiders who visit their settlements while still producing the same for their internal audience Cohen (1989). Initially, there is no differentiation in the products made for either party (Cohen, 1989). Being a significant part of the Toda culture, Toda embroidery is common practice in most Toda households. Hundreds of these artisans are spread across several Munds or Toda settlements across Nilgiris.

4.3 Role of Tourism in Commercialization

Tourism accounts for a large portion of revenue for the Nilgiris. Udhagamandalam (Ooty) is one of the most preferred hill stations in Tamil Nadu attracting about 2.5 million

tourists on an average every year with daily visitors amounting between 20,000 to 25,000. The district accounts for 6.4 per cent of the total domestic arrivals in the state of Tamil Nadu, with an average annual growth rate of 4per cent approximately (TNRTP) (Planning Commission, 2005).

Figure 4.1 Tourist Spots in the Nilgiris and their Buffers (3 km)



Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

Figure 4.1 shows some of the major tourist spots in the Nilgiris, most of which are located in Udhagamandalam Taluk. At the same time, it is noteworthy that Toda settlements or Mundas are also concentrated primarily in Udhagamandalam and Kotagiri Taluks, with a higher proportion of them in the former.

For our study we had surveyed Toda settlements namely Muthunad Mund, Garden Mund, Kombutuki Mund, Pudumund, Tharanadu Mund, Hartal Mund, Pagalkod mund, Minik Mund, Perathul Mund, Kaghoudi Mund, Thalapathiri Mund and Tamizhagam Mund in Udhagamandalam. In Kotagiri Taluk, the Toda settlements identified were Pedukal Mund, Bankad Mund and Kodtheni Mund (Refer to Figure 4.5).

There are nine centres of Eco Development Committee (EDC) that are established in the Nilgiris. They are based in Avalanche, Cairn Hill, Pykara, Pagalkod Mund, Doddabeta, Kodanad, Muthunad Mund, Sembakarai, Oosimalai and Nadugani Gene Pool (Nilgiris Eco Tourism, 2022). The Forest Department of the Government of Tamil Nadu had set up

these local committees with the aim of providing livelihood opportunities to individuals in the region. Since 2012, several young individuals have been trained and provided employment opportunities in the eco-tourism sector in these regions (Nilgiris Eco-Tourism, 2022).

4.4 Commercialization in Udhagamandalam

Garden Mund and Tharanadu Mund, two of the largest Toda Munds in the Nilgiris are located in Udhagamandalam. As per Toda respondents, they are the largest in terms of the Toda population and naturally also in terms of Toda artisans. Major tourist spots located in Udhagamandalam are Botanical Garden, Cairn Hills, 9th Mile Shooting point, Pine Forest, Pykara falls, Ooty Lake, Glenmorgan Viewpoint etc. (Refer to Figure 4.1).

Photograph 4.1 Toda Conical Temple at Muthunad Mund



Photograph: Researcher

The biggest Toda hamlet in the Nilgiris, the Garden Mund is located inside the famous tourist destination, The Botanical Garden. The hamlet consists of 22 households. The Two Toda SHGs functioning in the area are *Thaen Malar* and *Pon Malar* consisting of 10 members each. The artisans here collaborate to make Toda embroidered products which they offer at a State-sponsored outlet located within the Botanical Garden (Refer to Photograph 4.6).

Similarly, Muthunad Mund, located in Hullathy Panchayat is one of the EDC centres and according to its residents is also locally known as ‘Ed Village’ (Nilgiris Eco Tourism, 2022). The Mund, like most Toda Munds, has adjacent grazing tracts and agricultural

lands. Muthunad is considered holy by the Tody clan (Metz, 1864) and is known for its Cone-shaped temple called Poh (also known as Toda Cathedral) which is a tourist attraction (Refer to Photograph 4.1) (Ling, 1919) (Rivers W. H., The Todas, 1906a). *Roja Kootam* and *Thaen Kootam* are two SHGs functioning here. The artisans offer their finished products in temporary stalls put up outside their homes as tourists begin to visit this village.

Tamizhagam Mund is also a famous tourist spot known for its traditional Toda temple (Refer to Photograph 4.2 a). There are 9 households in this hamlet. *Uzhaikkum Magilar Kootam* is the SHG functioning in this area consisting of 12 members According to respondents, owing to being a tourist spot, often they are able to sell their products directly to the tourists as reported by the respondents in these Munds.

Photograph 4.2 a) Toda Temple at Tamizhagam Mund b) Entrance to 9th Mile Shooting Point modelled after a Traditional Toda Hut



Photograph: Researcher

Minik Mund, a small Toda Mund consisting of 5 households is located about 5 km away from Tamizhagam Mund. The closest tourist attraction to Minik Mund is Cairn Hill Reserve Forest located about 800 metres away from this settlement. *Saronin Roja* is the name of the SHG functioning in this settlement. The women sell the products they make at the state-sponsored Eco shop at Cairn Hill Nature Awareness Centre located at the entrance to the forest (Refer to Photograph 4.6).

Photograph 4.3 The Path between Tharanad Mund and Hartal Mund



Photographs: Researcher

Photograph 4.4 Pudumund Toda Hamlet, Ooty



Photographs: Researcher

Tharanadu Mund consisting of 18 households is located in Sholur Panchayat. About 40 women from this hamlet practice embroidery. *Niram Mara Pookkal* and *Vada Malar* are the 2 SHGs functioning in this hamlet consisting of 12 members each. Tourists who visit Glenmorgan View Point tend to look up and visit this serene Toda hamlet which is surrounded by tracts of grazing land. While they did have a stall near the 9th-Mile Shooting Spot where they offered their products for sale, this had to discontinue functioning owing to the pandemic and lockdown.

Pudumund is a Toda settlement in relative isolation in Sholur Panchayat. The artisans here mostly are members of the *Vada Malar* SHG. The village does not attract tourists. Hence the artisans mostly offer their products at Toda Cooperative Society located at Charring Cross.

Pagalkod Mund, Kaghoudi Mund, Thalapathiri Mund and Perathul Mund are located near 9th-mile shooting spot. The main point of sale is when artisans collaborate to finish products which they sell at Toda Cooperative Society located in Ooty. Being one of the EDC centres in the Nilgiris, they also come in direct contact with the tourists who purchase directly from them. *Vasantha Malar* and *PuduVazhvu Sangham* are 2 SHGs functioning in these settlements.

Photograph 4.5 Path to Pagalkod Mund located near 9th Mile Shooting Spot



Photograph: Researcher

4.5 Commercialization in Kotagiri

Three Toda Munds were identified in the Kotagiri Taluk of Nilgiris namely, Bankad Mund, Bedukal Mund and Kodtheni Mund. There are a total of 14 households in these Toda hamlets. Kodanad viewpoint is one of the most important tourist spots located in this taluk. Stores that offer Toda embroidered Products are mainly three – i) the stall put up at Kodanad viewpoint by SHG members ii) Kotagiri Women’s Cooperative Society and iii) Green Shop run by Last Forest. The Cooperative Society collaborates with over 200 Toda women located across Nilgiris to offer their products in their outlet. While Toda Munds in Kotagiri are located far away from the town, the Cooperative society helps them market their products in a better way as it is located in the town region. A lot of tourists visit every year to purchase authentic Toda embroidered products from this store.

In Toda Munds which particularly have a higher proportion of tourist visitors owing to their location close to a tourist spot, we can observe the occurrence of ‘complementary commercialization’. Further, the proximity of the Toda Munds to the centre also

contributes to the increased number of visitors as most tourists tend to visit the main market places located at pivotal points (Chutia & Sarma, 2016).

In the following sections, let us examine whether the location of the Toda Mund with reference to the centre or tourist spots has any correlation with the number of artisans and artisan households. This will be looked at by considering the following pairs of attributes:

- i) Distance of Toda Mund from the centre and the number of tourist spots within 3 km
- ii) Distance of Toda Mund to centre and the distance to nearest tourist spot
- iii) Number of tourist spots within 3 km and number of artisan households
- iv) Proximity to the centre and the number of artisan households
- v) Proximity to the nearest tourist spot and the number of artisans

The term ‘artisan household’ has been used here to imply those Toda households with at least one practising Toda embroidery artisan. This does not imply that the craft is the only source of earning in these households. Pearson’s correlation coefficient has been used in all cases.

i) Distance of Toda Mund from the Centre and the Number of Tourist Spots within 3 km

Upon running a Pearson’s correlation coefficient test on Stata to examine the relationship between the distance of the Toda Mund from the centre and the number of tourist spots falling within its 3 km radius, we could observe a strong negative correlation as depicted by $r = -0.8235$.

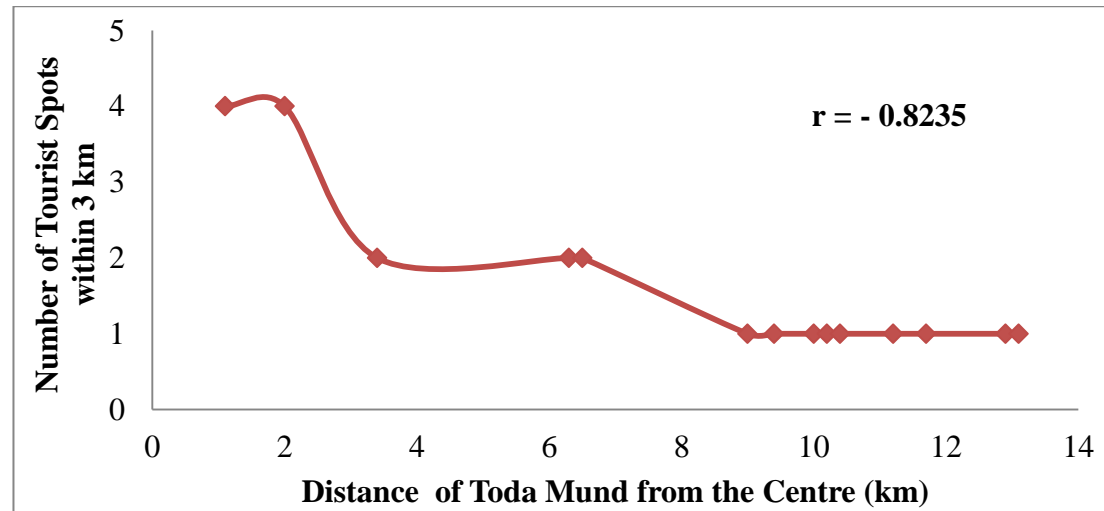
```
. pwcorr DfromC tspots_Num, sig star (.05)
```

| | DfromC tspots~m | |
|------------|-----------------|--------|
| DfromC | 1.0000 | |
| tspots_Num | -0.8235* | 1.0000 |
| | 0.0002 | |

Here the p value of 0.0002 depicts the statistically significant relationship between the two variables. This implies that the longer the distance from the centre, the lesser the

number of tourist spots falling within a 3 km radius of the Toda Munds under study. However, it has to be noted that this does not necessarily imply that the former causes the latter.

Figure 4.2 Correlation between Distance of Toda Mund from the Centre and Number of Tourist Spots within 3 km



Source: Primary data observed during the field visit to the Nilgiris, 2021

Several Toda Munds are located close to tourist attractions in the city. Examples of these are Garden/ Manjakkal Mund located inside Botanical Garden, Minik Mund near Cairn Hill Reserve Forest and Pagalkod Mund near 9th Mile shooting point. At the same time, several Toda Munds are tourist attractions themselves such as Tamizhagam Mund and Muthunad Mund, known for their traditional Toda temples (Figure 4.4).

Garden Mund and Tamizhagam Mund, located within two kilometres from the Udhagamandalam Centre have four major tourist spots each within their 3 kilometres radius. Minik Mund, located about 3.4 kilometres away from the centre has two tourist spots located within a 3 km radius.

Toda hamlets such as Pudumund, Hartal Mund, Pagalkod Mund, Kaghoudi Mund, Thalpathiri Mund and Perathul Mund located over 10 kilometres from the centre have only one tourist spot within their 3 kilometre radius (Refer to Table 4.1). Such Toda hamlets call for 'indirect tourism' with the help of an external agency, as 'complementary commercialization' might not take place in such localities.

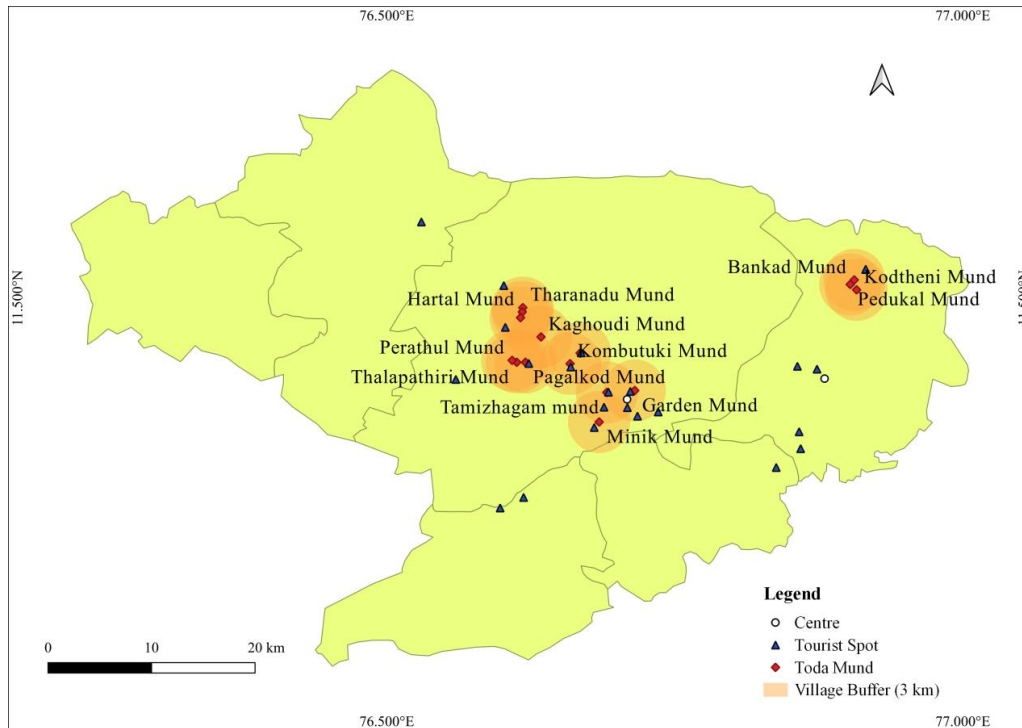
Table 4.1 Proximity of Toda Mund to the Centre, Number of Tourist Spots and Artisans

| Toda Hamlet | Distance to Centre* (km) | Tourist Spots within 3 km radius | Distance to the Nearest Tourist Spot (km) | Number of Artisans |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|---------------------------|
| Garden Mund | 1.1 | 4 | 0.4 | 27 |
| Kombutuki Mund | 6.5 | 2 | 0.3 | 4 |
| Muthunad Mund | 6.3 | 2 | 0.1 | 15 |
| Pagalkod Mund | 10.4 | 1 | 0.3 | 6 |
| Kaghoudi Mund | 10.2 | 1 | 2.8 | 3 |
| Thalapathiri Mund | 11.2 | 1 | 1.1 | 7 |
| Perathul Mund | 11.7 | 1 | 1.6 | 6 |
| Minik Mund | 3.4 | 2 | 0.7 | 7 |
| Tharanadu Mund | 13.4 | 2 | 2.5 | 32 |
| Hartal Mund | 13.1 | 1 | 2.2 | 13 |
| Pudumund | 12.9 | 1 | 1.7 | 11 |
| Tamizhagam mund | 2 | 4 | 0.1 | 16 |
| Pedukal Mund | 9.4 | 1 | 2 | 8 |
| Bankad Mund | 10 | 1 | 1.4 | 4 |
| Kodtheni Mund | 9 | 1 | 2.1 | 16 |
| | | | | 175 |

*Different centres have been taken into consideration for Udhagamandalam and Kotagiri (Upper Bazaar for Udhagamandalam and Kotagiri town for Kotagiri)

Source: Primary data observed during the field visit to the Nilgiris, 2021

Figure 4.3 Tourist Spots within 3 km radius of Toda Mund



Source: Primary data observed during the field visit to the Nilgiris, 2021

ii) Distance of Toda Mund to the Centre and the Distance to Nearest Tourist Spot

There is a strong positive correlation between the distance of the Toda Mund from the centre and the distance to the nearest tourist spot with $r= 0.7009$. This implies that the longer the distance of the Toda Mund from the centre (which was considered separately for Udthagamandalam and Kotagiri), the farther the nearest tourist spot was. This may suggest that as we move away from the centre, tourist spots tend to be sparse or located farther apart from each other and the Toda settlements.

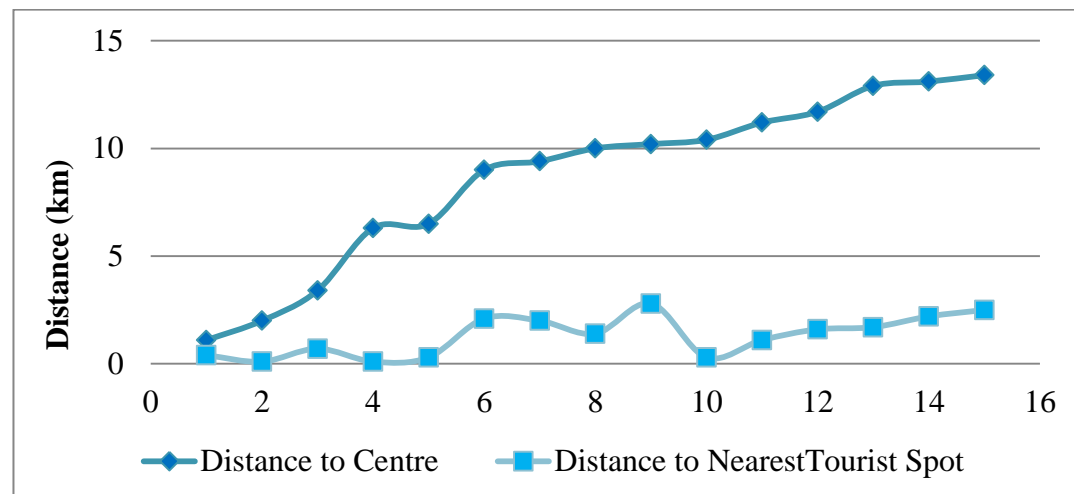
```
. pwcorr DfromC DfromT, sig star (.05)
```

| | DfromC | DfromT |
|--------|-------------------|--------|
| DfromC | 1.0000 | |
| DfromT | 0.7009* 0.0036 | 1.0000 |

We can observe that Toda Munds located nearer to the centre tended to have tourist spots located relatively closer (Refer to Table 4.1). Tamizhagam Mund, located 2 km away from the centre is popular for its traditional Toda temple which is located only 100 metres away from the settled area. Garden Mund, located about 1 km away from Ooty centre is only 400 metres away from its closest tourist spot, the Botanical Garden. Minik Mund, located approximately 3.4 kilometres away from the centre has Cairn Hill Reserve Forest located within 700 metres.

Toda Munds that are located far from the centre such as Kaghoudi Mund (10.2 km), Tharanadu Mund (13.4 km), Hartal Mund (12.6 km) have their nearest tourist spots at a distance of 2.8 km, 2.5 km and 2.2 km respectively (Refer Table 4.1).

Figure 4.4 Proximity of Toda Mund to the Centre and Nearest Tourist Spot



Source: Primary data observed during the field visit to the Nilgiris, 2021

iii) Number of Tourist Spots within 3 km and the Number of Artisan Households

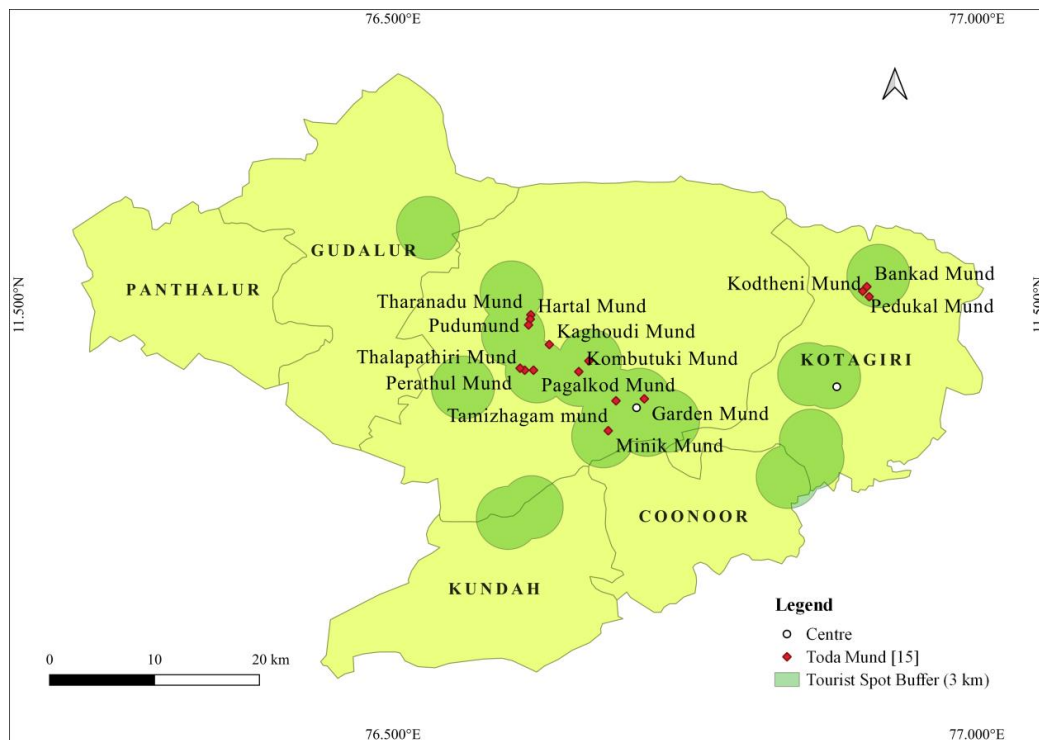
Pearson's correlation coefficient test was run on 15 Toda households to study the relationship between the number of tourist spots located within their 3 km radius and the number of artisan households. It was observed that there is a strong positive correlation between the two, with the r value of 0.718.

Here, we have calculated the weighted coefficient correlation as the total number of households in these hamlets varies widely. Garden Mund and Tamizhagam Mund with 4 tourist spots within a 3 km radius have 95.5 per cent and 100 per cent households with at least one practising artisan.

```
. pwcorr tspots_Num artisanhh [fweight=hh], sig star (.05)
```

| | tspots~m artisa~h | |
|------------|-------------------|--------|
| tspots_Num | 1.0000 | |
| artisanhh | 0.7180* | 1.0000 |
| | 0.0000 | |

Figure 4.5 Location of Toda Munds and Tourist Spot Buffers in the Nilgiris



Source: Primary data observed during the field visit to the Nilgiris, 2021

At the same time, there is also a moderately strong positive correlation ($r= 0.5653$) between the number of tourist spots within 3 km and the number of artisans in the Toda Mund. These values depict that, as the number of tourist spots in the vicinity of the Toda Mund went up, there is a simultaneous increase in the number of artisans as well as artisan households in these Toda Munds.

This could be a result of an increasing number of Toda women taking up the practice to avail the benefits of being located closer to one or more tourist spots. This further points to how complementary commercialization is prevalent in the case of Toda embroidery.

```
. pwcorr tspots_Num artisans [fweight=hh], sig star (.05)
```

| | tspots~m artisans | |
|------------|-------------------|--------|
| tspots_Num | 1.0000 | |
| artisans | 0.5653* | 1.0000 |
| | 0.0000 | |

iv) Proximity to the Centre and the Number of Artisan Households

Upon running the Pearson's correlation coefficient test on 15 Toda Munds, it was observed that there was a moderately strong negative relationship between the distance of the Toda Mund from the centre and the number of artisan households as depicted by r value of -0.3683.

```
. pwcorr DfromC artisanhh [fweight=hh]
```

| | DfromC artisa~h | |
|-----------|-----------------|--------|
| DfromC | 1.0000 | |
| artisanhh | -0.3683 | 1.0000 |

Here, we have calculated a weighted correlation coefficient as Toda hamlets with more number households tended to have a proportionately high number of artisan households. The r value of -0.3683 implies that, as the distance of the Toda Mund from the centre increased, there was a decrease in the number of artisan households, although moderate. This could imply that the inaccessibility to the market discourages Toda women from developing a monetary attitude towards the craft owing to the lack of opportunities.

```
. pwcorr DfromC artisans [fweight=hh]
```

| | DfromC artisans | |
|----------|-----------------|--------|
| DfromC | 1.0000 | |
| artisans | -0.1371 | 1.0000 |

In addition to this, it was observed that there is little to no correlation between the distance of the Toda Mund from the centre and the number of artisans in the Mund as depicted by $r = -0.13$. This means that the proximity of the Toda Mund to the centre did not show any significant relationship with the number of artisans present in these hamlets.

For instance, Tharanadu Mund and Garden Mund were two Toda hamlets with the largest number of Toda artisans. However, while Garden Mund is located about 1.1 km from the centre, Tharanadu Mund was located over 13 km from the centre.

v) Proximity to the Nearest Tourist Spot and the Number of Artisans

It was observed that there is little to no correlation between the distance of the Toda Mund to the nearest tourist spot and the number of artisans present in the Mund, as depicted by $r = 0.1369$.

```
. pwcorr DfromT artisans [fweight=hh]
```

| | DfromT artisans | |
|----------|-----------------|--------|
| DfromT | 1.0000 | |
| artisans | 0.1369 | 1.0000 |

At the same time, there was little to no correlation observed between the proximity of Toda Mund to the nearest spot and the number of artisan households in the Toda Mund as depicted by $r = -0.085$

```
. pwcorr DfromT artisanhh [fweight=hh]
```

| | DfromT artisa~h | |
|-----------|-----------------|--------|
| DfromT | 1.0000 | |
| artisanhh | -0.0858 | 1.0000 |

Table 4.2 Proximity to Nearest Tourist Spot and Number of Artisans

| Toda Hamlet | Nearest Tourist Spot | Distance to the Tourist Spot (km) | Number of Artisans |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| Garden Mund | Botanical Garden | 0.4 | 27 |
| Kombutuki Mund | Pine Forest | 0.3 | 4 |
| Muthunad Mund | Conical Temple | 0.1 | 15 |
| Pagalkod Mund | 9th Mile Shooting spot | 0.3 | 6 |
| Kaghoudi Mund | 9th Mile Shooting spot | 2.8 | 3 |
| Thalapathiri Mund | 9th Mile Shooting spot | 1.1 | 7 |
| Perathul Mund | 9th Mile Shooting spot | 1.6 | 6 |
| Minik Mund | Cairn Hill Reserve Forest | 0.7 | 7 |
| Tharanadu Mund | Pykara Falls | 2.5 | 32 |
| Hartal Mund | Pykara Falls | 2.2 | 13 |
| Pudumund | Pykara Falls | 1.7 | 11 |
| Tamizhagam mund | Toda Temple | 0.1 | 16 |
| Pedukal Mund | Kodanad View Point | 2 | 8 |
| Bankad Mund | Kodanad View Point | 1.4 | 4 |
| Kodtheni Mund | Kodanad View Point | 2.1 | 16 |
| | | | 175 |

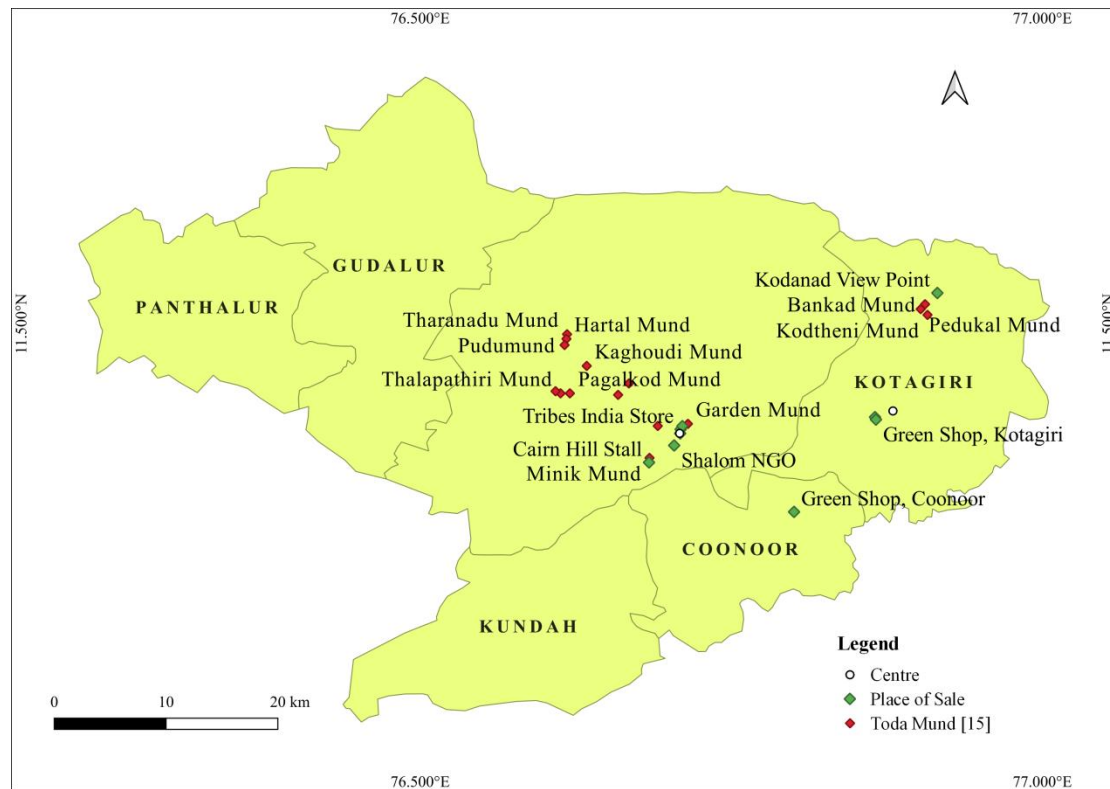
Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

4.6 Commute to Place of Sale

Depending on the distance from the tourist attraction, how Toda embroidered products are put for sale varies and so does the means of commuting to the place of sale. Table 4.3 shows the major means of sale sought by the artisans at various Munds and how they commute to them. Here we can notice that, in cases of proximity to a tourist attraction, the products are either sold directly to the consumers via temporary stalls set up at the said attractions.

Toda artisans from Munds that are not endowed with tourism often have to commute to one of these places of sale either via their personal vehicle or public transport. In certain cases, the finished products were also collected from them by the organizations. Appendix IV shows the coordinates of these places of sale located across the Nilgiris. According to respondents from Tharanadu Mund and Hartal Mund, located farther away from the centre, public buses ply regularly on their route every 2 – 3 hours, which they utilize to commute to Ooty.

Figure 4.6 Places of Sale of Toda Embroidery in the Nilgiris



Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

Table 4.3 Main Places of Sale and Means of Commute

| Toda Mund | Means of Commute to Place of Sale | Major Place of Sale |
|------------------|--|--|
| Garden Mund | Walk | Direct to Customers, Stall at Botanical Garden, NGO collects |
| Kombutuki Mund | Bus | Stall at Botanical Garden |
| Muthunad Mund | Bus/ Personal Vehicle | Stall at Botanical Garden, NGO collects |
| Pagalkod Mund | Bus | Toda Cooperative Society, Direct to Consumer, NGO collects |
| Kaghoudi Mund | Bus | Toda Cooperative Society, Direct to Consumer, NGO collects |
| Thalpathiri Mund | Bus | Toda Cooperative Society, Direct to Consumer, NGO collects |
| Perathul Mund | Bus | Toda Cooperative Society, Direct to Consumer, NGO collects |
| Minik Mund | Walk | Cairn Hill Eco Shop |
| Tharanadu Mund | Bus/ Personal Vehicle | Toda Cooperative Society, Direct to Consumer |
| Hartal Mund | Bus/ Personal Vehicle | Toda Cooperative Society, Direct to Consumer, Shalom Ooty |
| Pudumund | Bus/ Personal Vehicle | Toda Cooperative Society, NGO collects |
| Tamizhagam mund | Personal Vehicle | Toda Cooperative Society, Direct to Consumer |
| Pedukal Mund | Bus | Kodanad View Point, Kotagiri Cooperative Society |
| Bankad Mund | Bus | Kodanad View Point, Kotagiri Cooperative Society |
| Kodtheni Mund | Bus | Kodanad View Point, Kotagiri Cooperative Society |

Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

4.7 Supply Chain and Stakeholders

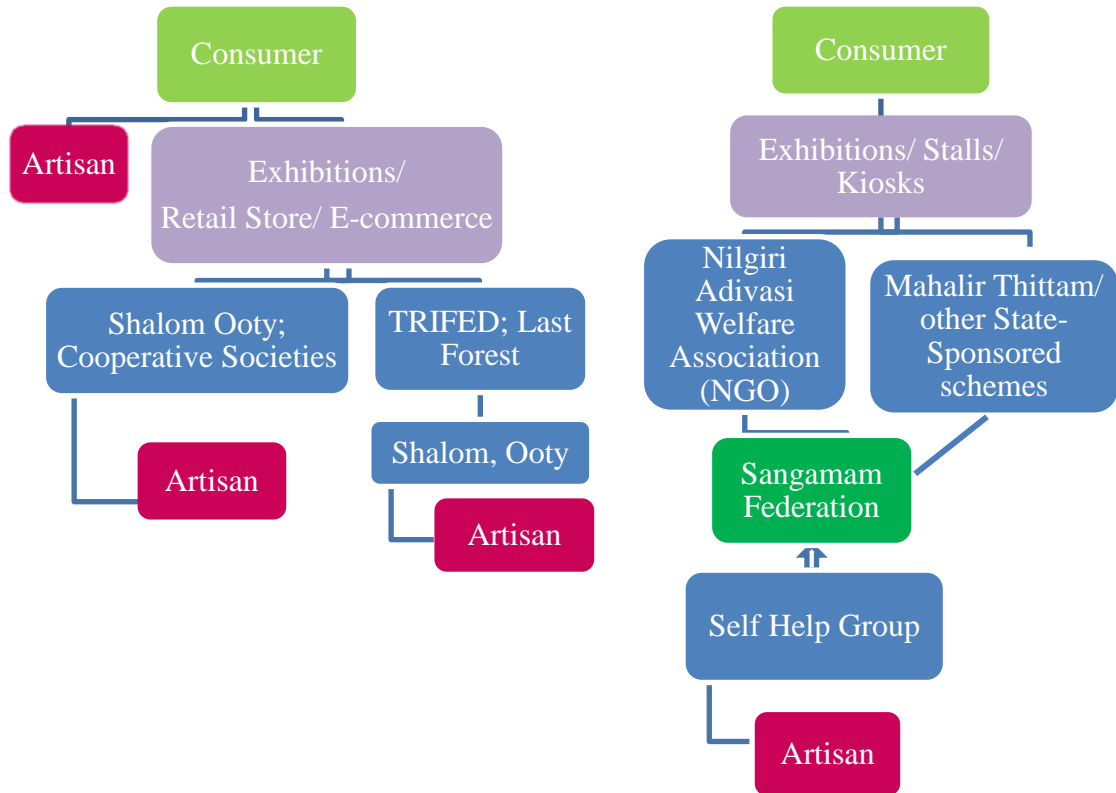
In India, despite the increasing demand for handicrafts, there is a dependence on middlemen and trader entrepreneurs to introduce these products in the global market. This is often attributed to the decreased bargaining power of the artists in a relatively competitive and liberalized market (Jena, 2010).

In Nilgiris, we do not get to observe the direct interaction between producers and customers in every craft village. This is because these customers (mostly tourists) tend to visit only the main craft markets situated in pivotal locations and capitals (Chutia & Sarma, 2016). In the process of the movement of these handcrafted goods from the artisan to the consumers, we can locate several stakeholders. These include private organizations, NGOs and state and central governmental organizations (Figure 4.4).

The farther they are from the tourist attraction, or the market, the higher the dependence on NGOs and other organizations to act as intermediaries to collect and market these products ('Encroaching commercialization'). These NGOs act as agencies that open a market for these products, particularly in Toda villages that lack direct access. These intermediaries market these embroidered products via Retail outlets, Exhibitions and E-commerce. Not only do these intermediaries help the artisans in trade, but also transformations in the craft, if not initiated by the artisans themselves (Chutia & Sarma, 2016)

In the following section, let us examine some of the important intermediaries who are stakeholders in the Toda Embroidery supply chain and understand their mechanism (Refer to Figure 4.6). The stakeholders in the supply chain will be discussed under the following headings:

- i) Self Help Groups/ Swaya Udhavi Kulu
- ii) Sangamam Toda Women's Federation
- iii) Toda Primary Agricultural Cooperative Credit Society and Handicrafts Sales Centre, Ooty
- iv) Shalom Self Help Group, Ooty
- v) Kotagiri Women's Cooperative Society, Kotagiri
- vi) Last Forest Enterprises Pvt. Ltd., Kotagiri
- vii) Other brands and Organizations
- viii) The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED)

Figure 4.7 Simplified Supply Chain of Toda Embroidery Products

Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

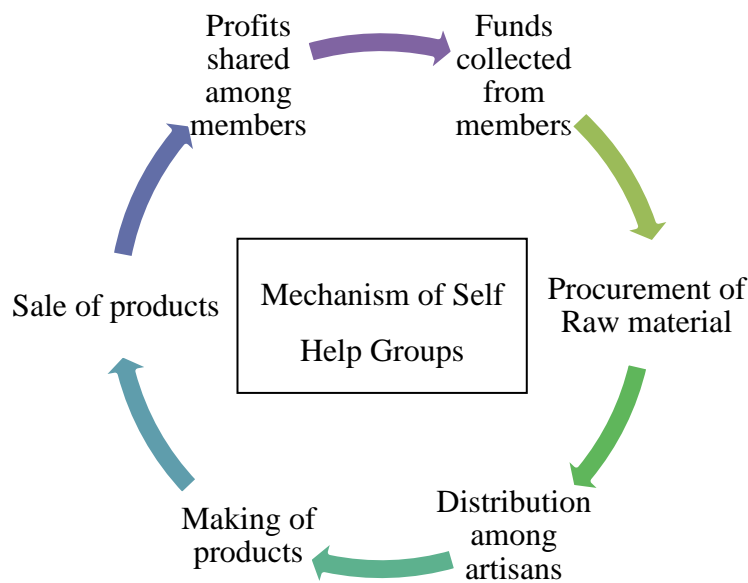
4.7.1 Self Help Groups / Swaya Udhavi Kulu

At the grass-root level, Toda artisans are organized into several Self-help groups (SHGs) or 'Swaya Udhavi Kulus'. These groups were formed under the Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana, a Cluster-specific scheme under Development Commissioner (Handicrafts). The Self Help Groups generally consist of up to 15 members. Depending on the number of artisans in each hamlet, there are up to 2 self-help groups in each Mund. The age of group members ranges between eighteen and sixty years.

In the 15 Toda hamlets under survey, these were the Self Help Groups identified and the number of members in each (Refer to Table 4.5). Garden Mund, Muthunad mund and Tharanadu mund had 2 SHGs each since they were the largest hamlets in terms of population as well as in terms of artisans.

SHG members in each Mund come together to collate funds and buy raw material required for the embroidery in bulk. This includes the fabric, wool and needles. This is then distributed among themselves to make various products such as shawls, keychains, pouches etc. Not only does this purchase benefit the members of SHGs, but also those who are not members. Non-members also contribute to the SHG in several ways – by providing embroidery services, tailoring services etc. for which they are compensated.

Figure 4.8 Mechanism of Self Help Groups



Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

The products made are then offered for sale via one or more of the following means:

- i) Direct sale to tourists or visitors: This is done either at the Toda Munds when artisans come in contact with the tourists.
- ii) Temporary stalls/ kiosks are set up in the Mund during peak seasons or via State-sponsored outlets. eg. Eco shop at Cairn Hills, Toda Model Hut at Botanical Garden (Refer to Photograph 4.6).
- iii) Online or digital means: Accepting orders via Whatsapp or over phone calls
- iv) Through NGOs and co-operative societies who preorder products and offer them in their outlets. eg. Kotagiri Women’s Cooperative Society, Shalom Self Help.
- v) By taking part in exhibitions hosted by State or central governments.

According to respondents who belonged to these SHGs, profits made from these sales are then distributed among themselves. Besides serving as a means of additional income for these women, it is considered a way of keeping the craft alive and maintaining the Toda culture.

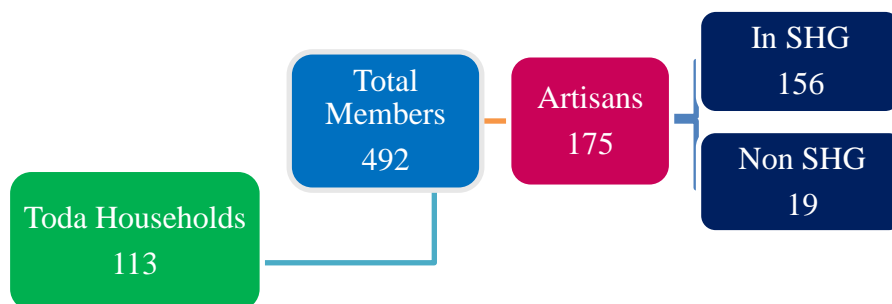
A total of 175 artisans practising the craft were identified in a total of 113 households surveyed. Out of this, 156 persons were members of some SHG while 19 were not (Table 4.4). Self-help groups instil in the members a sense of community. Additionally, the workload is shared among these artisans in case any member is unable to fulfil the timelines if any.

Photograph 4.6 Retail Outlets offering Toda Embroidery products (From left: Toda Model Hut at Botanical Garden, Eco shop at Cairn Hill)



Photograph: Researcher

Figure 4.9 Number of Toda Artisans

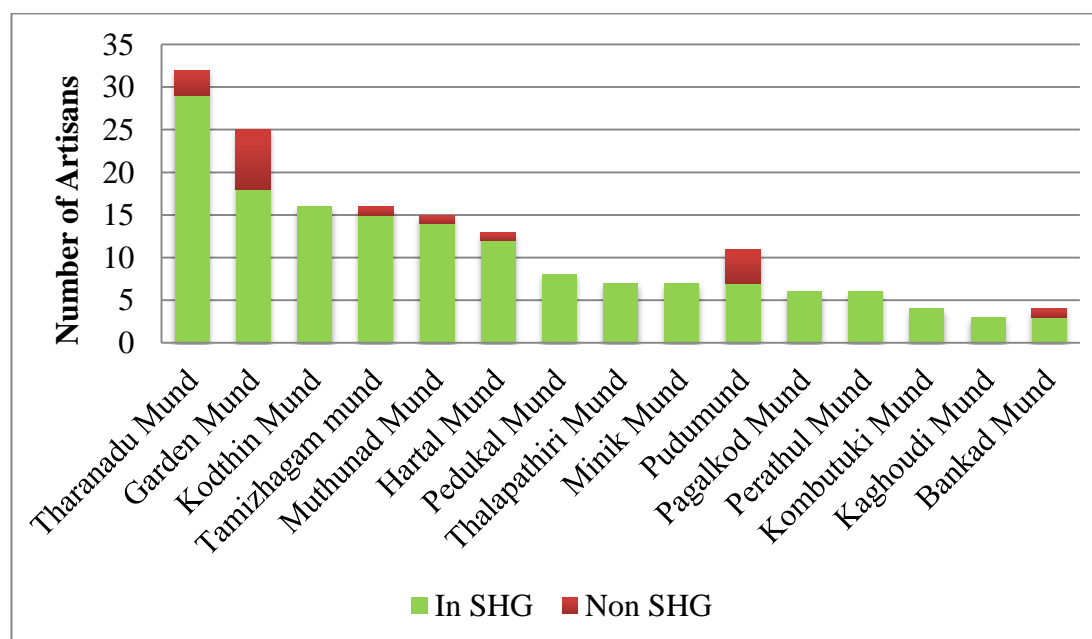


Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

Table 4.4 Artisans in Self Help Groups

| Toda Mund | Number of practising Artisans | In SHG | Non SHG |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Garden Mund | 27 | 19 | 8 |
| Kombutuki Mund | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| Muthunad Mund | 15 | 14 | 1 |
| Pagalkod Mund | 6 | 6 | 0 |
| Kaghoudi Mund | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| Thalapathiri Mund | 7 | 7 | 0 |
| Perathul Mund | 6 | 6 | 0 |
| Minik Mund | 7 | 7 | 0 |
| Tharanadu Mund | 32 | 29 | 3 |
| Hartal Mund | 13 | 12 | 1 |
| Pudumund | 11 | 7 | 4 |
| Tamizhagam mund | 16 | 15 | 1 |
| Pedukal Mund | 8 | 8 | 0 |
| Bankad Mund | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| Kodtheni Mund | 16 | 16 | 0 |
| | 175 | 156 | 19 |

Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

Figure 4.10 Toda Artisans in Self Help Groups

Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

Table 4.5 Toda Self Help Groups

| Toda Mund | Name of SHG | Number of Members |
|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Garden Mund | Thaen Malar | 10 |
| | Pon Malar | 10 |
| Muthunad Mund | Roja Kootam | 12 |
| | Thaen Kootam | 12 |
| Tharanad Mund | Niram Mara Pookkal | 12 |
| Pudumund | Vada Malar | 12 |
| Pagalkod Mund | Vasantha Malar | 14 |
| Tamizhagam Mund | Uzhaikum Magilar Kootam | 12 |
| Thalapathiri Mund | | |
| Perathul Mund | PuduVazhvu Sangham | 14 |
| Minik Mund | Saronin Roja | 12 |
| Pedukal Mund | | |
| Bankad Mund | | |
| Kodtheni Mund | Lilli Pushpam | 10 |

Source (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

4.7.2 Sangamam Toda Women's Federation

Distributing themselves into Self Help Groups helps the artisans attain financial assistance in the form of loans and material assistance from Governmental and Non-Governmental to practise the craft.

Sangamam Toda Federation is a body that formally administers all the Toda SHGs located in Toda Munds across the Nilgiris. It was founded in 2005 and is currently headed by a Toda woman from Muthunad Mund. There are 27 Toda SHGs under this body with a membership of about 300 women. It administers and helps them avail the financial and marketing assistance under various governmental and semi-governmental schemes. Further, it encourages savings among the members and resolving conflicts if any.

Sangamam federation has been registered under Mahalir Thittam, Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihood Mission. Under this State Government scheme, the SHGs are provided with marketing and financial support in the form of bank linkage, loans etc.

Table 4.6 Self Help Groups under Sangamam Federation

| Name of SHGs | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Roja Koottam | Garpeelf |
| Thaen Koottam | RojaMalar |
| Puduvazhvu Sangham | Manipura |
| Uzhaikum Magilar | Panjali |
| Poo Thendral | Therak Toda |
| Then Poo | Vasantha Malar |
| Pon Malar | Lilly Pushpam |
| Toda Vada Malar | Aaavara Poo |
| Roja | Semparuthi |
| New Star | Malligai |
| Sevvandhi | Neerkasimandhu |
| Saamandhi | Malayarasi |
| Sooriyan | Muthamizh |
| Thaen Malar | |

Source: Mahalir Thittam

The main functions of the federation involve holding monthly meetings (usually on the 15th of every month) at Ooty. This meeting will have the participation of 2 members each from the 27 SHGs from various Munds in the Nilgiris – mostly from Ooty and Kotagiri. The federation acts as a means to collect a pool of saving. Rs. 10 - 20 each is collected per head from each SHG on a monthly basis. This is deposited in banks via Mahalir Thittam and loans are availed as necessary.

While the federation is not directly involved in the marketing, it takes the guidance of Mahalir thittam to get awareness about the exhibitions and participate in them with their assistance. Mahalir Thittam encourages the Federation to participate in other state-level exhibitions such as SARAS⁷, Kodai Summer Festival Exhibiton etc.

⁷ SARAS (Sale of Articles of Rural Artisans Society) Exhibition is an initiative of Government of Telangana supported by the Government of India with the aim of providing a marketing platform for rural entrepreneurs and artisans. This annual exhibition cum sale is organized at Hyderabad twice every year where about 20 states participate with over 200 stalls (Telangana).

SHGs are chosen by the federation and are given the opportunity to take part in these exhibitions. Nilgiri Adivasi Welfare Association also supports the artisans in Marketing their craft at various government sponsored exhibitions.

4.7.3 Toda Primary Agricultural Cooperative Credit Society and Handicrafts Sales Centre, Ooty

Toda Cooperative Credit Society was one of the main organizations mentioned by most Toda respondents as a place of sale. Artisans from Munds that did not particularly have a dedicated stall (such as that in Botanical Garden or Cairn Hill) were dependent on this organization for the sale of their embroidered goods.

According to Toda respondents, this organization primarily functions by providing agricultural loans to Todas. Depending on the land possessed Todas avail loans from Rs. 60,000 to Rs. 1,00,000. These loans do not attract interest for up to 1 year within which they are supposed to be paid back. However, Toda SHGs also avail loans for embroidery purposes with which they purchase the required raw materials to distribute among artisans.

In addition to this, the society sources and provides Toda artisans with the required raw materials like fabric and woollen yarn. Toda artisans periodically collect these from here, embroider and make them into products. The artisans are then paid for their embroidery as well as tailoring charges if any. The society provides marketing support to Toda handicrafts via their handicrafts Sales Centre.

During the period of this survey, the society had paused functioning due to Covid-19 related restrictions which deprived many artisans of a place of sale. They had to resort to direct selling to customers or tourists and online means.

4.7.4 Shalom Self Help Group, Ooty

Shalom is a registered Self Help Group, located at Charring Cross, Udhamandalam which was formed in 2003. It is founded by Sheela Powell, a non-Toda woman, who used to run a tailoring shop in the 1990s. The woman is said to be approached by Toda women to help them convert their traditionally embroidered fabric into finished goods and put

them up for sale in her shop. Presently, Shalom works as an organization that takes care of the procurement of raw materials, market research, product design and making, marketing and other activities while leaving the artisans to only focus on the making or embroidery.

Photograph 4.7 Shalom Toda Embroidery Outlet



Photograph: Researcher

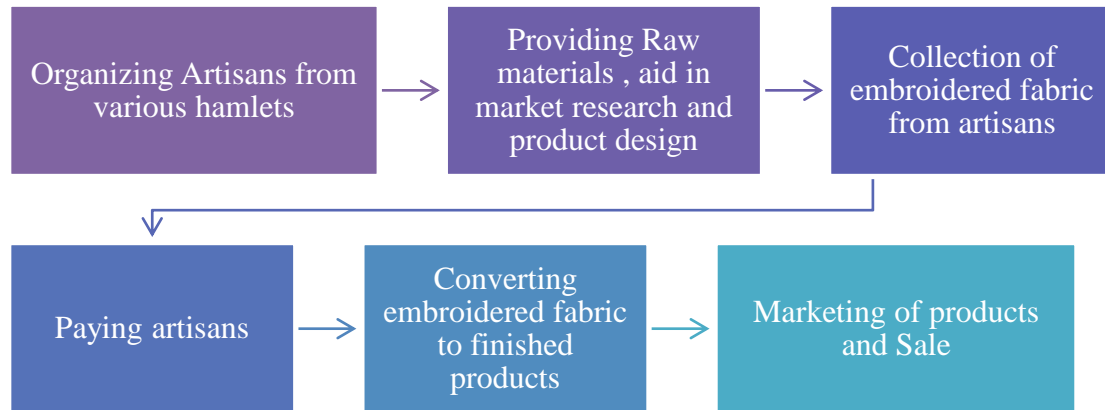
Shalom organizes artisans belonging to various Toda Munds across Nilgiris who are capable of making finished products as per the demands of the market. They are then provided with the raw materials and an idea of what the finished product would be. Once fulfilled, the embroidered fabric is submitted to the organization every week. The artisans are paid for their work upfront when they produce the embroidered fabric. This fabric then undergoes processes of tailoring to become products such as shawls, bags, tote bags, keychains, mufflers, cushion covers, masks etc.(Refer to Figure 4.11).

With the help of Shalom, the Todas were able to tap into the various schemes and loans available to them and this led to them forming a collective. Presently there are about 200 Toda artisans who supply their work to the NGO regularly and about 10-20 non-Todas who are involved in other tasks such as product design, tassel making, fabric cutting etc. at their outlet located in Ooty. The centre not only functions as a retail store but also as a production centre, where Toda embroidery is converted into various kinds of products.

Shalom is a self-funded organization. The fabric required for Toda embroidery used to be sourced from wholesale markets in Karur, the weaving centre of Tamil Nadu. Presently,

about 500 meters of fabric are put to use every month. According to the authorities at Shalom, the women earn an average of Rs. 2000-4000/- week depending on the intricacy of the work they can produce.

Figure 4.11 Mechanism of Shalom, Ooty



Source: Personal Interview with Sheela Powell, founder of Shalom

The major source of revenue for the NGO, besides the sales during the seasonal influx of tourists in the Nilgiris is exhibitions. The NGO regularly takes part in about 6 major and several minor exhibitions across India. They have been regularly a part of exhibitions conducted by TRIFED and Craft Council of India across India. Other exhibitions include Hundred Hands, Bangalore, Dilli Haat, Delhi, etc. Due to financial restraints, the NGO finds it unable to participate in relatively large exhibitions such as Dastkari. The NGO's revenue amounted to about 60-70 lakhs at its peak in 2018-2019 after which it saw a decline due to the pandemic. The organization claims that it has been thriving despite the pandemic and continuing to provide a livelihood for up to 250 Toda women associated with it.

In 2012 All India Craft Workers Association (AIACA) stepped in to work with Shalom to further the cause of Toda artisans. AIACA through the CSR program of the Royal Bank of Scotland helped the NGO run professionally and productively. This helped the NGO become a social enterprise. This collaboration led to various developments in terms of appointment of manager and supervisor, better equipment and machinery and contacts of potential buyers that helped pay the artisans four times their initial pay.

The work done by Shalom here can be considered an example of 'Encroaching Commercialization' as Cohen (1989) defines it. Here the native artisans are hired by this

external sponsoring agency for the production of marketable products. Here the Toda artisans who are located in relative isolation are provided with access to the market. Cohen points out that as long as this type of commercialization is limited in scope, the cultural impact it has will be insignificant while providing the economy with an income although moderate. However, if left unchecked, agencies operating out of purely monetary motives are bound to exploit the local skills to create 'standardized' handmade products (Cohen, 1989).

4.7.5 Kotagiri Women's Cooperative Society, Kotagiri

Kotagiri Women's Industrial Cooperative Society was established as a cooperative society under the Tamil Nadu Cooperative Societies Act 1961. The organization began their work in 1959 in a rented space following the lead of G M Taylor, a foreign national. (By Laws of the Kotagiri Women's Industrial Co-operative Society Ltd., 1972) It was in 1972 that they moved into the space where it is presently located. This society deals with hand-knit woollen products as well as Toda embroidered products.

The society engages in the work of providing raw materials to the tribal community, paying them for the embroidery work, transforming them into various products and marketing them via their outlet in Kotagiri as well as at State-sponsored exhibitions. The outlet currently has a variety of Toda embroidered products such as shawls, mufflers, table runners, pouches etc.

Toda artisans from across Nilgiris supply their crafted products to this society. However, most of them are from Munds/hamlets around Kotagiri namely Pedukal Mund, Bankad Mund and Kodtheni Mund owing to the proximity. Presently, over 200 Toda women are enrolled in this society. According to the authorities, these artisans earn up to 10,000 per month for the work they are able to supply, which varies from artisan to artisan. The payment for various products is predetermined by the society.

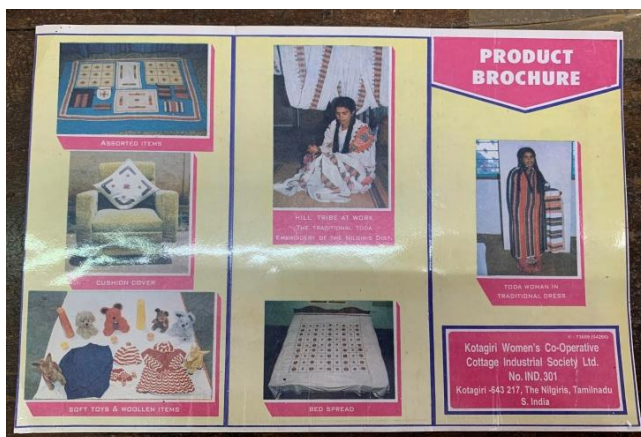
Cotton fabric required for the embroidery is sourced from weavers in the plains as well as suppliers located in Ooty. Approximately 200 metres of cotton is put to use every month. The cooperative society only takes part in exhibitions hosted by TRIFED across India. Besides that, the main source of income comes from the tourists who visit the outlet in the hope of finding authentic pieces.

Photograph 4.8 Kotagiri Women's Cooperative Society, Kotagiri



Photograph: Researcher

Photograph 4.9 Old Product Brochure of Toda Products at Kotagiri Women's Cooperative Society



Photograph: Researcher

4.7.6 Last Forest Enterprises Pvt. Ltd., Kotagiri

Last Forest Enterprises is a World Fair Trade Organisation (WFTO) certified entity that was formed in 2010 as a result of a series of activities undertaken since 1991 towards the marketing of organic forest produce such as coffee and honey. The honey hunting and beekeeping programmes initiated by Keystone Foundation, a non-profit organization led to the introduction of 'Last Forest Honey' in 2008. In 2014, Last Forest introduced its line of handwoven and handcrafted Toda products after collaborating with Shalom Self Help (Annual Report, 2020-21).

Currently, Last Forest has two Green shops in the Nilgiris, located at Coonoor and Kotagiri that offers a variety of forest produce alongside Toda embroidered products. In addition to it, it also has an online store as well as a social media presence where they market these tribal products (Annual Report, 2020-21).

The organization has helped build employment opportunities not only via launching these products with their existing product line, but also through other collaborations. As a part of its “#StayHomeLiveFair” campaign as a part of the WFTO network, the organization had collaborated with Indian Yards to distribute over 11,000 masks to frontline workers. As a part of this initiative, they had also introduced masks with hand-stitched embroidery strips by the Todas. In 2021, the organization had collaborated with Zola India to put together over 2300 sets of Toda embroidery products (purse and masks) and beeswax lip balms which were made by Irula tribal women using beeswax collected by men belonging to the Kurumba tribes of the Nilgiris (Annual Report, 2020-21).

4.7.7 Other Organizations and Brands

Other than the organizations mentioned above, there are several organizations and private brands that collaborate with the artisans or SHGs to bring about Toda embroidered product line to offer in the market. Craft Council of India, a registered society founded in 1964 to protect and enhance India's heritage has its own crafts shop by the name of Kamala. Kamala offers a wide range of authentic Indian handicrafts including Toda embroidery. They currently have two offline stores in Chennai and New Delhi alongside an online store (Home).

Linen Earth, a slow fashion brand based in Kochi had collaborated with a Toda SHG directly to bring about their line of Toda embroidered clothing (Priyadershini S, 2021). Zola India, a brand based in Chennai aims to provide rural and folk artisans with the opportunity to express themselves through wearable art. The brand with its outlets across India and in the United States has come up with its line of Toda embroidered cascading necklaces. These necklaces range from Rs 4000 and are a mixture of Toda embroidery and strings of beads but together by the Patwa community of Rajasthan. (Zola - A piece of Earth)

4.7.8 The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED)

The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) is a multi-state Cooperative Society set up in August 1967 under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 1984 (presently Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002). TRIFED is a national head organization administered by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India has dual functions of being a service provider and market developer for tribal products. The key idea of TRIFED is to equip tribal communities to carry out their affairs scientifically and systematically by endowing them with the necessary knowledge, tools and information (TRIFED) (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21).

TRIFED has 16 regional offices TRIFED's south regional office in Bangalore deals with the states of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Among the empanelled suppliers in Tamil Nadu, we are able to find 3 organizations associated with Toda. These are Nilgiri Adivasi Welfare Association, Shalom Welfare Project and Kotagiri Women's Cooperative Cottage Industrial Society Ltd, out of which the first two are NGOs and the third a cooperative society (TRIFED, TRIFED).

TRIFED facilitates the marketing of Toda Embroidery products via three means – Retail outlets, Online store and e-commerce and Centre sponsored exhibitions. Presently, TRIFED has over 130 outlets across the country including TRIFED's stores called 'Tribes India' Stores alongside consignment and franchisee outlets (TRIFED, Tribes India - The Art and Soul of India - Retail Outlets). TRIFED's Tribes India outlet is located at the Resource Centre for Tribal Development in Udthagamandalam. Amongst

various tribal produces and products, the showroom also sells Toda embroidered goods such as shawls, runners etc.

Figure 4.12 Toda Embroidered Products offered at Tribes India, Ooty



Photograph: Researcher

TRIFED continues to be one of the biggest purchasers of Toda embroidered products from Shalom, and Kotagiri Women’s Cooperative Society which are then marketed and sold via their outlets. TRIFED has established an online presence both through its online marketplace (<https://www.tribesindia.com>) as well as in major e-commerce channels such as Amazon, Flipkart, Paytm etc. and products marketed widely via social media and digital means. Presently, the stock of all the Tribes India outlets has been linked with this online marketplace In the financial year 2019-20, the expenditure of the ministry towards this scheme stands at 128.50 crores. In the financial year 2019-20, TRIFED made sales of Rs. 71.50 lakhs owing to this initiative (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21)

There are two major fests organized by TRIFED- Tribal Artisan Melas (TAMs) and National Tribal Festival, also known as Aadi Mahotsav. The former is a mela directly funded by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs to identify new artisans and products at the sourcing level, as a way of growing the tribal producer base. Aadi Mahotsav on the other hand is a festival which comprises an exhibition where tribal handicrafts are put up for sale alongside folk performances. On average, over 200 stalls offer tribal handicrafts and associated wares during this festival (Bureau, 2021).

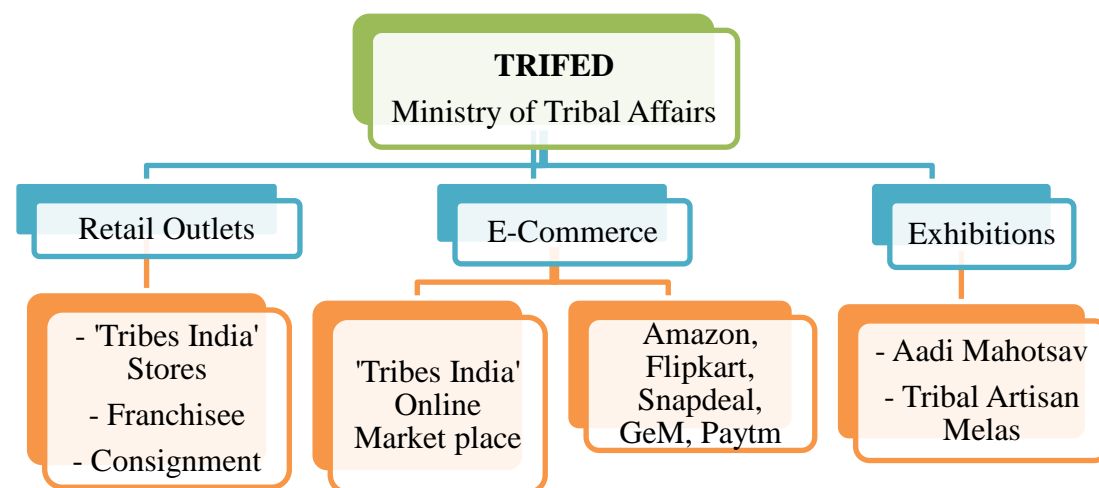
During 2019-20, TRIFED had organized 16 Aadi Mahotsavs in several cities across India including one in Ooty in the Nilgiris (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21). The Ministry had spent 23.23 crores against this scheme for the country in the financial year 2019-20 (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21).

Table 4.7 Marketing Channels of Stakeholders

| Name of Organization | Retail Outlet(s) | Online Store/ Website | Exhibition(s) |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| TRIFED | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Nilgiri Adivasi Welfare Association | No | No | Yes |
| Mahalir Thittam | Yes | No | Yes |
| Shalom NGO | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Sangamam Federation | No | No | No |
| SHGs | Yes | No | Yes |
| Kotagiri Women's Cooperative Society | Yes | No | Yes |
| Last Forest | Yes | Yes | No |
| Toda Cooperative Credit Society | Yes | No | No |

Source: (Socio-Economic Survey of Todas, 2021)

Figure 4.13 Marketing of Toda Embroidery by TRIFED



Source: Researcher's representation of information from (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21)

4.8 Impact of Commercialization on the Craft

One of the most significant consequences of the commercialization of ethnic crafts is how the newly produced goods tend to create an identity and an outward image of the group in question. This identity is often internalized by the members of the community even though these products may have gone through revisions and changes as per the market demands or even newly created for the same (Cohen, 1989).

‘Craft items’ are those produced in small quantities essentially meant for the members of the community and the producers themselves. Foreign forces like tourism can affect local art in several ways. This may take the form of new techniques and materials, alterations in the form of expression, standardization, changes in scale, diversification, innovation or changes in the context of ideas (Trowell, 1954)(Ben-Amos, 1977) (Cohen, 1983).

Commercialized craft products that surface as a result of cultural interaction and amalgamation can be considered cultural products according to Cohen, even as they have a ‘transitional’ nature. Such products tend to integrate and fuse the old ways with the new while still reflecting the former (Cohen, 1989). Some of the changes undergone by Toda embroidered products owing to commercialization have been discussed under the following headings.

4.8.1 Differentiation

The deliberate efforts of the artisans to create crafts for sale can be considered as differentiation (Berma, 1996). Changes in commercial arts may be brought about either by the producers’ effort or per the tastes of the consumers. Even as traditional arts in their original form are offered to outsiders, most traditional arts put up for sale undergo some form of modification or even invention (Graburn, 1976).

Functional arts are those which fulfil traditional functions within the parent society whereas commercial fine arts are produced to satisfy their creators while alluring the consumers of aboriginal arts worldwide (Graburn, 1976). In complementary commercialization, there exists the tendency to differentiate between the products made for internal use and offered to visitors or tourists over time (Cohen, 1989). This differentiation can be observed even in the case of Toda embroidery.

Photograph 4.10 Embroidered Shirt worn by Grooms during Marriage Ceremony



Photograph: Researcher

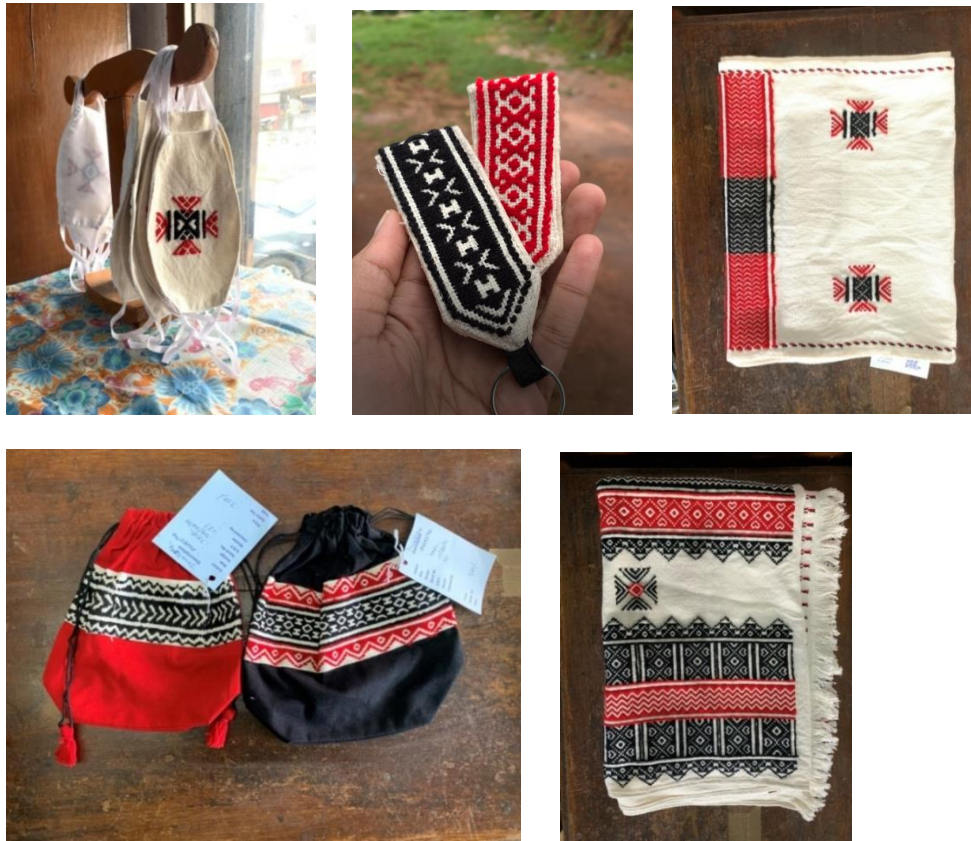
Souvenirs produced for the mass market are often economical, transportable and easily explainable (Graburn, 1976). According to Toda respondents, while products such as the traditional Putkuli cloak or embroidered shirt (worn by men for weddings) continue to be produced solely for the internal audience, the ones produced for the external audience vary in terms of the intricacy, patterns and usage. For the latter, items made are mostly souvenir-like such as keychains, mufflers, masks, etc. keeping in mind the interests of visitors.

4.8.2 Diversification

Commoditization owing to commercialization is existent in several forms in today's age of mass consumption (Chutia & Sarma, 2016). Tourism and the commercialization that comes along with it demands diversification of crafts (Cohen, 1989). In the case of Toda Embroidery, we can see it manifesting in the form of the variety of products that are available in the market (Refer to Photograph 4.11).

According to (Graburn, 1976), pleasing the consumer becomes relatively more important than pleasing the artist in cases where profit motive dominates over aesthetic values. These "tourist arts" are very dissimilar to the culture or group from which it has evolved. Handicrafts often act as ideal souvenirs and tend to act as great tourist attractions (Markwick, 2001). Hence, these are made to cater for the tourists who visit the city and surrounding places of interest.

Photograph 4.11 Embroidered Products offered for Sale



Photograph: Researcher

Organizations such as Shalom and Kotagiri Women’s Cooperative Society also have a team working on their product design. At Shalom, we can find articles such as keychains, luggage tags, pouches etc. priced relatively low as compared to larger, traditional Toda products such as Putkuli.

At the same time, some products are priced on the higher end such as Sarees, Shawls etc. With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, Toda embroidered masks were highly sought in many of these organizations.

4.8.3 Innovations

Westerners rarely use original textiles in their unaltered forms. These adaptations which are made to suit the modern uses may range from the incorporation of small elements or sometimes, the revamping of the entire piece of garment (Cohen, 1988b).

Innovations happen as the artisans are challenged to create fresh designs at lower costs (Jena, 2010). Even as “authentic” tribal costumes attracted tourists, they were marketable

only in small quantities. Due to this reason, experiments were conducted to alter them to adapt to Western usage. This included either a change in the form, look and utility or the incorporation of tribal elements via small patches that were incorporated into fashionable clothing (Cohen, 1988b)

Photograph 4.12 Toda Embroidered Patch



Photograph: Researcher

Toda embroidery also has undergone “boutiquisation” (Cohen, 1988b) in a similar fashion. Traditionally, Toda embroidery used to be done directly on the final products as embellishments. In the present times, we can observe that many products are made by sewing on embroidered patches and strips on already finished products such as pouches, clothing etc. (Refer to Photograph 4.12). This not only helps escalate the production process but also contributes to the diversification of products.

As per the founder of Shalom, fringes and tassels on the fringes of shawls are also a fairly new concept. The NGO has employed a separate team for the making of these tassels.

4.8.4 Standardization

As (Appadurai, 1986) points out, the push of commoditization at the production end tends to be more towards standardization. The most criticized feature of tourist art production is the standardization of forms as it goes against the Western canons of individual creativity (Ben-Amos, 1977). It is said that as the dependence on standardized artefacts by “civilized societies” increases, the individuality of classes, families and individuals tend to get dissolved (Graburn, 1976).

In the digital era, standardization in commerce is a norm. Specifications of each product become important while listing products on e-commerce platforms such as Amazon. The organizations that collaborate with these tribes also stick to standard sizes for the products. To implement this efficiently, the artisans are informed beforehand about the product that will be made out of the fabric they embroider, along with the dimensions.

In addition to this, the uniqueness of handmade products makes it challenging to manufacture a considerable stock of the same product. In organizations such as Shalom, this issue is tackled to an extent by continuing to build a stock even if no orders are coming in. This also ensures that the women get a regular income regardless of whether the products are sold immediately.

4.8.5 Change in Scale

What was traditionally practised solely for the internal audience is now being transformed into something that is accessible to a larger section of the population and gradually taking characteristics of tourist art.

Besides the local Self Help Groups in Toda Munds, several organizations are now coming forward to collaborate with the tribes to produce the craft on a larger scale. According to authorities at Shalom, they currently have a stock of products worth over 40 lakh. Extended collaborations with TRIFED and Last forest have opened new markets thereby increasing the demand for these products. Naturally, more people are now engaged in the craft and earning a supplementary income from the same.

4.9 Challenges faced by Toda Artisans

The perseverance of traditional arts and crafts is attributed to a handful of aspects. This includes the obtainability of traditional raw materials, persistent demand for the items, knowledge of the skills, availability of time, recognition from community members and the part it plays in upholding the belief systems (Graburn, 1976). Following are some of the challenges faced by artisans when it comes to sustaining their craft.

4.9.1 Unavailability of Raw Materials

One of the common challenges pointed out by Toda respondents when it comes to the practice of Pukhur is the unavailability of good quality raw materials. They used to procure the khaddar fabric from a vendor who has stopped the production of the same for

about two years. This has led them to pick alternatives for the same. Some of these alternatives are machine-spun and are said to affect the quality of the final product according to the Toda respondents.

Although in the recent past, few vendors have emerged in Ooty who produce the fabric, the price for this base material has drastically increased. What used to cost about Rs. 200 – Rs. 250 is now available for about Rs. 1400.

4.9.2 Lack of Centralized Outlet

The artisans or SHGs in the federation lack proper centralized space to function as an outlet and/or for keeping stock of raw materials and finished products. Besides some outlets run by non-Toda private parties and Tribes India stores run by TRIFED (that offers space for all tribal products), we are unable to find any outlet in the main centres of Nilgiris that are dedicated to Toda Embroidered products.

Owing to this limitation, the Self Help Groups in different Toda Munds look after the marketing activities in respective Munds. A centralized outlet would have been helpful, especially for artisans located in isolated Toda Munds.

4.9.3 Lack of Training

Traditional Toda products, Putkuli for instance, does not require any kind of stitching/ tailoring. The sides of a traditional Putkuli are frayed as a standard. Commercialization pushes the artisans to design and manufacture new products (most of which usually require stitching/ tailoring eg. Bags, frocks, purses and keychains).

Although Toda women are exceptionally skilled in their unique embroidery, they report to lack proper training when it comes to other skills such as tailoring and product design. Hence, there is dependence on external parties, especially when the existing skilled members are unable to handle the demand. Artisans claim that the tailoring charges are high and that in turn affects the production and pricing.

Organizations such as NAWA had contributed by sponsoring tailoring machines. Mahalir Thittam had previously contributed to skill enhancement by hosting a training programme on tailoring as well as product design. However, there has not been any recent training that has been carried out.

4.9.4 Dearth of Knowledge of the Market

Production knowledge with regards to the market, consumer and the end destination of the commodity varies in terms of internal and external demand, particularly in small scale traditional societies. This knowledge is comparatively indirect and irregular in terms of external demand (Appadurai, 1986). In such cases, traders and their agents act as a bridging gap to translate this external demand to the local producers that may relatively lack direct contact (Appadurai, 1986).

When it comes to the implementation of developmental schemes, the dearth of knowledge about artisans and handicrafts units poses a major issue (Jena, 2010). The gap in this knowledge between the producer and the consumer leads to the relative deprivation of the producing class and brings higher profits to the traders and consumers. Further, such discontinuities also lead to issues pertaining to authenticity and expertise (Appadurai, 1986).

When it comes to Toda artisans, except for the occasional financial and marketing assistance by organizations such as NAWA and Mahalir Thittam, all the work right from sourcing raw materials to production and marketing is carried out by the artisans themselves. Often they are not well familiar when it comes to the market demand in which cases external agencies (private parties such as Shalom) act as agents to help with the marketing of these products.

Chapter 5

Protection and Revival of Toda Embroidery

Craft production may also act as a medium of communication through which an external audience is educated about the ethnic community in terms of their customs, historical experiences and current state (Cohen, 1989). Hence, the protection and revival of these crafts are important.

From the perspective of Intellectual Property, handicrafts have three distinct constituents: “reputation”, “external appearance” and “know-how”. While reputation is linked to the handicrafts’ style, origin or quality, the external appearance is a function of their shape and design. Know-how on the other hand is the knowledge and skills involved in creating them. Each of these components could be potentially protected by a distinct form of Intellectual Property. Patents are a means of protecting know-how, besides as a trade secret. External appearance could be protected by copyright or industrial designs. Reputation on the other hand is protected by trademarks, collective or certification marks, geographical indications (GI) or unfair competition law (WIPO, 2016).

In the preceding chapter, we looked at the commercialization of the craft and the various stakeholders in the process. In this chapter, we will be examining the various protection and revival measures taken at the national, state and district level concerning Toda embroidery. We will be looking at various Government ministries, schemes and organizations for the same. This chapter aims to throw light on the mechanism of these parties and how they work together with the stakeholders mentioned in the previous chapters for the protection and revival of the craft.

5.1 National Level

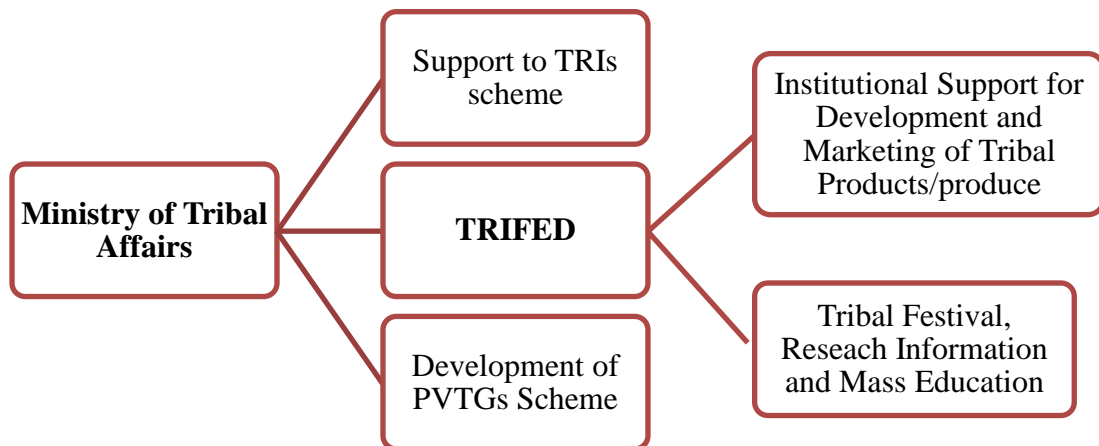
In India, the respective State Governments are in charge of the development and promotion of crafts. The Central Government supplements their efforts by introducing various developmental schemes. These schemes often provide need-based support to the artisans for the integrated development of handicraft clusters. It also upholds sustainable development by organizing these clusters into Self Help Groups (Datta & Bhattacharyya, 2016)

5.1.1 Ministry of Tribal Affairs

The complete policy and planning alongside coordination of programmes aimed at the development of Scheduled Tribes is handled by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. However, the concerned Central Ministries/ departments, State Governments and Union Territory administrations are responsible for the implementation of the sectoral schemes and programmes (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21).

The tailored schemes of the Ministry are designed to upkeep and complement the efforts of other Central Ministries, State Governments and partially voluntary organizations through financial assistance. The schemes are implemented by the State Government and Union Territory Administrations for the social, economic and educational development of tribal communities (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21).

Figure 5.1 Schemes benefitting Todas and their Craft under Ministry of Tribal Affairs



Source: Adapted from (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21)

Schemes under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs

i) Scheme for development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)

There are 75 tribal groups identified by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) based on conditions such as “..pre-agricultural level of technology, stagnant or declining population, low literacy and subsistence level of the economy” (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21). These tribes are not only eligible

for the Central and State Government Schemes available for the general population but also the Scheduled Tribes Component (STC) of these schemes. In addition to this, they are also eligible to avail the benefits of the schemes introduced by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs aiming for the development of Scheduled Tribes (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21).

Out of the 37 STs in Tamil Nadu, 6 tribal communities belong to Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups. Todas are one among them besides Irulars, Kurumbas, Kotas, Kattunayakans and Paniyans. Irulars form the largest PVTG community in the state (SCSTRTI, 2015).

Under this scheme, funds are made available for activities essential for the survival, protection and development of PVTGs which are not already funded by any other central or state government scheme. These activities include housing, land distribution and development, agriculture and cattle development etc. In the financial year 2019-20, the expenditure of the ministry towards this scheme stands at 250 crores. Funds released to the State of Tamil Nadu for the same in 2019-20 was 819.48 lakhs (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21).

ii) Institutional Support for Development and Marketing of Tribal Products/Produce

Institutional Support for Development and Marketing of Tribal Products/produce was introduced in the financial year 2014-15. The scope of this scheme as per the Annual Report (2016-17) of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs is as follows:

“ i) To give comprehensive support for people belonging to various tribes in the entire range of production, product development, preservation of traditional heritage, support to both forest and agricultural produce of tribal people, support to institutions to carry the above activities, provisions of better infrastructure, development of designs, dissemination of information about price and the agencies which are buying the products, support to Government agencies for sustainable marketing and thereby ensure a reasonable price regime ii) Sharing of information with Gram Panchayats and Gram Sabha, and iii) Skill up-gradation, development of utilitarian products for an increase in value in the market” (Annual Report, 2016-17).

This scheme seeks to establish institutions for Scheduled Tribes to assist them in the marketing and development of activities on which they depend for their livelihood. This is achieved through measures such as market intervention, training and skill up-gradation of tribal artisans, craftsmen, Minor Forest Produce (MFP) gatherers, Research and Development/ IPR activity, supply chain infrastructure development etc. (Annual Report, 2016-17). In the financial year 2020-21 (up to 31.10.2021), TRIFED generated a business of Rs. 211.86 lakhs (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21)

iii) Tribal Festival, Research, Information and Mass Education

Under this scheme, the Ministry aims to promote rich tribal heritage, disseminate information and spread awareness through the organization of Tribal Crafts and Food Festivals, Sports, Music, Dance, Photo Competitions, Craft Expos, Workshops, Seminars, Documentary film production, Publications and other activities (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21).

There are two major fests organized by TRIFED- Tribal Artisan Melas (TAMs) and National Tribal Festival, also known as Aadi Mahotsav. The former is a mela to identify new artisans and products at the sourcing level, as a way of growing the tribal producer base. Aadi Mahotsav on the other hand is a festival with exhibition-cum-sale of tribal handicrafts, fabric, jewellery and folk performances. (Bureau, 2021) While Aadi Mahotsav is funded directly by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, certain State level festivals such as the Hornbill festival of Nagaland, Pawl-kut festival of Mizoram and MedaramJatra of Telangana are funded through Tribal Research Institutes (Bureau, 2021).

iv) Support to Tribal Research Institute Scheme

Tribal Research Institutes are established and administered by respective State Governments. Through the ‘Support to Tribal Research Institute’ Scheme, the Government aims to evolve TRIs as a body of knowledge and research and act as a think tank for tribal development and preservation of art and culture of tribal people (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21). The three main areas covered under this scheme are – building infrastructure, research and documentation and training and capacity building.

With regards to infrastructure, the scheme provides support for the building, repair and up-gradation of TRIs and national TRIs in regions where they are not already established.

Further activities include establishing tribal museums, memorials, digital repositories, conference halls, exhibitions and sale outlets across the State (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21).

Tribal Research Centre of Tamil Nadu, located in Udhamandalam, Nilgiris looks after the overall development of the 36 Scheduled tribes in Tamil Nadu. This institute, which was originally under the administration of Tamil University, Thanjavur was taken over by the Government in 1995. A Tribal Museum, whose foundation was laid back in 1989 was also established here in 1996. It houses several tribal artefacts like traditional jewellery, weapons, model huts, model temples etc. and attracts tourists and visitors (Department of Tribal Welfare) (Nadu).

Tribal Digital Repository portal is a web portal created to preserve the cultural heritage of the tribes. This searchable digital repository (<https://respository.tribal.gov.in>) holds books, research papers, reports, documents, photographs and videos concerning tribes and associated research. This research and documentation also take into consideration augmented reality (AR) and other new technologies to document tribal welfare measures, tribal profile, language, traditions, customs, evaluate government interventions etc. (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21). Training and Capacity building are carried out for functionaries, tribal representatives, artisans etc. through seminars, conferences and workshops.

In 2011, TRIFED in collaboration with Shalom Self Help hosted a 90-day skill training program. The program trained 20 women, in an attempt to make them capable of selling their products directly to customers without middlemen. (India T. o., 2012). TRIs also are responsible for the promotion of state-level tribal festivals and yatras to bring forth more tourists. Expenditure towards this scheme in the financial year 2019-20 stands at 109.98 crores (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21).

5.1.2 Geographical Indication

As per the definition by WIPO, Geographical Indication is a sign used on goods that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or reputation owing to that origin. (World Intellectual Property Organization). Such products are often a result of traditional processes and knowledge passed on by communities from one generation to another (WIPO, 2016).

While Geographical Indications do not directly protect the actual know-how or knowledge associated with the handicrafts, it does contribute to their indirect protection in several ways. Under conventional IP systems, the traditional knowledge usually remains in the public domain and is prone to misappropriation by third parties. Geographical Indications can protect these handicrafts from misleading or deceptive trading practices and safeguard the reputation that it has accrued over time. Further, it also contributes to protecting a niche market (WIPO, 2016).

Geographical Indications are community rights, unlike trademarks (Aen, 2015). Non-authorized parties are hence not allowed to use protected geographical indications on goods that do not fulfil the required criteria i.e, belonging to a defined area and possessing the required characteristics (WIPO, 2016).

The Geographical Indications of Goods (Goods and Protection) Act was enacted in India in 1999. As of March 2022, 417 products have received the Geographical Indication tag out of which several products have a different country of origin (Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, 2022). Owing to its uniqueness and geographical underpinning, Toda embroidery received the GI tag in 2013.

The principal function of GI is to act as a title of origin (Aen, 2015). In terms of marketing, GIs provide handicrafts with an added economic value by conveying a cultural identity with the help of the region of origin (Nilgiris in the case of Toda embroidery). Further, it also recognizes the value provided by certain human skills in the production process thereby portraying a distinct identity for these products (Aen, 2015).

The significance of Geographical Indications has increased in the past few decades. This is because they have the potential to acquire a high reputation and turn into valuable commercial assets, if not already. Owing to this, their protection at a national as well as international level becomes important to shield against misappropriation, forgery or counterfeiting (Aen, 2015). In developing countries, GIs act as one of the most efficient Intellectual Property rights as it can localise economic control, reward those who poses traditional knowledge and also inspire the social development of indigenous communities (Aen, 2015).

In the case of India, products that bear Geographical Indication can be dealt with by only registered proprietors along with authorized users (Aen, 2015). As per the information

provided by the Geographical Indications Registry (Intellectual Property India), there are 75 authorized users and proprietors of Toda Embroidery.

Some other handicrafts in Tamil Nadu that have obtained the GI are Nachiarkoli Lamps, Pathamadai Mats, Mamallapuram Stone Carving, Swamimalai Bronze Carving, Temple Jewellery of Vadaseri, Thanjavur Art Plate, Thanjavur Paintings etc. (Poompuhar). Kasuti Embroidery of Karnataka, Khatwa patchwork of Bihar, Sujini Embroidery of Bihar, Chikan of Lucknow, Phulkari of Punjab etc are some of the other GI protected embroidery crafts of India.

5.1.3 Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Ministry of Textiles

In the 11th Five Year Plan, the Government of India had implemented generic schemes for the holistic development of handicrafts. The Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) implements schemes that are not targeting any region, gender or caste so that artisans across all communities can avail the benefits. Two generic schemes implemented are i) National Handicrafts Development Programme (NHDP) and ii) Comprehensive Handicrafts Cluster Development Scheme (CHCDS) (Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Ministry of Textiles, Government of India).

Components under NHDP are as follows (Ministry of Textiles, 2021):

- i) Baseline Survey and Mobilization of Artisans (Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana)
- ii) Marketing Support and Services
- iii) Design and Technology Upgradation
- iv) Human Resource Development
- v) Direct benefit to Artisans
- vi) Infrastructure and Technology Support
- vii) Research and Development Scheme

Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana is a cluster-based scheme from which SHGs including Toda SHGs of Nilgiris avail benefits with the help of their implementing agency – The Nilgiri Adivasi Welfare Association. Presently, over 119 Toda embroidered products have been uploaded onto the digital repository (www.craftclustersofindia.in) under this scheme. The repository was created to deliver market linkage to these clusters so they

could be contacted directly by buyers or exporters. (Ambedkar Hatshilp Vikas Yojana, Ministry of Textiles) (Baby & Paul, 2017)

Under the CHCDS, projects are implemented to improve the unorganized handicraft clusters with regard to infrastructure and production. These projects aim at supporting these clusters to keep up with modernization and development (Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, 2021-22 to 2025-26).

Artisans once empanelled become eligible to take up implementation of interventions sanctioned under the various schemes. For the empanelment process, the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) issues a photo-identity card that acts as official proof when it comes to skill training, access to credit, marketing and other schemes (Development Commissioner (Handicrafts)). According to the founder of Shalom, Ooty, the organization had taken action towards the formal empanelment of several Toda artisans so they could avail training and marketing support provided by TRIFED. This card allowed them to supply their work for central government stores/outlets.

These schemes are often undertaken by implementing Agencies that consist of NGOs, VOs and Government Agencies. In the case of Tamil Nadu, Poompuhar or the Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Development Corporation Ltd. is responsible for the same.

National Crafts Museum and Hastkala Academy

National Crafts Museum and Hastkala Academy is set up at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. It is a subordinate office of the Development Commissioner for Handicrafts under the Ministry of Textiles. The Museum aims at spreading awareness about India's rich tradition of handicrafts and handlooms. The main activities of the crafts museum include the collection and preservation of crafts specimens besides restoration, reproduction and improvement of art and crafts. In the Folk and Tribal Art Gallery, we can see a collection of tribal artefacts (Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, 2014-15).

The museum houses a village complex portraying various village structures from across India alongside traditional folk art forms. Here, we are also able to locate a replica of a traditional Toda Hut (Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, 2020-2021).

5.1.4 Awards and Recognitions

On the occasion of women's day 2022, Toda women Jaya Muthu and Tejamma were presented with Nari Shakti Puraskar by the President of India to honour their contribution to the preservation and promotion of Toda Embroidery. This annual award is the highest civilian honour, presented by the Government of India and the Ministry of Women and Child Development to women who contribute toward women empowerment (The Hindu, 2022).

Photograph 5.1 Jaya Muthu and Tejamma receiving the Nari Shakti Puraskar from the President of India (2022)



Source: (Digital Photo Library, Rashtrapati Bhavan, 2022)

5.2 State and District Level

5.2.1 Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Development Corporation Ltd. - TNHDC (Poompuhar)

Poompuhar, or Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Development Corporation was established in 1973 by the Government of Tamil Nadu to elevate the livelihood and living standards of artisans located in Tamil Nadu. It provides marketing services to Tamil Nadu artisans via its online marketplace alongside its 17 showrooms located across Tamil Nadu and in cities such as Delhi and Kolkata. Besides, it also has production centres for Brass lamps, stone carvings, wood carvings and Thanjavur art plates. (About TNHDS)

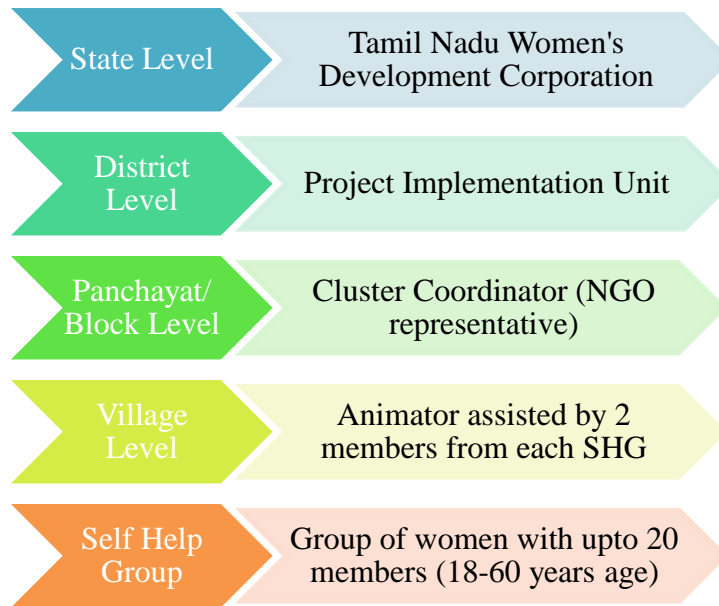
Every year, Poompuhar gives away awards such as the “Living Craft Treasure” Award, Poompuhar State Award, Poompuhar District Craft Award, Gen Next Award, Handicrafts Export Award, Team Production Award and Utility-Based Handicrafts Award (Annual Report, 2019-20).

Poompuhar alongside Keystone Foundation, Kotagiri had played a key role in the attainment of the GI tag for Toda Embroidery. It is jointly owned by Keystone Foundation (an NGO working in the Nilgiris), Poompuhar and Toda Nalvaazhvu Sangam (a body of some Toda artisans run by a Non-Toda dentist based in Coonoor) (Rural India, 2017). Presently, Poompuhar’s Sales showroom in Ooty is no longer functioning. Instead, Toda embroidery products are now offered for sale at their showroom at Manikoond in Coimbatore.

5.2.2 Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihood Mission – TNSRLM (Mahalir Thittam), Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women (TNCDW)

One of the earliest efforts to improve the social and economic conditions of poor women was initiated with the financial assistance from International Fund for Agricultural Development in the Dharmapuri district, Tamil Nadu in 1989-90. The project that focused on the creation of Self Help Groups was implemented with the support of NGOs and the banking system, particularly the Indian Banks and NABARD. The project had become well established by 1995-96 inculcating financial discipline among women’s groups in rural communities. Later, this became a growth model for the state-wide Project known as the Tamil Nadu Women’s Development Project or Mahalir Thittam covering the entire state (Planning Commission, 2005).

At the State level, this project is implemented by the Tamil Nadu Women’s Development Corporation. This is a public sector unit under the Social Welfare Department. At the district level, a “Project Implementation Unit” (PIU) headed by a Project Officer aided by six project officers looks after different functional areas. Committees headed by the Chief Secretary and Collector supervise and provide inputs for the project at State and district levels respectively (Planning Commission, 2005)(Refer to Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2 Administrative Setup of Mahalir Thittam

At the village level, a coordinator is entrusted with the responsibility of the smooth functioning of the Self Help Groups in each village group. Two members representing each Self Help Group assist this coordinator in achieving programme goals. An NGO representative will act as a cluster coordinator to supervise these village groups.

There are usually about five Village Panchayats (about 20 SHGs) under each cluster coordinator. Depending on the area of coverage, there are also district/ block level coordinators to oversee the cluster coordinators (Planning Commission, 2005). The programme is a three-way partnership between the Government departments, the banking system and NGOs to benefit the community. The NGO is involved not only in the formation of Self Help Groups but also involved in training and motivation inputs. (Planning Commission, 2005). In Nilgiris, Mahalir Thittam is headquartered at Udthagamandalam. Toda SHGs avail the benefits under this scheme through Sangamam Toda Federation.

Through this scheme, the SHG members are encouraged to make savings. There is no ceiling on the amount to be saved, a minimum amount is usually decided upon (Planning Commission, 2005) This collected pool of funds is then used to provide loans (known as 'Sangha loans') to the members on a rotating basis with interest rates varying between 2-3 per cent. This helps the members during an emergency and for small consumption needs without depending on a moneylender (Planning Commission, 2005).

Figure 5.3 Three-way Partnership in Mahalir Thittam



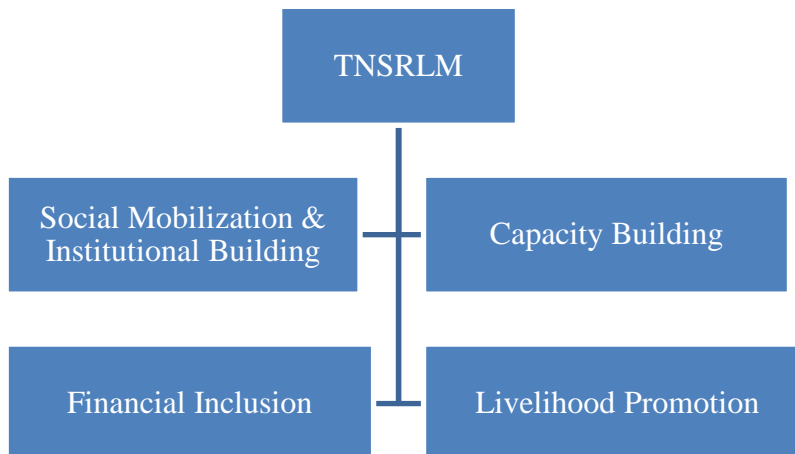
By evaluating the capacity of these groups to generate and rotate internal savings, they are considered for financial assistance under available Government schemes such as Swarnajayanthi Gram Sevarojgar Yojana (SGSY) scheme, Rashtriya Mahila Kosh loans, loans from NABARD etc. The release of loans, repayment and distribution of subsidies are done only through the group account to inculcate financial discipline and repayment ethic among these SHGs (Planning Commission, 2005).

Mahalir Thittam provides support to these SHGs in the form of credit/ loans for both individuals as well as SHGs. Some of the loans (need-based) provided are:

- i) PLF, CLF loans up to 25,000-50,000 for livelihood activities
- ii) Subsidy Loans through other departments like THADCO, DADWO, Banks, Insurance schemes, PMJJBY, PMJSBY
- iii) Revolving Fund via Banks, Vulnerable Reduction Fund

These loans (individual and group) have a minimum tenure of 15-20 months attracting interest of 12 per cent.

Marketing support is provided in the form of kiosks, exhibitions and stalls at shopping complexes. Some of the important exhibitions in which this organization takes part are SARAS Exhibition, Hyderabad and Exhibition at Summer Festival, Kodaikanal. Further, steps are being taken toward setting up e-commerce platforms for the marketing of these products online. Currently, Rs. 25000/- is allocated towards marketing and related activities.

Figure 5.4 Functions of TNSRLM

Artisans earn about Rs. 5000- Rs. 6000 on a monthly basis. This figure however varies depending on the season and sales. Bestseller products are pouches, shawls, frocks, coats bags and masks. Mahalir Thittam generates annual revenue of Rs. 25000 – Rs. 1 Lakh depending on the season.

Toda artisans report that Mahalir Thittam had taken the initiative to provide training to Toda artisans in tailoring. This had empowered the artisans to be independent of outsiders when it comes to making products out of their embroideries.

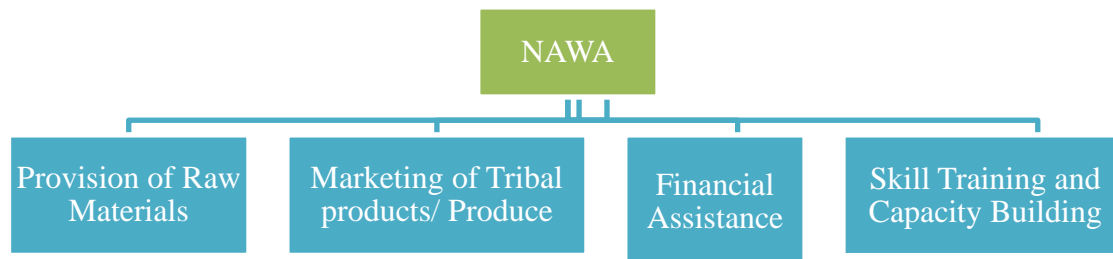
At the district level, implementation is also taken up by Semi-Governmental Organizations that usually consist of NGOs and others that work closely with the Government of India for the welfare of these communities. Nilgiri Adivasi Welfare Association is one of the biggest NGOs that are working towards the socio-economic development of tribal communities in the Nilgiris.

5.2.3 Nilgiri Adivasi Welfare Association (NAWA), Kotagiri

NAWA is a registered, charitable NGO working towards the welfare and development of tribal communities of Nilgiris and surrounding areas such as Todas, Irulas, Kotas, Kurumbas etc. Even though the main focus of the organization is on health and education, the social and economic development of the communities is also taken into consideration. As a part of that, it engages in the promotion of tribal artefacts such as Toda embroidery, Kota pottery etc. (NAWA).

According to concerned officials at NAWA, the organization supports Toda tribal artisans in primarily four areas – provision of Raw materials, marketing of tribal products/produce, financial assistance and capacity building. Located in Kotagiri, NAWA primarily collaborates with Central and State Governments to market these products. Toda tribal artisans collaborate with NAWA via Sangamam Toda Women’s Federation.

Figure 5.5 NAWA’s Assistance to Toda Artisans



NAWA sources the raw materials required for hand embroidery such as the cloth and woollen threads from the plains and distributes them to the SHGs via Sangamam Federation. One of the major challenges faced by the organization was sourcing raw materials for the craft which was affected due to the pandemic.

The artisans then make products using these materials and submit them back to the NGO on a weekly basis. Some of the best-selling products here are shawls, masks, table runners, dupattas, coats, shoulder bags etc. The artisans earn about Rs. 700 per week depending on the number and quality of work they are about to produce. Marketing of these products takes place primarily at Government-sponsored exhibitions.

Besides providing income to the artisans for the work they produce, NAWA provides financial assistance to the community in the form of credits/ loans. These loans are issued both at the individual and SHG levels. According to authorities of Sangamam Toda Federation, Nilgiri Adivasi Welfare Association had taken the initiative to distribute over 200 tailoring machines to the Toda artisans to support their craft. This had helped a lot of Toda artisans in expanding their business.

Table 5.1 Support provided to the Artisans by Organizations besides Marketing

| Name of Organization | Raw Materials | Product Design | Machinery/ Tools | Credit/ Loans | Capacity Building |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| TRIFED | No | No | No | No | Yes |
| Nilgiri Adivasi Welfare Association | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Mahalir Thittam | No | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| Shalom NGO | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes |
| Kotagiri Women's Cooperative Society | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No |
| Last Forest | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |

Source: Socio Economic Survey, 2021

5.3 SWOT Analysis of the Present State of Toda Embroidery

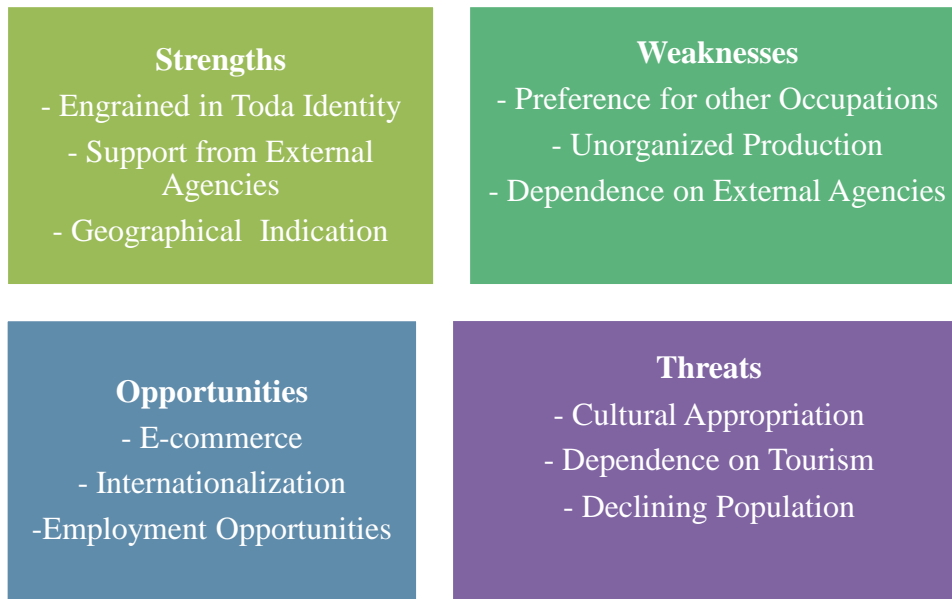
While commercialization plays a key role here in the revival of Toda embroidery, it also comes with a set of challenges. Let us now examine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats pertaining to the protection and revival of Toda embroidery.

5.3.1 Strengths

i) Culture Engrained in Toda Identity

Art that is created for, treasured and used by peoples within their society plays a significant role in upholding the ethnic identity and social structure. Such arts help impart important values to the group members (Graburn, 1976). The role played by traditional crafts in upholding the beliefs and rituals is one of the several factors that account for the persistence of any craft (Graburn, 1976).

The biggest strength when it comes to Toda embroidery as a craft is how engrained it is in the culture of the Todas. Pukhur forms an important part of their traditional costume, ceremonies and celebrations. For this reason, the practice continues to be passed on to younger generations to this date. This is one of the prime reasons for the sustenance of the craft today.

Figure 5.6 SWOT Analysis of the Present State of Toda Embroidery**ii) Support from External Agencies**

Since the Todas belong to the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups, they get support from the government for their socio-economic development. Adding to this, several NGOs have been working closely with the Government to execute schemes that are beneficial not just for the community but also for the craft.

Todas have been receiving support in the form of marketing, capacity/ skill-building as well as financial support under various governmental and non-governmental schemes. To add to this, there are several state government-sponsored exhibitions and melas organized in India that encourage the making of such handicrafts and provide a platform for the artisans to showcase and sell.

Organizations such as NAWA, Shalom and Kotagiri Women's Cooperative Society make sure that the artisans are provided with the necessary raw materials and marketing support and hence having to only deal with production.

iii) Geographical Indication

The attainment of the Geographical Indication tag in 2013 plays a significant role in protecting Toda embroidery against usage by unauthorized persons. (WIPO, 2016). The GI certification provides the producers as a group (Toda artisans in this case), the exclusive right to practise and produce these crafts. Further, the group also become

recipients of any added economic value that may be a product of their investment in quality, reputation, and authenticity concerning their product (Aen, 2015). The GI tag opened doors to the marketing of the product in several ways while also attracting a lot of consumers.

5.3.2 Weaknesses

i) Preference for other Occupations

It was observed that daily labour and agriculture were the two main primary sources of income in Toda households. Out of the 113 Toda artisan households surveyed, 72 (63.7per cent) of them were dependent on Daily labour, 75 households (66.3per cent) on Agriculture and 26 (23 per cent) on others. Hand embroidery on the other hand was only a source of secondary income alongside buffalo rearing.

Embroidery is a time taking craft and the artisans are not compensated adequately for the effort they put in. According to respondents, daily labour at a nearby agricultural field or forest will provide them with about Rs. 300-350 per day in the case of females, which can go up to Rs. 1000 for males if they work extra time. According to a respondent from Garden Mund, working as a gardener at Botanical Garden pays them about Rs.10,000 monthly. Hand embroidery on the other hand will provide them with hardly Rs.1000 in a week, provided they manage to make and sell the products. Owing to this reason, women now prefer pursuing other occupations that can help them sustain their lives better.

ii) Unorganized Production

Despite the existence of Self Help Groups, the production process of Toda embroidery is fairly unorganized in many Munds. This is because, for most women, this practice is more of a part-time occupation. According to Toda artisans, only a handful of Self Help Groups are functioning to their full potential and several require a revival.

Considering the already low population, the Toda population in the Nilgiris is widely scattered. Many of these settlements are located in pockets within the forest. This adds to the problem of the organization of the artisans according to authorities of Sangamam Federation. Adding to it, it makes it difficult to mobilize artisans and bring their art to the market.

iii) Dependence on External Agencies

The majority of the Toda population is engaged in agriculture and allied activities. Not a lot of artisans are exposed to the ideas of marketing and related trends. Several Toda respondents opined that, due to their lack of awareness of technology, a lot of opportunities go unexplored. Due to this limitation, many of them depend on third parties such as NGOs and other organizations for the marketing of these products. Often, private parties with better infrastructure and information regarding these aspects allegedly exploit the artisans and their craft for profit.

5.3.3 Opportunities

i) E-Commerce

Presently, at the national level, TRIFED, governed by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and has an online marketplace offering tribal products and produce from across the nation. ‘Central Cottage Industries Emporium’, a Government of India undertaking under the Ministry of Textiles also has an online marketplace offering authentic handloom and handicraft products. At the state level, Poompuhar has an online marketplace. Even though we can find Toda products in the TRIFED’s Tribes India marketplace, at the time of this study, Toda products had not made an appearance in the latter two (Ministry of Textiles).

When it comes to private organizations at the district level, Shalom and Last Forest have a social media presence and the latter also runs an online store. However, we are unable to see such initiatives at the local level, particularly on the part of the Toda community members. Although many respondents are gradually learning how to establish themselves online, this is an area that holds potential if the artisans are guided properly.

ii) Internationalization

Despite attracting foreign tourists, the International market for this craft has been relatively untapped. As of now, most of the trade with foreigners occurs when they visit Nilgiris or come in contact with the tribes directly. The unique craft has the potential to attract foreign customers. According to a respondent from Garden Mund, International tourists often visit the Mund to purchase Toda embroidered products. However, due to the limitation in the weight of luggage they can carry back (around 40 kgs), they usually pick

lighter products. By incorporating the right technologies and actions, there is potential to expand this foreign market without making it dependent solely on tourism.

iii) Employment Generation

The Self Help Groups formed at each Toda Munds provide these Toda women with a source of income leading them towards financial independence. Several respondents report not having to depend on others in the family to pay for their children's clothes or tuition.

Todas are a close-knit community and this practice is something that brings them together. Toda women in their Self Help Groups tend to develop this sense of community, by working together toward the same goals. Since these constitute persons belonging to the Toda community, they can uphold their traditional values and culture without outside interference.

Embroidery being a household industry has a lot of potential for employment generation, not only for artisans but also for other skilled and semi-skilled persons such as – tailors, tassel makers, product designers etc. This can be tapped into to benefit not only the women belonging to the community but also non-tribal women.

5.3.4 Threats

i) Cultural Appropriation

Cultural appropriation is defined as the process in which a particular culture's symbols, artefacts, rituals, genres etc. are used by members of a different culture. This is considered inevitable as cultures come into contact in some form. Rogers (2006) In this era of commercialization, several parties have attempted to take advantage of the opportunity to gain profit. This has led to the creation of cheaper knock-offs and designs being replicated in print.

Allegedly, there are private non-Toda organizations that have been attempting to exploit the artisans for profit. This often means that the tribal artisans are not compensated enough for their work. Some members of the Toda community opine that this has led to the production of inauthentic work as new designs with no relevance to their culture are often introduced (Abbiramy, 2020). According to a respondent from Minik Mund, NGOs run by non-Toda members often disregard the sacristy of the craft by introducing them to

shoes and footwear. Further, these private agents seem to price the products way higher. A Putkuli shawl that costs Rs. 2500, when bought from their Self Help Group's stall, is sold for twice the price at these stores.

ii) Dependence on Tourism

The degrading effect of commercialization and tourism on ethnic and traditional crafts is commonly spoken about by intellectuals. Tourist art or art created for sale to outsiders is considered impoverished as compared to the 'traditional' ethnic arts made for local consumption (Cohen, 1989) (Ben-Amos, 1977).

New forms of art made for sale to foreigners or tourists may have no function at all within the culture of their producers or may have limited use. There is a possibility of the parent system ceasing owing to the loss of patronage, while the purposes of tourist art may continue to grow (Ben-Amos, 1977). As fast as they may develop, tourist arts are also prone to die out quickly as they tend to be contact-dependent (Ben-Amos, 1977).

iii) Declining Population

As per the Census of India, 2011 the population of Todas in the State of Tamil Nadu stands at 2002. Out of this, the Nilgiris houses 1509 persons. Toda artisans are predominantly females. If we rule out the males, the number comes down to about 789. If we rule out the dependent population, we get a very low number.

The membership in Sangamam Toda Federation stands at around 350. Organizations such as Shalom and Kotagiri Women's Cooperative Society are collaborating with about 200-250 women only, many of whom are aged 60 and above. The membership in these organizations is not exclusive and sometimes artisans are part of more than one organization simultaneously. If more people are not encouraged to take up the craft and are adequately compensated for the same, the number of artisans who help sustain the craft may decline further.

Chapter 6

Conclusion and Recommendations

Traditional Cultural Expressions (TCEs) such as handicrafts are treasured assets to communities that maintain, practice and develop them (Bruchac, 2014). This knowledge that is often passed on from one generation to another, acts as a medium of communication through which the external audience learns about the traditions, customs and historical experiences of the group at hand (Cohen, 1989) (Bruchac, 2014).

Toda tribal embroidery is one of the significant traditional cultural expressions of the Toda tribes of Nilgiris. This study was an attempt to look at the current standing of the craft keeping in view the impact of commercialization on the same. The process of commercialization of Toda embroidery has been examined in the light of tourism in the Nilgiris. Here we look at the multiple stakeholders and the role they play in providing the craft with a new meaning.

The Nilgiris is the second least populated district of Tamil Nadu wherein a large share of the land is either under some form of agriculture or forest cover. The influence of the North East and South-West monsoon makes the Nilgiris favourable for the growth of a multitude of crops. Tea processing Industries make up the majority of employment generation in this district. In addition to this, the natural altitude makes the district distinct in the tropics and favourable for tourism. This is also one of the reasons why the Europeans began establishing their sanitarium here in the 1800s. Udhamandalam (also known as Ooty) is commonly known as the queen of hill stations and continues to attract tourists every year, particularly during the summers (State Planning Commission, DHDR-The Nilgiris, 2011) (Planning Commission, 2005).

With a population density of 287 persons per sq. km, the Nilgiris district has the least population density in the state of Tamil Nadu. At the same time, Nilgiris is also the top 8th district in terms of the share of the urban population (Census of India, 2011). The Nilgiris, being home to several tribes, soon became a melting pot of different cultures after the British influx in 1818. Paniyan, Irular, Kurumbas, Kattunayakan and Toda are the five dominant tribes residing in this district. While Todas and Kotas occupied the

higher ranges of the hills, Irulas and Kurumbas occupied the lower ranges (King, 1870). Despite their proximity to each other, these tribes remained culturally distinctive despite being exposed to foreign customs (Mandelbaum, 1941).

Todas are considered to be the original inhabitants of the Nilgiri hills. This position and rights are not only claimed by the tribes themselves but also conceded to them by other hill tribes (Shortt, 1868). Nearly 75 per cent of the total Toda Population in Tamil Nadu is located in the Nilgiris. Here, they reside in settlements called 'Munds' located predominantly in Udthagamandalam and Kotagiri Taluks. Todas used to be the only 'true pastoralists' in the Nilgiri mountains (Walker A. R., 2012) and their culture traditionally revolved around buffaloes, sacred dairies and Putkuli cloaks (Chhabra, 2000).

Out of the three important arts of the Todas, Embroidery is considered to be par excellence (Emeneau, 1937b). It is the most striking feature of Toda clothes and forms an intrinsic part of Toda identity (Bruchac, 2014) (Chhabra, 2000). This unique kind of embroidery is practised on coarse woven cloth with black, red and occasionally blue thread or woollen yarn. Even though modern clothes are common among the members today, the traditional Putkuli cloak remains a mandatory attire during all-important Toda ceremonies such as temple events, weddings, funerals or childbirth.

Toda embroidery was traditionally considered 'women's work' (Rivers W. H., 1906) and continues to be among one of the major activities Toda women take part in. Toda artisans (mostly women) learn the craft from older women in the household at an early age of about 13-14 years. The embroidery is done using a simple darning technique by counting the warp and weft of the cloth (Emeneau, 1937b). The embroidery is done with such precision that the cloth does not quite have a reverse side (Emeneau, 1937b). Depending on the intricacy of the pattern and the area to be embroidered, products embellished with this embroidery take anywhere from a few hours to a few days for completion. The traditional Putkuli shawl takes up to eighty days for production.

In the sample survey conducted in 15 Toda Munds located in Udthagamandalam and Kotagiri Taluks, a total of 175 artisans were identified. Over 95 per cent of the Toda households surveyed had at least one Toda artisan who was practising embroidery and offered their products for sale. The highest number of artisans was identified in

Tharanadu Mund and Garden Mund which had 32 and 27 artisans respectively. On average, a Toda Mund had about seventeen Toda artisans.

A strong positive correlation was observed between the total number of households and the number of artisans in a Toda Mund. There was also a simultaneous increase in the number of artisans as the total population in the Toda Mund went up. This may imply that the practice of Toda embroidery is common in most Toda households. The average number of artisans per household varied widely and averaged around 2 persons per household. Pedukal Mund in Kotagiri Taluk accounted for the highest mean household population as well as the number of artisans per household standing at 5 and 3 persons respectively.

Although the artisans were distributed fairly equally across all age groups, there was a relatively higher number of practising artisans in the age group of 32 to 46 years (36 per cent). The average age of a Toda artisan was approximately 41 years. The time spent engaging in the craft also varied from person to person. This depended on the existence of other household responsibilities, employment status and sometimes even motherhood. Over 52 per cent of the Toda artisans surveyed reported spending approximately 4-5 hours on the craft daily. These women made time usually after their household chores or other employment to make embroidered products which they then offered for sale.

The sale of these embroidered products only brought in supplementary income to these households. It was observed that most artisan households were either dependent on daily labour or agriculture as their primary source of income. The income earned from embroidery varied widely as it is solely dependent on how much an individual artisan can produce and sell. The responses from the artisans when enquired about their monthly income from the craft varied between Rs.1000 to Rs. 3000. The artisans were unable to provide an accurate number owing to the seasonality and the unorganized nature of the work. Over 94 per cent of the artisan households owned land on which they practised agriculture. Over 45 per cent of these households had land holdings up to 1.5 acres. Approximately 6 per cent of these households possessed no land.

The earliest attempts to commercialize the craft were initiated by missionaries such as the Church of England Zenana Mission in Udhagamandalam. These attempts can be considered an example of 'Encroaching Commercialization' as defined by Cohen (Cohen,

1989)(Emeneau, 1937b). In contemporary Nilgiris, we are also able to observe ‘Complementary commercialization’ wherein the artisans or craftsperson manufacture products to satisfy both the internal demand as well as the demands of the external audience (tourists and visitors) who visits these tribal hamlets.

The Nilgiris is one of the most sought tourist destinations in Tamil Nadu and has a multitude of tourist attractions such as the Botanical Garden, Mountain Train, Mudumalai National Park, Pykara Falls, Mukurthi Peak, Kodanad Peak, Ooty Lake, Avalanche Lake, Doddabetta Peak, Cairn Hill, 9th Mile Shooting Spot and others. The district accounts for 6.4 per cent of the total domestic arrivals in Tamil Nadu with a mean annual growth rate of 4 per cent (TNRTP) (Planning Commission, 2005).

The concentration of the Toda community the Nilgiris has contributed to the commercialization of the craft. Tourism in the Nilgiris makes ‘Complementary commercialization’ of Toda embroidery possible as many of these Toda settlements are located adjacent to tourist spots or are tourist attractions themselves. Examples are Garden Mund located adjacent to Botanical Garden. Tamizhagam Mund and Muthunad Mund, known for their traditional Toda temples and Pagalkod Mund, located within the premises of the 9th Mile Shooting Spot.

It was observed that there is a strong negative correlation between the distance of the Toda Mund from the centre and the number of tourist spots located within a 3 km radius. Garden Mund and Tamizhagam Mund located within two kilometres from the Udhagamandalam Centre has four major tourist spots each within their 3 km radius. Minik Mund, located about 3.4 kilometres away from the centre has two tourist spots located within a 3 km radius. On the other hand, Toda hamlets such as Pudumund, Hartal Mund, Pagalkod Mund, Thalpathiri Mund, Kaghoudi Mund and Perathul Mund located over 10 kilometres from the centre has only one tourist spot within their 3 km radius.

Similarly, we can observe a strong positive correlation between the distance of Toda Munds from the centre and the distance to the nearest tourist spot. This implies that as one moves away from the centre, the distance to the nearest tourist spot also became longer. While Tamizhagam Mund and Garden Mund are located 2 km from Ooty centre, their respective nearest tourist spots are located only metres away. In the case of Toda hamlets that were located further away, such as Tharanadu Mund, Kaghoudi Mund etc,

the nearest tourist spots were located up to 3 km away. These findings may imply that as one moves away from the centre, the number of tourist spots were lesser in number and located sparsely.

The impact of tourism on the commercialization and the persistence of the craft was studied by looking into the correlation between the existence of tourist spots and the number of artisans. We also examined whether the proximity of the Toda Mund to a tourist spot and/or the centre had any correlation with the number of practising artisans.

It was observed that there is a moderately strong negative correlation between the distance of the Toda Mund from the centre and the number of artisan households. This implies that the farther the Toda Mund was located from the centre, there tended to be a decrease in the number of artisan households. At the same time, it was observed that there is little to no correlation between the proximity of the Toda Mund to the centre and the number of artisans in the Toda Mund. Garden Mund located closest to the centre (1.1 km) and Tharanadu Mund, located the farthest (13.4 km) were the two Toda hamlets with the most Toda population and artisans. Similarly, no correlation was observed between the proximity of Toda Mund to tourist spots and the number of artisans.

Interestingly, it was observed that there was a strong positive correlation between the number of tourist spots located within a 3 km radius of the Toda Mund and the number of artisan households. There is also a moderately strong positive correlation between the number of tourist spots within a 3 km radius of the Toda Mund and the number of artisans. These results may indicate that Toda artisans located closer to the centre or a tourist spot are encouraged to pursue the craft to avail of the benefits of being proximate to their potential customers (complementary commercialization).

Direct contact of artisans with the tourists or visitors ('Complementary Commercialization') is one of the common ways in which Toda embroidered products are marketed. This is one of the reasons artisans in Toda Munds located close to a tourist spot tend to thrive. In addition to this, the products are marketed at local, regional, national and to an extent at the International level via the multiple stakeholders in the supply chain.

There are both State-sponsored and private retail outlets offering Toda embroidered products. Some of the major outlets offering Toda products in Udthagamandalam are

Tribes India, Toda's Primary Agricultural Co-operative Credit Society, Shalom Self Help, Toda Model Hut located in Botanical Garden and Eco Shop at Cairn Hill. In Kotagiri, Green Shop run by Last Forest and Kotagiri Women's Cooperative Society are two stores offering Toda Embroidered Products. Last Forest also has one of their Green Shops located in Coonoor Taluk. Toda artisans from Munds that are not endowed with tourism often have to commute to one of these places of sale via their personal vehicle, public transport. In some cases, the finished products were also collected from them by the organizations.

Today, Toda artisans are organized into Self Help Groups under the Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana in each Toda Mund. 'Sangamam Federation', the body consisting of 27 SHGs administers the activities of these SHGs. Over 89 per cent of the Toda artisans surveyed reported that they were a part of some Self Help Group. The SHGs located in Toda Munds located close to major tourist spots such as Garden Mund, Tamizhagam Mund and Muthunad Mund seemed to be more active as compared to the SHGs in other Toda Munds. It was observed that members of these SHGs often commissioned artisans from Toda Munds in relative isolation to make embroidered products which they then offered for sale as tourists visited them.

While Self Help Groups and Sangamam Federation do the work of organizing the artisans, production and marketing to an extent, several external agencies enter the scene to contribute to the scaling process. These parties or external agencies extend support to those hamlets or settlements that are in relative isolation by providing them access to the market in general and the tourist market in particular.

A present-day example of 'Encroaching Commercialization' in the Nilgiris with regards to Toda embroidery can be seen in the case of Shalom, an organization run by a private party. Shalom has been one of the organizations acting as a mediator to provide Toda artisans in relative isolation access to the market. The organization hires Toda artisans and provides them with support in the form of raw materials, product design and marketing. Toda Primary Agricultural Cooperative Credit Society and Handicrafts Sales Centre located in Ooty and Kotagiri Women's Cooperative Society located in Kotagiri are also similar external agents that make the production easier for the artisans by taking care of the raw materials and marketing the products.

However, it was observed that private organizations such as Shalom tended to perform better than other organizations with regard to marketing. Their knowledge of the market and trends has helped them come up with products that are sought after by the market. They have also collaborated with TRIFED and other private brands to take these embroidered products to a wider audience.

At the national level, exhibitions are the primary source of marketing for Toda products. Both Central and several State governments host handicrafts melas and exhibitions providing the artisans with a platform to showcase their craft. The artisans are also facilitated by organizations such as Mahalir Thittam and Nilgiri Adivasi Welfare Association who link them with the various state and central government schemes that sponsor their travel and accommodation. While the aforementioned organizations link the artisans or SHGs directly with these opportunities, private organizations such as Shalom take part in these exhibitions on behalf of the Toda artisans.

E-commerce is one of the ways in which Toda embroidered products are marketed at the national as well as international levels. TRIFED has its online marketplace where it offers Toda products. It also has established its presence over platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, Paytm etc. Private organizations such as Last Forest have their online store where they offer Toda embroidered products such as pouches, masks, bags etc. alongside other tribal produce and products such as honey and coffee. Shalom Self Help has a presence on social media through which they accept orders. Besides these, clothing brands such as Jaypore, Linen Trails and handicrafts stores such as Kamala by Craft Council of India, jewellery brands such as Zola India also have been collaborating with the artisans to offer their products in the market, sometimes after modifying them as per the trends in the market.

Contact with the external audience often leads to changes within the craft. In the case of Toda embroidery, we can find this manifested in the form of differentiation, diversification, innovations, standardization and change in the scale of the production. As Cohen (Cohen, 1989) anticipates, the differentiation of products that come with complementary commercialization is apparent in the case of Toda embroidery as well. However, today we can observe a differentiation in the products made for domestic consumption and the external audience.

Tourism and the increased demand for Toda embroidered products have called for diversification. Presently, we can see a multitude of embroidered articles that are purposeful even for the external audience— such as table runners, masks and pouches. Newer products continue to be designed to keep up with the demands and tastes, particularly that of tourists and visitors.

Some innovations can be observed in the making of products. While earlier the embroidered cloth used to be made into different products, presently many products are made by sewing on embroidered patches and strips on already made products (such as pouches, bags and kurtas). This not only helps escalate the production process but also contributes to the diversification of products. Other impacts of commercialization can be observed in the change in the scale of production and the standardization of the products. The embroidered products which used to be made solely for domestic use are now produced on a much larger scale, especially owing to the involvement of external agents in the commercialization process. Commercialization and the associated increased production have called for the standardization of products which makes the production process easier and more organized.

The major challenges faced by the Toda artisans today are the unavailability of raw materials, lack of a centralized outlet, dearth of skill training and lack of knowledge of the market. This makes them dependent on external private parties who sometimes engage in the marketing solely for monetary reasons thereby leading to the exploitation of artisans. Their scattered population makes organization difficult despite Sangamam Federation acting as a connecting link between all the Toda SHGs in Nilgiris.

Commercialization in many cases triggers the revival of the craft (Cohen, 1989). However, protection measures are necessary so that the craft and the indigenous artisans practising the same do not undergo exploitation. At the national level, Toda embroidery is protected by the Geographical Indication tag, which shields it from misleading trading practices and against misappropriation by third parties. Toda Embroidery received its GI certification in 2013 with the joined efforts of Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Development Corporation, Keystone Foundation and Toda Nalvazhvu Sangham, the latter two of which are NGOs working towards the welfare of Nilgiri tribes and Todas respectively. This attainment has provided the craft with an added economic value, thereby contributing to the marketing as well as the commercialization process.

Schemes under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and TRIFED provide support to the community in the form of capacity building and market development. Being among one of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups of India, the Todas are eligible to avail Central and State Government Schemes available for the general population, along with the Scheduled Tribes Component (STC) of these schemes. In addition to this, they are also eligible to avail of the benefits of the schemes introduced by the Ministry aiming toward the development of Scheduled Tribes (Ministry of Tribal Affairs G. o., 2020-21). The Tribal Research Institute located in Udhagamandalam under the Ministry's scheme has been doing the work of protecting, preserving and spreading awareness about the crafts and cultures of Todas amongst other Nilgiri tribes.

Mahalir Thittam, a scheme under the Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women has been encouraging the formation of Self Help Groups and promoting saving amongst underprivileged women. Sangamam Federation with the support of Mahalir Thittam avails benefits in the form of capacity building, financial inclusion, social mobilization and livelihood promotion. Mahalir Thittam plays a key role in making these SHGs aware of the various government schemes concerning marketing these crafts and facilitates their participation in State-sponsored exhibitions nationwide. Non-Governmental Organizations such as Nilgiri Adivasi Welfare Association have been on the frontline to support the artisans in the form of marketing, capacity building and financial assistance. The organization's initiative to distribute tailoring machines to the Toda artisans had helped many expand their business.

From the SWOT analysis carried out on the current state of Toda embroidery, it was observed that the craft has a fair share of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The biggest strength is the fact that this embroidery culture is deeply engrained in the Toda identity which plays a major role in its persistence. Besides this, the community receives support from various government schemes and non-governmental organizations not merely for the upholding of their culture but also their socio-economic development. Several organizations make the production process easier by providing Toda artisans with the required raw materials, product designing assistance and marketing. However, Todas are still far from considering the craft as a major source of livelihood.

The seasonality of the sales, owing to its dependence on tourism and the resultant unreliability pushes these women to take up other occupations such as daily labour to take

care of their families. While there are a handful of women who earn a decent amount from the craft, we need to take into consideration factors such as proximity to tourist locations, absence of other commitments and security provided by other earning members in the family which favours some artisans over the others. The scattered population and the unorganized nature make it difficult for the Toda artisans to sustain themselves in the market without relying on an external agency.

If the right systems are put in place, the practice can generate employment opportunities in the rural areas thereby contributing to socio-economic development. E-commerce and internationalization of the craft are two major areas which are not fully explored by Toda artisans and have the potential to benefit the craft and the artisans.

Some aspects which may pose a threat to the craft are cultural appropriation, over-dependence on tourism and the declining population of Todas. As the craft is being commercialized and welcomed by a multitude of organizations and brands, the subsequent increase in demand may lead to the appropriation of the craft and the culture. This occurs when producers with no proper knowledge of the production or the tradition enter the market for monetary reasons (Cohen, 1989). In addition to this, the dependence on tourism, without exploring other channels for commercialization may impact the artisans badly, particularly if the tourism sector declines.

Recommendations

Indian handicrafts sector in general and tribal handicrafts in particular face a multitude of issues when it comes to reforms and revival. Many of these traditional talents will find it difficult to stand the test of time unless these crafts and craftspersons are provided due importance. Following are a few recommendations that may contribute to the sustenance and protection of Toda embroidery in the present circumstances.

i) Centralized Outlet

One of the main ways we can work towards the protection of Toda embroidery is by promoting authentic artisans and ensuring that they are compensated adequately. Not only will it directly support the artisans' livelihoods but also encourage them to pursue the craft. One of the ways this can be ensured is by reducing the number of middlemen between the artisan and the final consumer. Presently, other than isolated stalls located at

Botanical Garden and Cairn Hills, we are unable to find well-functioning outlets run by the tribes themselves. A centralized outlet can be helpful to bring together the artisans that are scattered across the Nilgiris without depending on an external party.

ii) Promotion of Craft Tourism

Nilgiris with its rich indigenous cultures hones the potential for craft tourism. Traditional arts and crafts such as Kota Pottery, Kurumba paintings, basketry and bamboo works can be encouraged and brought together alongside Toda embroidery to promote craft tourism in the Nilgiris. This, when done within limited scope can provide exposure to these artisan communities while helping to spread awareness about their culture and traditions. The aforementioned centralized outlet may also be set up in collaboration with the major tribes in the region for a holistic representation.

iii) Regular Skill Training Programmes

Education and skill training programmes can be implemented among the tribes on relevant topics such as digital marketing, product design, tailoring etc. Such skill-based training can contribute to empowering these artisans to become independent and expand employment opportunities. This can be implemented with the help of NGOs functioning in the region or via SHGs. This will enable the artisans to be independent of external parties and can potentially safeguard them from exploitation.

iv) Encouraging E-Commerce

In this digital era, there are emerging opportunities in the e-commerce sector. Especially after the Covid-19 pandemic hit, the tourism sector has been greatly affected. It had also led to the shutting down of several retail stores offering Toda embroidery. E-commerce is one of the best ways to reach a bigger market while taking away the over-dependence on tourism. With inputs and skill training on these aspects, the Toda artisan community hones the potential to take their craft to a larger population and customer base.

v) Ensuring Proper Implementation of Schemes

Even though we have a multitude of governmental and semi-governmental schemes in place, there is a prospective for better implementation of them at the ground level. Several digital repositories are not updated regularly. In addition to this, systematic

reports summarizing the operations of various schemes will be helpful to analyse the progress and impact.

Better coordination at the ground level may ensure that the beneficiaries are made aware of the schemes available and avail of the benefits. Schemes pertaining to bank linkages of SHGs and credit dissemination could be streamlined and made hassle-free so that more individuals and SHGs find it accessible. Empanelment in programmes may also be simplified by entrusting implementing agencies at the ground level.

Toda embroidery is one of the traditional crafts that are reflective of India's rich history in craftsmanship. Commercialization of the Toda embroidery, whether 'Spontaneous' or 'Sponsored' has not only provided the craft with a new meaning but also contributed to the socio-economic development of the Toda artisans while also helping them uphold their culture and traditions.

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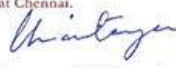
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Appendices

Appendix I: GI Certificate of Toda Embroidery

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| प्ररूप O-2 |  | FORM O-2 |
|  बौद्धिक सम्पदा भारत |  |  INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY INDIA |
|  | भारत सरकार GOVERNMENT OF INDIA | |
| | भौगोलिक उपदर्शन रजिस्ट्री Geographical Indication Registry | |
| | वस्तुओं का भौगोलिक उपदर्शन (रजिस्ट्रीकरण तथा संरक्षण) अधिनियम, 1999 Geographical Indication of goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 | |
| | धारा 16 (1) के अधीन भौगोलिक उपदर्शन अथवा धारा 17 (3) (ई) के अधीन प्राधिकृत उपयोक्ता के रजिस्ट्रीकरण का प्रमाणपत्र Certificate of Registration of Geographical Indication under section 16 (1) or of authorised user under section 17(3)(c) | |
| | भौगोलिक उपदर्शन संख्या: Geographical Indication No.: 135 | CERTIFICATE NO : 187 |
| प्राधिकृत उपयोक्ता संख्या Authorised user No.: | | दिनांक Date : 11.09.2008 |
| प्रमाणित किया जाता है कि भौगोलिक उपदर्शन (जिसकी समाकृति इसके साथ उपाबद्ध है) / प्राधिकृत उपयोक्ता | | |
| के नाम से | वर्ग में | संख्या के अधीन |
| | | दिनांक को |
| के लिए रजिस्टर में रजिस्ट्रीकृत किया गया है। | | |
| Certified that the Geographical Indication (of which a representation is annexed hereto)/ authorised user has been registered in the register in the name of Toda Nalavaazhvu Sangam, Hospital Road, Ootacamund – 643 001, Nilgiris District, Tamil Nadu, India; Keystone Foundation, Keystone Centre, P. B. 35, Groves Hill Road, Kotagiri - 643217, Nilgiris District, Tamil Nadu, India, and Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Development Corporation, ('Poompuhar') at No.759, Anna Salai, Chennai – 600 002, Tamil Nadu, India. | | |
| in class 24, 25 & 26 under no. 135 | | as of the date 11.09.2008 |
| in respect of "TODA EMBROIDERY" | | Falling in Class - 24 in respect of - Textiles & Textiles goods, not included in other Classes; Class - 25 in respect of - Clothing.; Class - 26 in respect of - Lace and Embroidery. |
| आज दिनांक | माह | 20 |
| को चेन्नई में मेरे निदेश पर मुद्रांकित किया गया। | | |
| Sealed at my direction, this 04 | day of March | 20 13 at Chennai. |
| | |  |
| | | रजिस्ट्रार, भौगोलिक उपदर्शन Registrar of Geographical Indication. |

Appendix II: Coordinates of Major Tourist Spots in The Nilgiris (Decimal Degrees)

| Sl. No. | Tourist Spot | y | x |
|----------------|---------------------------|----------|----------|
| 1 | Cairn Hill Reserve Forest | 11.38755 | 76.68005 |
| 2 | Toda Temple | 11.41824 | 76.6924 |
| 3 | Botanical Garden | 11.41888 | 76.71139 |
| 4 | 9th Mile Shooting Point | 11.44316 | 76.62324 |
| 5 | Toda Conical Temple | 11.4524 | 76.66872 |
| 6 | Glenmorgan View Point | 11.51078 | 76.60157 |
| 7 | Kodanad View Point | 11.5247 | 76.91569 |
| 8 | Pine Forest | 11.44012 | 76.65968 |
| 9 | Pykara Waterfalls | 11.47452 | 76.60287 |
| 10 | Doddabetta View Point | 11.40104 | 76.73558 |
| 11 | Ketti Valley View Point | 11.39739 | 76.71759 |
| 12 | Emerald Lake | 11.32683 | 76.61874 |
| 13 | Avalanche Lake | 11.31766 | 76.59838 |
| 14 | Government Rose Garden | 11.4048 | 76.70882 |
| 15 | Ooty Lake | 11.40524 | 76.68855 |
| 16 | Mukurthi National Park | 11.4293 | 76.5599 |
| 17 | Mudumalai Tiger Reserve | 11.566 | 76.53 |

Appendix III: Coordinates of Toda Mund in The Nilgiris (Decimal Degrees)

| Sl. No. | Name of Toda Mund | y | x |
|---------|-------------------|----------|----------|
| 1 | Minik Mund | 11.3923 | 76.68433 |
| 2 | Tamizhagam mund | 11.41794 | 76.69097 |
| 3 | Garden Mund | 11.41964 | 76.71521 |
| 4 | Pagalkod Mund | 11.44414 | 76.62033 |
| 5 | Kombutuki Mund | 11.4429 | 76.6591 |
| 6 | Kaghoudi Mund | 11.46615 | 76.63386 |
| 7 | Thalapathiri Mund | 11.44415 | 76.61281 |
| 8 | Perathul Mund | 11.44584 | 76.60881 |
| 9 | Muthunad Mund | 11.45209 | 76.66777 |
| 10 | Tharanadu Mund | 11.49158 | 76.61806 |
| 11 | Hartal Mund | 11.48786 | 76.61756 |
| 12 | Pudumund | 11.48291 | 76.61607 |
| 13 | Pedukal Mund | 11.51176 | 76.90229 |
| 14 | Bankad Mund | 11.51567 | 76.90581 |
| 15 | Kodtheni Mund | 11.5071 | 76.9078 |

Appendix IV: Coordinates of Retail Stores offering Toda Embroidery (Decimal Degrees)

| Sl.No. | Organizations | y | x |
|--------|--|----------|----------|
| 1 | Kotagiri Women's Cooperative Society, Kotagiri | 11.42502 | 76.86555 |
| 2 | Shalom, Ooty | 11.4023 | 76.70413 |
| 3 | Cairn Hill Eco Shop, Ooty | 11.38868 | 76.68393 |
| 4 | Toda's Primary Agricultural Co-operative Credit Society, Ooty | 11.41196 | 76.709 |
| 5 | Tribes India Store, Ooty | 11.41524 | 76.70934 |
| 6 | Toda Model Hut, Botanical Garden, Ooty | 11.41779 | 76.71076 |
| 7 | Kodanad View Point, Kotagiri | 11.5247 | 76.91569 |
| 8 | Green Shop, Coonoor | 11.34897 | 76.80051 |
| 9 | Green Shop, Kotagiri | 11.42308 | 76.86633 |

Appendix V: Individual Questionnaire

Respondent Details:

Village/Mund Name: Panchayat:Block:

District:Name of Respondent: Clan:.....

Gender: Marital Status: Married/ Unmarried

Educational Qualification: Relation with the head of the House:

Main Occupation of Head:Total Household Income.....

Land Assets.....

1) Household Details:

| Sl. No. | Name | Age | Sex | Relation with respondent | Whether involved in Craft. Y/N | Remarks |
|---------|------|-----|-----|--------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

2) Major sources of Income

| Cultivation | | Agricultural Labourers | | Household Industry | | Others | |
|-------------|----------|------------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|--------|----------|
| Main | Marginal | Main | Marginal | Main | Marginal | Main | Marginal |
| | | | | | | | |

If others, specify

Toda Embroidery

3) At what age did you learn the craft?:

4) Average working hours per week/day:

5) Nature of work: Regular/ Seasonal If Seasonal, when

6) Average monthly income from the craft:

7) Amount of work produced per week/ month:

8) Details of embroidery done:

| Sl No. | Product | Avg. Time taken |
|--------|---------|-----------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

- 9) Whether done individually/ In collaboration with any organization
- 10) Place of Production: NGO/ Home/ others:
- 11) Where do you sell your products?13) Distance:
- 14) Means of transport to place of sale:
- 15) Changes undergone by the craft:
- 16) Thoughts about commercialization of the craft.....
- 17) Thoughts on middlemen to sell products:
- 18) Changes that could be made:
- 19) Existing NGOs and Self-help groups working for the welfare of Toda Embroidery**

| Sl No. | Name of Organization | How long have you been working? | Remarks |
|--------|----------------------|---------------------------------|---------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

If others, specify.....

20) Government Programmes for Toda Embroidery

| Sl . No. | Name of Government Programme | Whether aware of it? Y/N | Whether Benefits availed? Y/N | Remarks |
|---------------------|---|---|--|----------------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Details of Credit/ Loans

- 21) Source and amounts of finance used: savings, remittances, friends/relatives, money lender, banks, others.....
- 22) Purpose of mobilizing credit
- 23) Terms and conditions for the transaction: repayment schedule (amount and period), type and value of collateral.....
- 24) Flexibility in repayment: repayment amounts, periods and rates of interest
- 25) No. of times a credit source was reused: source, amounts, reasons.
.....

Appendix VI: Questionnaire for organizations (NGOs, Self-helps)

- 1) Name of the Organization: 2) Location.....
- 3) Year of formulation:4) Founder(s):
- 5) Number of Toda artisans involved:
- 6) Which villages do the members belong to?
- 7) Number of Non-Toda workers:
- 8) Tasks undertaken by Non-Toda workers:
- 9) Average weekly wage per artisan:
- 10) How often do artisans produce their work:
- 11) How do you manage stock?
- 12) Where are raw materials sourced from:
- 13) Quantity and Quality of Raw materials:
- 14) Types of products made:
- 15) Type of support/assistance provided by the organization

| Production | Raw Material | Product Design | Machinery/ Tools | Output and Marketing | Credit |
|------------|--------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------|--------|
| | | | | | |

Others:

- 16) Mechanism of the organization
- 17) Sales Channels: Online/ Offline

| Offline Store/ Outlet | Online Store/ Website | Exhibition | Third-party Outlet | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------|--------------------|--|
| | | | | |

- 18) Main Exhibitions taken part in (if any).....

19) Promotion of Products:

Regional level:.....
 State Level:.....
 National Level.....
 International Level:.....

- 20) Best-selling products:
- 21) Outcome/ Average annual turnover:
- 22) Changes undergone in revenue over the years.....
- 23) Government initiatives.....
- 24) Terms and Conditions related to Cash and Kind.....
- 25) What are the challenges faced?
.....