Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Design system of Kolam Pattern

The study based on design system of Kolam pattern (Nagata, 2007) tried to find out the fundamentals in Kolam design and conversion of them into numbers and linear diagram. The Kolam is actually a tradition practiced in Tamil Nadu, South India. The paper consists of two points - first how Kolam is drawn through one stroke and secondly if one stroke has a structural feature or not.

The author has found that if Kolam follows certain rules it will lead to conversion in numbers and exhaustive computer analysis. The researcher also provides few samples in this paper. Later the researcher found that through linear diagram it is easy to put complicated Kolam in an easy way keeping the property of one stroke.

The author in his conclusion is able to prove his hypothesis and through few steps, it is easy to convert the complicated Kolam into an easily digitalized Kolam.

2.2 Floor art in different cultures

It is important to understand and signify imagery in the context of studying Kolam (Archana, 1985). A certain sense of dynamism and tension and an urge to transformation; an open endedness in principle and features within the context need to be clearly defined. Their parameters should be mapped out and their relative importance and interrelations need to be assessed through analysis of their repeated occurrence.

Each phenomenon is presented as an image that is through physical or mental sensations. An image represents an object. An object represents an experience. An experience represents a phenomenon. The perfect cosmic phenomenon is ordered or evoked in a ritual (Archana, 1985). The object is a symbol that is manifested. The image is personified or abstracted.
Civilizations function within the confines of its symbols. The symbols rooted in the immediate environment reflect the underlying patterns and nature of society and are specific to their ethnological and ecological context and their economic activity (Archana, 1985).

In Rural India, the forms and content of rituals are variegated. These variances are due to certain innate characteristics ‘...that are rooted in their immediate environment’ (Archana, 1985).

In a study on the languages of symbols Aryans introduced vratas as religious observances in order to absorb the local inhabitants. These vratas were accessible to all. They were practiced almost all over India under different forms. Rangoli in Maharashtra, chowka in Uttar Pradesh, muggus in Andhra Pradesh and Kolam in Tamil Nadu. Vratas are a kind of desire that is represented in images. They are sung or enacted, in order to be fulfilled. They are not just prayers or propitiations but are rooted in magic - a make-believe activity (Archana, 1985).

### 2.3 Kolam designs among the traditional Tamil women

The observation brings about the importance of Kolam designs among the traditional Tamil women. It showcases how, though, the Kolam designs bring out the culture of a woman it also hides the inner inhibitions that the women have to face in the course of their lives (Dohmen, 2001).

The methodology used in this research is that of observation as well as interview methods. By using these methods, the researcher tries to understand the importance of Kolam designs to the women as well as the significance that the designs hold to them. The women do not tire from this work, in spite of the fact that they do it twice a day, rather they take pride in the designs that they make.

The paper also talks about how the practice of the Kolam art has not been given much importance in the field of the media, where only certain publications cover this field. Moreover, it has been considerably ignored by scholars.

The author also links the nationalist stance of a woman and looks at how women in South India link their representations and bring out their thoughts and ideas through
these art forms. This is of utmost importance since the women’s voice often goes unheard in the patriarchal society. The colonial, as well as the Dravidian cultures, have generally defined a woman as a low culture or someone that is typically weak.

Thus, the author concludes this paper by saying that through such practices of the Kolam art designs women break these stereotypes of being someone who is uncultured and dependent. Further, the practice of Kolam by women breaks this stereotype that women cannot be creative.

2.4 Labyrinth Ritual in South India

This unique paper aims to find out the similarities between the threshold and tattoo designs of Malenesian Island of Malekula and the tattoo designs in Tamil Nadu province of South India. John Layard uses the qualitative methodology for his research and his source of data collection is a secondary source. He has two books as the sources of information. The first book is “Threshold Designs and Tattoo Patterns” printed in Chennai, which consists of the tattoo designs and patterns that women use during the harvest month of Margali. The second book is Kolam and it consists of hand drawn patterns of tattoo designs which are used by the Korava Community.

The author gives us the similarities between the beliefs behind drawing these patterns. He first points out at the Continuous - Line Technique. In South India, women draw these patterns before sunrise and these patterns are drawn on a surface which is already cleansed with water. The pattern is drawn with one continuous line. In Malekula too, the patterns are drawn with continuous lines. Here we again see the similarity in the technique of drawing these patterns. Another similarity which John Layard brings in is, in both the customs, in South India and Malekula, these patterns are drawn by women and men walk over it. In Malekula, the Female Guardian Ghost draws it and the dead man walks over it. The paper is full of examples where the author has successfully brought about similarities between the two communities.

With two books as his sources, John Layard has drawn similarities between the two communities and has concluded the paper with a few facts.

(a) The tattooers are always women, (b) the patterns are, like the threshold designs, connected with Ganesha and with averting the evil eye, (c) that they are regarded by
some as a “passport for the forgiveness of sins and for admission to heaven,” and (d) that the same designs are sometimes drawn on the ground (Layard, 1937).

2.5 Elements of worship in Hindu religion

This excerpt introduces us to the elements of the Hindu way of worship and how they follow certain rules and regulations to receive blessings from their respective deities. The article has been divided into two major sections - the elements of worship and from shrine to the temple. The study mainly focuses on the rituals, cultures, and traditions of the Hindu religion and the methods they use to garner the blessings from the deities. It also emphasizes on the fact that Hinduism revolves around the concept of reciprocity that one should give something and then wish for something in return. Consequently, people use divine gifts to please gods and hope to receive the desired blessings. The second section talks about the interiors of the temples and the mesmerizing facts about the temples and the shrines.

The Hindus follow very strict traditions especially with regard to the notion of purity and pollution. This is the reason that we see the Hindus purify themselves with water, through a bath, and only then visit a temple in clean clothes. At any occasion of pollution, we see that the Hindus have definite shlokas and mantras to purify the polluted space or person (Huyler, 1999).

In this book, the extensive use of Kolams, the distinct culture of Hindu traditions has been highlighted. The book also provides insight into the rigorous methods that are followed while practicing the religion.

2.6 Aesthetic and religious aspects of Kolam

The following article on Hindu reflection on Kolam presents a guide to Kolam and rangoli, its traditions meanings and interpretations. The article first draws a distinction between rangoli and Kolam. It enunciates the ingredients used in Kolam they being “rice flour dry and wet is used to apply Kolam, and in some instances sand, lime and wet red soil for borders”. The article then throws light on why these patterns capture ones attention “its beauty lies in its ability to be ever fresh and lively and because of its impermanent nature” (Srinivasan, 2011).
The main orchestrators of Kolam are women, and it was considered as a qualification for marriage. Kolam also draws competition among the youth in order to get plaudits for their designs. Applying Kolam before any festivities is considered to be very auspicious. It is also believed that this practice tends to ward off evil and negative energies from the households.

The article goes on to compare Kolam with the lakhsman rekha (a reference to the Ramayana). And also says that “Older generation of Indians believed that it drove away disturbance, disease, discord while establishing peace, understanding, and good health when dedicated to the Lord.” Kollam is also seen as an offering to the birds and ants hence those ingredients are used and displayed outside the house.

Finally the article talks about the inception of the art, and says it existed throughout the Vedic times when sudharma was instructed by a rishi to use the powder of white stones to decorate his house, and he did so by drawing patterns of “the sun and the moon, the swastika, the tulsi vrindaavan and the Lord's blessed feet.”

2.7 Materializing and embodying rhythms in Kolam patterns

The research work on Kolam patterns as materialisation and embodiment of rhythms (Laine, 2013) argues that the rhythmical aspects of the Kolam practice, which concern its multifaceted relations to extraordinary events, daily life, and embodied skills, need to be presented through sound and moving images in order to be grasped by non-practitioners. The study finds out that the images materialise and embody the rhythm of the day. The performance is organised into a regularity of flows defined by weekly, monthly and annual circumstances related to the rhythm of planets and the following seasons. According to a weekly rhythm, Kolam is also made in front of deities, in temples as well as at altars in homes and at offices. An intersecting rhythm is defined by life cycles of individual household members.

It also talks about the feminine rhythms associated with Kolam. From a Hindu perspective, the energy that rhythmically moves time and space are divine. The energy is understood as shakti (or Prakriti). Shakti is a name of The Goddess, as well as a term that is translated as power. In this context, it is particularly linked to divine female power or energy, and characterised by a capacity to both create and destroy. Male gods
depend on shakti in order to act, as the male principle Purusha is passive in opposition to the female active principle Prakriti. All women are considered to embody shakti and thus share the capacities of The Goddess. Through Kolam making, women channel the divine energy into social life, and many of them hold that shakti is the source of their skills in Kolam making. Learning to make Kolams is a rhythmical mode of becoming a feminine being. Girls develop into womanhood as they participate in Kolam drawing, cooking and other female responsibilities. Towards the end, Anna Laine examines how the experiential aspects of Kolam rhythms can be conveyed more strongly through the video than in this text.

The study explores the rhythmic aspects of Kolam practice, how it is associated with females and how visual rhythms can be integrated with and broken up by aural rhythms, and how these movements can evoke spatiotemporal experience.

2.8 Kolam in Tamil Christian tradition

Kolam in Tamil Christian tradition (Granziera, Christianity and Tamil Culture: Father Joseph Beschi and the Image of the Virgin Mary, 2011) examines the image and identity created for Virgin Mary in the works of art by Costanzo Giuseppe Beschi. These works of art include both the regional Tamil poems and artistic representations crafted in two places of devotion namely Konankuppam and Tanjore. The study involves subtle elements of Indianization in faith. For example, when a saree is given to Mother Mary by the devotee. The ‘otherness’ of Tamil faith is skilfully reduced with specific focus being given to elements that can be incorporated. The study also draws parallels with the theory of newer forms of protests.

Kolams are believed to bring prosperity to houses and in a similar way Virgin Mary in South India, specifically Tamil Nadu, is also connected through a series of signifiers like royal silk, precious jewels and garlands of flowers. Mary is presented in contrast with most village deities who are portrayed as militants or in a war against bad deeds. Mary, thus, becomes a symbol of peace and prosperity. The prosperity factor is also in parallel with the positive change signified in Kolam art.

In the poems, there exists a striking similarity between Sri Lakshmi and Mother Mary. Lotus, rising from purity and peace etc are elements that define both the deities. The
visual representation and poetic creativity, thus, played a key role in Mother Mary as a source of worship and immense devotion to the millions.

2.9 Sona drawing

A sona drawing (Liu, 2010) is an art form where people draw on the sand with their fingers. It is mostly practiced in Africa as a custom by several communities. It consists of a single curve which starts at one point and ends up at the same point. They are drawn without taking away the finger from the sand and, most importantly, no over-drawing is allowed. This art form has a lot of similarities with the art of India, specifically to the Kolam drawing seen in South India. Kolam is also drawn by using hands. They use the rice powder to draw Kolam on the ground. In this research paper, “Visual Art as Research: Explorations with Sona Drawings”, the author Yang Liu describes his personal perspective into visual art research involving the exploration, extension, and generalization of the traditional sona drawings of Angola and their application to his artwork. Liu equally gives importance to sona drawing and Kolam drawing.

Through this research paper, the author is pointing out the cross-cultural and interdisciplinary approaches to studio art and art education. It distinctively talks about the relation of science and art in terms of geometry, graph theory, and topology. Liu also gives a detailed and systematic study of the Kolam and sona drawings. Even though he talks about Kolam, more importance is given to the sona drawing which may have affected the conclusion of his paper. The inclusion of geometry, length and breadth of lines gives an authority to this paper. Similarly, with the visual representation that Liu has used in his paper gives an insight into the rigorous methodology that has been followed in formulating this paper.

2.10 Women and their role in art education and social sustainability

The experts (Arthur, Asante, & Opoku-Asare, 2011) say that Mural Art is not practiced that much by African Women but they still employ traditional values, symbols, and geometric combinations. Mural being derived from Latin yet practiced in Africa with a range of abstract ideas. In examining the cultural, symbolic and aesthetic aspects of this unique art form, the paper demonstrates, using findings based on a qualitative research
approach, how it not only empowers its practitioners as artists but also plays an influential role in the region’s socio-economic development.

The Sirigu community consists of five villages. The area is well known for its striking traditional architecture, pottery and mural paintings. The study focuses primarily on a detailed description of the art of Sirigu women, and on the interpretation of its cultural and aesthetic significance. The murals made by the indigenous Sirigu women are a unique expression of the cultural identity of the ethnic Kassena-Nankana people. It was observed that the women take pride in decorating the houses built by their husbands with strikingly crafted paintings based on traditional patterns. Paintings sometimes contain abstract geometrical figures that have local symbolic meanings. Sirigu mural making is a rich resource for art education, highlighting the careful use of universal principles of design such as harmony, rhythm, and variety as well as elements of design peculiar to Sirigu mural art.

It has emerged clearly from the research that the Sirigu women carry considerable cultural wealth and power in their role as artists and storytellers. Their paintings are mirrors reflecting their indigenous traditions and socio-cultural identity. The study also provides insight into the significant role the artists play in cultural and social sustainability.

2.11 Kolam patterns and rhythms

The given article on Kolam patterns as materialisation and embodiment of rhythms (Laine, 2013) talks about Lefebvre’s theory of rhythm, the relation between external rhythms (e.g. Kolam) and internal rhythms (i.e. bodily rhythms) in one’s life and the way in which it influences everything surrounding our very being. Rhythm is an interaction between time, space and energy. The rhythms keep flowing in and out of life and are related to each other. “To grasp a rhythm it is necessary to have been grasped by it.” Lefebvre tried to explain the theory of “rhythm” through the understanding of Kolam. He adds that the patterns of Kolam reflect rhythm as well. The internal bodily rhythms go hand in hand with the Kolam patterns which becomes quite evident while making the Kolam. Further, he discusses the rhythmic aspects of the Kolam practice which is related to the daily life and embodied skills.
The Kolam maker’s anthropological knowledge can be conveyed through Kolam-patterns. The knowledge represents various understandings of the Hindu practices through Kolam with respect to energy that moves time and space.

The Kolams found at the entrances of houses in Tamil Nadu materializes the rhythm of the day. The rhymes are also defined by weekly, monthly and annual circumstances with respect to planets and seasons. The Kolams also reflect the mood of the people/community. As in, during auspicious events like marriage or temple festivals, women draw large and intricate Kolams, but during events like death, no Kolam is made. Large Kolam is a symbol of happiness whereas no Kolam is a symbol of sorrow.

In Hindu religion, people believe that planets dominate the human life substantially. In order to refrain from certain omens, people draw Kolams. The nine planets are known as Navagrahas. These planets are a symbol of nine gods with the sun in the middle. These planets are worshiped as Gods by the women who draw particular Kolams representing particular Gods in the same way they walk around idols in the temples-nine times.

The nine gods are pleased accordingly to refrain from having a bad influence on lives. For eg, to please Sanni/Shanni, the Saturn God, women feed him rice with sesame seeds and the same seeds are used in the Kolam as well. To please Chandran, the moon God, the time is divided into auspicious and inauspicious. During the inauspicious time, no Kolam is made, but as the time subsides and auspicious time takes over, the activity of Kolam making is resumed.

The Kolam is also made according to the time period of the day. People belonging to the Brahmin Caste have their own time of making Kolams. They consider the earning morning hours as the most auspicious time for making Kolam.

And eventually, the article talks about how the rhythms of Kolam inspire the life of people. The rhythms of Kolam also reflect the life cycles of the house members. The absence of Kolam is considered to be an inauspicious phenomenon, whereas the enlarged sizes define the auspiciousness.

With respect to feminine rhythms, women believe that a feminine energy(Shakti) is their source of skill in Kolam making. Kolam making is an act of feminine being. It has
great implications for women. The better they are at making Kolams, the more they are considered as skillful wives.

2.12 Kolam as a reflection of women’s complex relations with identity and power

The writer in his thesis “Art of Longing and Belonging- Kolam as a Reflection of Women’s Complex Relations with Identity and Power in Contemporary India” explores an interesting angle on the connection between the art and practice of Kolam in the southern part of India and the metaphorical meanings it exudes about how women through their art exert their identity in a patriarchal society.

The researcher through his ethnological studies and observations essentially talks about how women in the households practice Kolam on a regular basis as a part of their daily rituals or chores which have a more complex significance than that may occur on the surface. More than the aesthetic appeal, Kolam is made by women on the belief of its ability to summon prosperity for the household and at the same time to ward off evils. The thesis is a rich amalgamation of first-hand stories personally narrated by the women of the region. Based on these stories, the researcher establishes how practicing Kolam by middle-class women in an urban society gives them a sense of belonging (Smit, 2013).

An anomaly which the researcher spots in his research is the use of new materials and forms used in Kolam practices, like stickers which reflect how Kolam practices are constantly evolving in terms of material, techniques and style. It also reflects on how these modifications have subsequently transformed the women’s role and is slowly bereaving them away from their identity while drawing the Kolam. The thesis on the whole talks about socio-economic transformations going hand in hand with the upliftment of women and how it has enabled them to surpass the gender barriers.

Auke Smit concludes his research by establishing that women are, just like the self-contained dots in a Kolam, part of a larger framework, in which gender, class and caste intersect.

Women are bound to perform their identities which are burdened with responsibilities and sacrifices, keeping both their families and society content.
2.13 Understanding of the Muggu

Threshold drawings (Kilambi, 1985) are a type of drawing which is done on the ground. These drawings are of various types. While some are used on a daily basis others are used strictly for certain ceremonies. One will also understand that different places in India have different terms for this type of art. The author states that in the northern part of India, in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra this type of drawing is called as Rangoli, in Bengal it is called Alpona and in the Southern part of India in Hyderabad it is known as Muggu and in Kerala and Tamil Nadu it is known as Kolam. The manner in which the drawings are done is very much different than each other. In North India, Rangoli is done mainly during the festivals and occasions like marriage, childbirth etc. In South India, it is made every morning. Other such comparisons are also made by the author in this paper. This custom is still followed in many parts of India both in the day to day lives and also for special ceremonies. The designs are done by a compilation of auspicious objects and elements.

The author sheds some light on the features of ‘muggu’. She adds that it takes place before or at sunrise. The ground on which the drawings are traced should be purified. The threshold is the only place where the muggu are drawn. Muggu is always drawn with white powder. No attempt is made by the people, who draw this, to preserve the drawings; they are almost immediately walked upon. According to the author a fascinating mythological link of the mugger's being drawn at sunrise is explored in the paper.

Muggu explores symbolic and auspicious elements that are still practiced in both urban and rural areas. Each symbol gives a stimulating insight and tells us a different story. People today have been adopting contemporary designs into the traditionalized muggu which is very crucial to the importance of Kolam design in the present scenario.

2.14 Women, art education and social sustainability

The experts say that Mural Art is not practiced that much by African Women but they still employ traditional values, symbols, and geometric combinations. Even though Mural has been derived from Latin it is widely practiced in Africa with a range of abstract ideas. In examining the cultural, symbolic and aesthetic aspects of this unique
art form, we will demonstrate, using findings based on a qualitative research approach, how it not only empowers its practitioners as artists but also plays an influential role in the region’s socio-economic development (Asare, Appau, & Afia, 2011).

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It has emerged clearly from the research that the Sirigu women carry considerable cultural wealth and power in their role as artists and storytellers. Their paintings are mirrors reflecting their indigenous traditions and socio-cultural identity. The study also provides insight into the significant role the artists play in cultural and social sustainability.

2.15 Women’s lives, women’s rituals in the Hindu traditions

This compilation of works of five authors primarily focuses on the lives of women within and outside their domestic boundaries. It also speaks of Hindu rituals that are specific to women while the Hindu practices were male-centric in all spheres (Pintchman, 2007).

The fifth chapter ‘Threshold Designs, Forehead Dots, and Menstruation Rituals: Exploring Time and Space in Tamil Kolams’ written by Vijaya Rettakudi Nagarajan explores the ways that women’s religious practices traverse boundaries. The focus of this chapter is the relationship between Kolams, auspicious designs that women create daily at the entrance of their homes, and pottus, the auspicious red dots that adorn Tamil women’s foreheads.
Nagarajan, in this chapter, argues that the Kolam and the pottu are parallel ritual expressions that embody auspiciousness and inauspiciousness. Both Kolam and pottu mark thresholds, those of the home and the body, and the erasure of the pottu and the absence of Kolam indicates one’s menstruation and their subsequent reappearance indicate the completion of the period of menses.

Pottu and Kolam both act as the embodiments of the status of married women as auspicious householders. This message of auspiciousness is sent beyond the household, even to the larger communities in which female Hindu householders are a part of.

2.16 Existence and the integrity of Kolam designs and patterns

The researcher Gift Siromoney discusses existence and the integrity of Kolam designs and patterns found in Tamil Nadu. The research also throws light upon the similarities and differences between the designs found in tradition Kolam designs and the designs and carvings found in various Buddhist and Jain temples of South Kanara district of Karnataka. Further, it puts light on the techniques used to create such patterns. Kolam designs are intricately done using lines and dots. The researcher also mentions that Kolam patterns are a relatively newer concept and that he was unable to find any mentions of them in ancient Tamil texts and literature (Siromoney, 1978).

It is learned that in villages and rural areas, the floor is smoothened by sprinkling it with a mixture of cow dung and water. After this, rice powder is carefully used to draw beautiful designs in a symmetrical order. The researcher has also said that different designs are used for different days and elaborate designs are reserved for festivals and special occasions. Some of the designs are Tantric in nature. These designs referred to as yantras can also be seen inscribed on stones set up by those practicing black magic.

The researcher has also mentioned that mathematical properties are used to create Kolam patterns. Studies have shown that these Kolam designs are drawn mainly by the women folk. About three-fourths of women were found to use the old patterns but there were others who designed new patterns using the traditional ideas with a modern twist. In this paper, we also come across new patterns, including those taken from embroidery design books, that were used. Some used coloured powder to fill in the designs and such designs are called rangoli in Tamil Nadu. Some put in a message in English and
call it "English Kolam" which is an interesting perspective to the hypothesis of my project.

The researcher says that many women use devices such as perforated rolling tubes and perforated trays in order to save time in "drawing" the Kolam. These devices help make the Kolam in a systematic, yet original way. They in no way spoil the authenticity or the antiquity of the Kolam design. The Kolam designer uses rice powder which is later consumed by ants - a traditional form of feeding them.

Along with its decorative purposes, Kolam has proven to be a deeply rooted aspect of the everyday lives of people of Tamil Nadu. Thus, one can understand that it has been in their culture for the past few centuries.

2.17 Inside and outside space

The study on inside and outside space refers to a unique type of employment as it is highly dependent on the nature of the employee. Thereby, one can comprehend that the relations developed through such employment are also one of its kinds. According to the existing studies on domestic service in different cultures, the tension in the relationship is because of the intimacy that is developed between the employee and employers’ family and the difference in class and hierarchies that are developed through work, which is also necessary to maintain.

The concept of inside and outside space can be categorised on the grounds of family/non-family, close/distant, safe/unsafe, protected/unprotected, or private/public. In Tamil households, the distinction of inside and outside space is very evident. One sees that with the Tamil culture, women must identify themselves as the symbolism of the proper woman by keeping herself confined to the inside, even when she is moving out in public. Even the spaces outside the home, can be taken into consideration as an inside space when a long period of time has been spent outside. This inside or known space can become the outside space when there is an intrusion of an unknown identity; for instance, when a religious group intrudes in the familiar streets, the streets appear to be different and unknown (Sara, 2000).

The inside space can also be related to the concerns of purity and privacy. This can especially be seen when it comes to one’s caste and status. Higher the caste, greater is
the concern for purity. In many Brahmin homes, different areas are marked as space of purity. The place where a holy plant is put, the kitchen, or the food storage area, the area of worship is all places of purity. On the other hand, the dining area and the bedroom mark the area of privacy, where the family members can have their private conversations. The bedroom is also considered private as it is a place for storage of expensive artefacts and ornaments such as gold jewellery or silk sarees.

The servants also play a key role in defining the inside and outside spaces. It depends on what they bring in the house and what they take out of the house. They can bring in habits, diseases, disorder, dirt, language and can take out valuable information or things in the form of theft or gossip. The employers have to put enough thought into selecting a servant which would not breach the boundaries of their household. With the increased level of intimacy with the family members, the servants have the access to crucial information they can spread outside the house. With the dirt that they bring in, they affect the cleanliness of the home. Cleanliness is a crucial marker of a privileged home.

Gossip also poses a great threat to the family, as the information about the family is guarded against the outsiders as it marks the reputation of the family. Prestige or honour states the class or standard of the family. One of the greatest threats to reputation is the information that servants pass on to other servants and the households they work in. The servants’ movements into private spaces such as in bedrooms are restricted and wardrobes are locked and servants’ honesty is tested.

As mentioned earlier, concerns with purity are greater among higher castes, who have a proportionately higher depiction among the middle and upper classes. The home is represented by women as the symbol of family values. Women are responsible for producing these values. Men, as well as women, act on the ideological principles that women reproduce by caring for their homes in such manner.

2.18 Indian temple tradition

The research paper talks about the unique feature of human beings in creating culture. Man believes that the culture can guard him against every tensions and stress. He creates icons that help him face the challenges of his busy and stressful life. The paper also talks about how fear has always been a part of religion. In the various expressions
of religion such as rituals, ceremonies, shrines, magical cult etc the images and icons go together. The tendency of image making which represents religion has been discovered early in his career. Man's creativity furthered the cause of religion and art (Rao R., 1980).

2.19 The mystery of Indian floor paintings

The Article on The Mystery of Indian Floor Paintings (Dutta, 2011) tries to investigate if there is any underlying meaning behind the alpona or the floral decorations. However before that, the article explores the pan–Indian local vocabulary of these floor paintings. It also traces the colloquial meaning of the word in each vernacular language, which helps in understanding the origin of the very concept. The etymological understanding of the word alpona is also discussed in this paper. The history of these floral paintings is traced back to Mohenjo-Daro. These drawings are rich with symbolism and sacred meaning. Based on the appearance and regional application of these floral arts, these arts are divided into two: the ones that are drawn in the mountain terrains and the others in the plains and the fertile regions of the country. However, in the south there is yet another set, floral and geometrical. The most commonly used motif like the circle and the square have symbolic meanings. Circle has been used to represent the universe while the Square represents the culture. The upward pointing triangle, like a mountain, represents stability and the eternal male element within us. The downward pointing triangle, like a waterfall, represents the unstable physical elements which are transient.

The article also refers to the underlying meanings behind the worship of Naga or snake in the Hindu tradition. Some floral designs also reflect this tradition and speak about the importance of the Naga in the life of people. Lord Vishnu and Lakshmi are the two Gods mostly worshiped using motifs. The pot, representing the container of personal wealth is also a popular motif. Connection to fertility and abundance is also seen in the symbolic use of colours. The use of folk art in these floral designs is also discussed in the article which is very insightful to the larger study.

2.20 Caste system and practices in Tamil Nadu

The study on Caste System And Caste Practices In Tamil Country (Kumarasami & Gnanavel, 2012) highlights the caste discrimination and caste practices of Tamil Nadu.
India from inception has been a country ruled by caste issues and through this paper, he talks about origin, practices and discriminations that revolve around the caste system.

Caste was a term which was derived from the Portuguese and was used to designate the different tribes or classes into which the people of India were divided. It has been variously described as Kudi or Kulam in Tamil. This evil practice, of Caste System, was the product of the slow evolution of people who were in different stages of development, different levels of civilization and consequently were of different skin colors and physiognomy. The authors, then, highlight the various castes that are present in the society and how each caste has to indulge in a specific vocation. Eg: Only Brahmins could be teachers and purohits. The authors then talks about the castes: Brahmins, Vellalas, Mukkalathors, Kallars, Malavars, Agamudiar and others.

Talking about the various castes and how each caste practices a certain career and path, the paper concludes urging people to look beyond this social evil of Casteism and work for the social development of the society.

2.21 Ritual art of India

The history of ritual dates back to the Vedas (Mookerjee, 1998). The Vedas tries to establish the relationship between the performers of the ritual during the performance. The texts like Vedas validate the ritual and the rituals performed in India involve a lot of artistic elements and also aesthetics thereby enabling us to define Indian art as a ritual. One comprehends that it was only over a period of time, during the post-Vedic movement, that the, aesthetic path to liberation emerged.

Ritual art is a means or way which enables us to realize our oneness with the world around us. Traditionally Indian ritual art is a way of unification of the vital principle. While on the other hand western religious art majorly deals with answers that have been institutionalised.

Indian ritual art is more to do with the relationship between the artist and the medium; it involves a cosmic connection which helps in unification and invokes a highly meaningful work of art.
The author, in his introduction to “Ritual Art of India”, explores how every art form in India has its roots in rituals. Indian rituals, he says, are generally performed to “invoke and propitiate deities, exorcise negative forces, to celebrate rites of passage or mark turning points in the cycle of death and renewal rituals create a focus and compacts energy.” Rituals are performed at weddings, deaths, consecration of the womb, naming of the child, child’s first solid food, education, shaving of the child for the first time and the list is endless. Almost everything in India is ritualistic and systematic including meditation and yoga too.

Art in India is just like a ritual where every offering made must be the purest and the finest of its kind. The main objective of ritual art is to create harmony and moreover to celebrate harmony and community. The author also relates art to the central unifying of all India’s spiritual concept of “kriya.” The kriya of art making is highly ritualistic, elaborate and is harmonious.

Rituals are of several kinds. It ranges from object worship to mental reverence and to transcendental worship. One thing that is common in all these kinds of rituals is the element of human experience. Rituals draw heavy influence from myths and answers to several rituals can be drawn from myths too.

The whole process of performing certain rites and rituals is so artistic that first an icon is created, then life is filled into by various chants and offerings and then when the worshipper enters after a process of cleansing and explores himself through the whole process of the ritual. Finally to conclude we can say the practice of a ritual gives rise to a new phenomenon and the difference between the sacred and profane disappears thereby enabling a ritual to develop a symbolic language which is highly artistic and unique.

2.22 Art as metaphor of mind

Wolkenkuckucksheim (Weissensteiner & Freksa, 2012) is a site-specific interactive computer system which is developed by the Cognitive Systems Group at the University of Bremen, Germany. This has been created and shaped by the artist in partnership with the scientists living there in the university namely Professors Falko Schimid and Freksa. Elisabeth Weissensteiner is a noted artist whose interest is all about studying the syntax
of space and the semantics of materials. The scientists, however, do a research on the cognitive propositions of the computing. This essay explains that the artist uses the interactive technology as well as the theory of cognition as a source for the metaphor that is playful as well as ironic. This project is very special because it brings together the artistic way of creating metaphors and the scientific way of theoretical inquiry. This article emphasizes on how the artist and the scientist display a dialogic way to complement each other by working with the same cognitive elements. Art is, here, subjected to a scientific inquiry and also becomes a driving force for creating the mental images.

The article highlights the point that the images do not always carry fixed meanings and the mind creates different narratives. To come to a conclusion, several minds are required to agree upon what they have understood. In Wolkenkuckucksheim, the images on the screen change slowly. This change is, however, slow and subtle. The image change occurs across the entire image at the same time. The image understanding is, therefore, a gradual process. In our first sight, we may not see the image properly but it becomes prominent when we do recognize it.

The Wolkenkuckucksheim possesses individuality and does not become a model for the cognitive phenomenon. Instead, it leads the observer into an uncertain, self-driven and interpretive imagination and it gives a space for an experience that is new and creative. In the light of this article, Kolam can be seen as an image that can be subjected to scientific inquiry. Kolam with its dots and lines possesses a movement within which the viewer can recognise it. The viewer can observe the Kolam as one whole art or see the parts in continuity. The Kolam can also be seen as a metaphor, explaining more than the meaning it conveys, since it has something more to it than what meets the eye.

2.23 Kolams as ritual, art and ecology

Kolam art is used to communicate different concepts (Nagarajan V. R., 1998). The practice that is commonly followed by women can be used to mark space and time. It, therefore, shares these qualities with another tradition seen in South India – the art of applying pottu (red dot) on the forehead by women. Thus, the author suggests that the act of marking space in a house or a woman’s forehead is one and the same thing and is applicable to be used as a metaphor.
Kolam and *pottu* share certain aspects that make them similar, such as, the ability of them to have dual meanings – the presence and absence of a state of a being in the house as well as the body. Kolam mostly indicates the auspiciousness or inauspiciousness of time, interactions between people from within the household as well as different households and a woman’s menstrual cycle.

Kolam helps gives cues to those who visit the household on how to behave. The presence of Kolam at a doorstep indicates openness and is filled with positive energy that flows from the woman who made it to the guest who passes over or around it. This would be an indication that the household is happy to receive gifts. Moreover, the absence of it has harsh connotations such as a prediction of the death of a family member or suffering in the household. Thus, people entering the house might be prepared to comfort the members.

Similarly, presence and absence of *pottu* indicate how a woman should be treated, whether as a child, sister, married woman, a widow, Hindu or of other faiths etc. The red dot is also associated with a woman’s duty towards her husband. The presence of it ensures him a long, healthy life while the absence of it ensures death. Often, a menstruating woman does not make Kolam as it is considered to be inauspicious for the house. Except for when a girl menstruates for the first time or when a child is born which is ironically an auspicious moment in the household. Thus, Kolam is deeply involved with the woman’s state of being in the house. Therefore, one can comprehend that there are moral, cultural and social connotations to this art form.

Kolam marks spaces like shrines, temples, and thresholds of the houses. Shrines placed in the kitchen, where the woman cooks, are the spiritual core of the house. Kolams on the front of the house creates a distinction between what’s private and what is public; the known and the unknown. The other significant understanding that Kolam marks time is also discussed in the paper. For example, Kolam is drawn before the sun rises as a call to the Gods. This is an auspicious timing similar to the one during the Pongal festival that signifies good harvest. The month of Markali (beginning of the day for the Gods) is considered an auspicious time to go on a pilgrimage or to die as access to Gods is more open. Different designs of Kolam are drawn during special periods depending on the family’s caste and traditions.
2.24 Visual metaphor

Hypotheses of cognition have experienced a radical change in the last few decades. It is no more seen as a free process because the contemporary perspective places the mental capacities connected with cognizance as one component (Morey, 2011). Within this system, insight does not exist without nature, social associations, emotions, and feelings. The cognitive researcher or cognitive therapist who does not maintain to be an interactionist or connectionist is uncommon. The investigation of representation includes various fields in late history from cognitive neuroscience to semantics. Visual analogy research possesses an underrepresented region of the request. With the improvement of the cognitive sciences, a cognitive perspective of allegorical intuition is developing. This calls for a re-examination of visual representation in the acts of specialists and prompts my focal exploration inquiry: Is there a reasonable structure to the formation of visual analogies by craftsmen that nearly adjusts to the cognitive perspective of allegorical considering.

This request concentrated on a specific situation and a few number of craftsmen members included with a particular display space, the Pearl Street Gallery, in Brooklyn, New York. The arguments installed in the system of my examination issue, and the members drove me to select phenomenography as a fundamental piece of the methodology to the study. This study included subjective information accumulation techniques from which the information was dissected and deciphered. The manifestations of information accumulation included perceptions, recorded meetings, recording, shooting, a display and fine arts. Also, the incorporation of different points of view was seen as a positive trait of phenomenography, particularly with the multitude of hypothetical points of view that educated this investigation of visual allegory in craftsmanship.

This study was made in four stages: In stage one, a consortium of four specialists was recognized through an open door specimen to plan and embrace a gathering craftsman display at the Pearl Street Gallery in Brooklyn. These essential craftsmen members were occupied with forming the display into a craftsman run space for shows, and I knew them through the past joint efforts at the exhibition. The specialists met to team up on presentation and investigated the associations with the examination question. Some piece of the coordinated effort was enlistment of different specialists for the
presentation and study. In stage two, all participating craftsmen were talked with utilizing a convention at their studios preceding the display. For the third stage, the craftsmen had a month-long show at the Pearl Street Gallery. Amid the presentation, every craftsman was met in the exhibition. This meeting was semi-organized to focus on reactions from the first meeting and new inquiries identifying with the show. Amid the fourth stage, the third round of meetings was led. These were semi-organized to receive a feedback on the experience of the show and study.

2.25 Art and metaphor

The study examines (Parsons, 2010) how visual metaphors together makes a visual art and how the art can be understood by identifying these visual metaphors just as one interprets a linguistic content. To prove his argument he has used the work of Lakoff & Johnson who has claimed the same argument in general. Parsons claims that a visual image can have several or mixed metaphors. He has completed this paper by providing a strong proof with the help of several examples.

Metaphors are used to suggest similarities between two subjects or ideas. In linguistic works linguistic metaphors are used to convey or portray an idea by using words that convey the similarity. In the visual images, visual metaphors, such as various symbols or structures, are used in a way that it resembles an object or an idea. By reading through these metaphors one can easily interpret the art or image in the proper manner.

Example: Usage of the colour black. This is used virally in advertisements. The author has used several examples illustrating this phenomenon.

Metaphors are originated from experience and these metaphors make the viewer see or read through the content with respect to the similar experiences or meanings he has come across in the past. The viewer connects every symbol and sign with a meaning and applies it to interpret the content. This paper would be fruitful in furthering the metaphorical understanding of Kolam.

2.26 Role of metaphor in art therapy

Through the book, *The Role of Metaphor in Art Therapy*, the author (Moon, 1995) intends to explain the concept of metaphors and its relation to art. The chapter starts
with a folk tale to make readers aware of the term “metaphor”, and the importance of understanding metaphors as a two-way communication. There are many advantages of being aware of metaphors than explaining concepts in its literal sense. They strike a chord with the listener and help in retention. Further, in psychotherapy, they are an accurate test of the clients’ mental state as the meaning derived from the metaphors are interpretations of their own and they are an enjoyable experience for both parties.

The author also explains the advantages of metaphors with respect to the topic at hand i.e. art therapy. Since artworks are meant to stimulate one’s mind, they are a great way to stimulate the artistic tendencies of the patient. They are also less threatening than traditional methods of therapy in addition to being more adept at the unleashing inner turmoil and psychological issues which are expressed through creating works of art using layers representing these issues. Here, Moon gives an example of a client who made a painting of his favourite childhood fairy tale and upon further analysis came to the realization that his painting depicted his relationship with his overbearing father in his childhood. Another interesting point that the author makes is that art therapy typically has three participants viz. the client, the therapist and the artwork itself. The art therapist and the client both build a rapport with each and foster a healthy relationship.

But the author refutes his own points by explaining the criticism faced by most proponents of art therapy. There are others who treat this kind of treatment as non-sense and averse to the traditional timed method of therapy. But he also rebuts the critics stating that Aristotle too was a supporter of using metaphors.

In the Chapter Rituals as Enacted Metaphor, Moon bases many religious rituals on metaphors such as the action of breaking bread as a translation of the metaphor of Jesus’ brokenness. He also says that sporting rituals such as coin toss, first pitches and end-of-game are also metaphorical actions with much deeper meaning attached to them. Since the author is an art therapist himself, he relies on the rituals himself before and after his sessions. This gives an insight into the mind of one who follows the metaphorical method and an in-depth understanding of the reasons behind following a ritualistic pattern.
2.27 Creative space

The focus of this chapter (Duxbury & Murray, 2009) is on the innovative planning along various groups, land uses, residential forms, associating to create inventive areas in an urban environment. Creative space-making could be observed in different dynamic, consistent domains, ideas, preparation and policy, and on-the-ground entrepreneurialism. As new configurations and practices of inventive space, development emerges, varied degrees of ‘misalignment’, friction and separation among these domains become evident. Both, as a context and a collection of dynamics, for the release and production of cultural expression, economic process erodes certainty. Places for expression are driven by a necessity for accumulation in abundant new creative economy thinking so that the style of the place, contextualization, and aesthetics of house become productive factors in understanding creative thinking and innovation.

Cultural geographic, urban planning and new thinking about the world flows from the inventive economy gifting basic opportunities for many cities and smaller communities who are literally enacting “processes of repluralisation”. Essentially communities reinvent their economic base, several others are also thinking about a way to construct and stand-in spirited inventive areas as a resource- for production, rehearsal, performance or exhibition of recent genres, new inventive works or new practices. The conceptual underpinnings of creative spaces, as physically embedded places, are where creative production, exhibition and consumption occur. It examines a knowledge production process consisting of ideas, planning, and policy. Culture is gradually changing into an area of this vision and dissertation. Culture as a key dimension of property is thinly distributed however pervasive the plan for community development and property literature. It has been historically discussed in terms of cultural capital and outlined as ‘traditions and values, heritage and place, the arts, diversity and social history’.

The authors discusses a ‘cultural ecology’ approach to design; or natural artistic areas inside communities of any scale that are artistic and holistic, and supportive to each physical and social infrastructure. Artistic space-making as a policy sub-field should adequately incorporate problems with vicinity, sociality, cultural diversity, and equity whereas linking dissimilar skilled vocabularies or grammars of space.
2.28 Culture as the designer

The article ‘Culture as the Designer’ written by Das (Das, 2005), says that the biological instability and increasing insecurity in people motivated them to structure an environment of different beliefs, knowledge, objects and practices. Men have this tendency to create different levels of beliefs among them. In the study of human culture as an ongoing human activity, by Peter L Berger, there are three steps in dialect process of society. According to the meta-theoretic consideration in Indian culture, it strives to create social stability to children and also provides them to reflect as they grow older on the illusory nature of physical and mental reality. It is all about knowing the nature of consciousness which is the basis of everything in the universe.

The author talks about building the three blocks of the society which include the sadhus. He says that a sadhu is held with such awesome love that, when society abuses a sadhu, even Vishnu needs to resurrect on earth to restore request. A sadhu is a social revolt; he has rejected society. He strives to free himself from social moulding and lives on. Through renunciation, this individual moves far from families and spends the vast majority of the genuine nature of self. Sadhus continuously are deserving of love. Arnold Toynbee calls them the social rebels who eventually develop as imaginative pioneers to revive society. It is these sadhus who give a parsimonious hidden string to the outline of the Indian man-made environment.

Das also says that Ramayana and Mahabharata are the two Indian epics which taught the culture to Indian society.

Further, the paper also talks about the different types of needs in our day to day life and also discusses the Physical, Philosophical, and Social needs. In the conclusion of the paper, Das mentions that there are two things in the world. One is Prakrit- the nature and the other is Sanskrit- the culture. Designers are not treated as demigods. They are seen as part of the culture. Das also extends his conclusion by saying that the design in all cultures depends on a meta-theoretical framework subscribed to a culture.

2.29 Space, desire, and gender in Tamil Cankam Poetry

This interdisciplinary work (Selby, 2011) explores how people in the Tamil region of India think about space and land, and how it, in turn, influences the creation of the social
and aesthetic world they live in. The contributors focus on the notion of geography in its strictest sense, on verbal descriptions of land and space and how these descriptions build and inform diverse social cum aesthetic realities. The essay examines “texts” drawn from a range of time periods and a variety of sources in Tamil culture, including imaginative literature, historical events and narratives, religious rituals, and daily life in contemporary Tamil Nadu. The book clearly demonstrates the ways in which early Tamil aesthetic and linguistic paradigms have survived to the present as living, vital expressions through which contemporary boundaries and social identities are shaped and constructed.

2.30 Religious pluralism in the South Asian diasporas

The article (Jacobsen, 2009) investigates religious pluralism in the South Asian Diasporas. He discovers that the protection of conventions is advanced in the festivals of the celebrations. Here, we can understand that the incredible celebrations, in which a substantial rate of the parts of the gathering takes part, are essential for the personality of the gathering. These customs become significant vehicles for safeguarding and communicating religious personality. Such rituals restate the Tamil religious personalities and help the Tamils to safeguard a Tamil personality in Norway. The Sri Lankan Tamil Hindu religious practices in Diaspora are guided at the protection of the Tamil character. Be that as it may, this is the situation additionally with the Sri Lankan Tamil Catholic religious practices. The customs performed in the Tamil space of the Catholic Church in Norway are much the same as in Sri Lanka. The dialect utilized and the customs performed mean Tamilness, that is, they connote being Catholic the Tamil way.

16.7% of the Sri Lankan Tamils are Christians. The majority of them are Roman Catholics. Christianity came to Sri Lanka under the Portuguese, the most punctual provincial power in Sri Lanka, and they were Roman Catholics. While numerous Sri Lankans changed over to Catholicism under the Portuguese, few changed over to the Protestant holy places under the Dutch and the British who succeeded the Portuguese as frontier leaders of Sri Lanka. One of the reasons for this may be the stronger accentuation on ceremonies and hallowed persons in Catholicism when contrasted with Protestantism.
2.31 Tales, symbols and rituals in Indian mythology

The book ‘Indian Mythology’, authored by Devdutt Pattanaik, unravels the mysteries of Hindu mythology and demonstrates how the Hindu narratives, ritual, and art capture the Hindu world-view (Pattnaik, 2003).

In one of the chapters, the author discusses how Hindu myth reflects a human understanding of nature. The author gives a fundamental difference between myth and science. He explains that myth needs faith and not proof. He also defines myth as a form of communication that establishes a relationship between the universe, society, and human. Some of the avenues through which communication takes places are narratives, symbols, and rituals.

The author also talks about some ideas that cannot be contained in a story, but can only be represented as symbols. He explains that these symbols may be realistic such as a flower, a tree or any geometric shape. It is must to be noted that unlike signs, symbols gives room for innumerable interpretations.

The author provides some of the probable explanations for different symbols. The elephant is explained as Powerful, with no natural enemy; fish as indicative of water; and hence life, a parrot as that which has a red beak and a green body. Therefore, exhibiting colours of fertility; mount of Kandarpa, the god of desire. Further, one can see the author explaining about the triangles in sacred Hindu geometry. Here is one example of the explanation.

In all, this book provides a lot of inputs in understanding illustration, narration and metaphor in Kolam art tradition of South India. It also makes everyone appreciate yet another system of ideas that was created by humans to help them come to terms with life.

2.32 Lifestyle, traditions, religion of Tamil people

The author, Arulselvan Raju, starts accentuating on the history of the Tamil literature and states the earliest Tamil works are known as Cankam poetry (Raju, 2010). He further states that the Cankam writing is an extraordinary wellspring of data, which is to know and comprehend the antiquated Tamil people groups’ lifestyle, traditions,
religion, authentic occurrences, and convictions. The Tamils had their own particular convictions and traditions. He sets two objectives of the study, one being discussing the beliefs of Tamils as found in Akanānūru and the other being, discussing the customs of Tamils as found in Akanānūru.

Raju goes about deconstructing the meaning of Akanānūru and the various beliefs under it, such as chirping of the lizards, beliefs bound to the wedding, chastity etc. The beliefs further seem to stem from various other aspects such as from customs, festivals, games etc. Each one of these beliefs is explained further on the factors through which they came into existence and how the classical poems reflect some of the impacting elements of the beliefs in detail.

The author concludes that the Tamils had numerous convictions and traditions. Some of these practices still exist among current Tamils, for instance, the festival of karttikaivilakku which still exists particularly among the Hindus. Besides this, he states, the established ballads, especially akam lyrics which reflect these components in subtle elements. They are the immense wellspring of data to study the antiquated Tamils. Subsequently, so as to comprehend the Tamils of the antiquated period, one must read and appreciate the Tamil established writing which is rich with data in regard to history and society of Tamils.

2.33 Kanchipuram sari: Design for auspiciousness

The research paper, authored by Aarti Kawlra, explains that the design and technique of the Kanchipuram sari (Kawlra, 2005). This is mainly done to demonstrate the togetherness in cultural practice and technical design as found among the Padma Saliyar community of weavers in Tamil Nadu. Its goal is to locate design integrally into the talk of culture by showing how the silk wedding sari, when worn or gifted, is related to the purity of events and people, not only on the surface but in the very idea of its design. In other words, the present study will show that the cultural value of luck is naturally related, both to an instrumental activity, weaving, and to a clear and sensible world or area. Unlike fabric produced as a continuous yardage, each sari is woven as a complete article of clothing unit with an inner and outer surface, top, and bottom, front, and back, which are in a clear and definite relationship to one another. The researcher has attempted to show how the “design” viewed as the togetherness of elements, of the
Kanchipuram sari, comes out visible in the Korvai way of doing things of weaving the sari. The study of the Tamil term Korvai tells about the way of doing things and that it is seen as a "togetherness" and "the fighting force” of elements.

The article deals with the design (unity and separation) according to which the Korvai technique results in a border joined to the main body of the sari. The researcher goes into the details of how the threads are wrapped together to form the two edges of the sari with three formal elements of design. It also deals with colour of the sari which is further divided into border colour and body colour out of which some colours are preferred and some restricted. Texture, ornamentation, cloth body are the other physical aspects of the sari that the creators stick to and that are typical to a Kanchipuram sari.

The concept of Raasi has been dealt with in accordance with the auspiciousness value of the sari. The Padma Saliyars, described as the apex of creators of auspiciousness in the form of the silk sari, have surpassed the popularity of Benarasi silk saris as well, with their saris being in huge demand during festival and wedding season. The researcher talks about how this type of sari making is not done for the purpose of making profits or used as a commodity but is an art form among the weavers who are extremely particular about sticking to the technique.

2.34 Myths and symbols in Indian art and civilization

Myths and symbols in Indian art and civilization are a reworking of the lecture course delivered at Columbia University in the winter term of 1942 (Zimmer, 1989). The Wheel of Rebirth and the Wisdom of life are two important areas covered in the first session of the book. Both the concepts are deep rooted in Hindu mythology and beliefs. In the second session, various concepts that deal with the mythology of Lord Vishnu are discussed. The concept of Vishnu Maya is one. The chapter also deals with how Maya is expressed in Indian Art. The session deals in depth with the use of Maya as an element in Art and also how it exists in the Indian art even without its obvious presence.

Another interesting chapter is the Guardians of Life is the one on Lord Vishnu and Buddha who are associated with each other through certain common elements. The serpent is the supporter of both Vishnu and Buddha. Also, the Serpent and the Bird-concept are detailed in the chapter. Other elements in Hindu Mythology like the Sacred
Rivers and their importance in the life of a believer, the elephant, the lotus and the like are also discussed.

The fourth chapter is entirely about Lord Shiva who is regarded as a powerful one. He is the preserver and the destroyer. The playful manifestations of Shiva and the Powerful form of Shiva are discussed in this chapter. Another important element, one which many people think of when any reference to Shiva is made, the dance of Shiva is also talked about in the fourth session of the book. In the chapter before conclusion, the origination of the concept of Goddess is studied.

2.35 Teaching mathematics through the art of Kolam

The paper (Chrnulu, 2007) gives a detailed insight into the traditional South Indian art form, Kolam and its mathematical connotation. Kolam is drawn by women using rice powder and diluted rice paste or even paint (for longevity) in front of their homes as a welcome sign to all those coming to visit the household. These patterns consist of a line drawing containing loops drawn around patterns of dots that are generally symmetrical. The symmetry is the beauty of the design giving it a uniform and proficient look. Further, we understand that this symmetry is obtained through mathematics.

The various mathematical specifications to be considered while preparing a design for Kolam are explained in detail in this paper. One of the specifications is the inability to have an odd number of vertices. The paper also talks about the Euler path. If all vertices of a graph are even, it has a Euler path and an Euler circuit. A Euler path is nothing but a path in which each edge of a graph is used only once. This path is not determined through symmetry. If a graph has exactly two odd vertices, it has a Euler path.

One of the types of design is a square array, designed with an odd number of rows and columns. Another type of arrangement has a center row that always contains an odd number of “pulli”. If a graph has more than two odd vertices, it cannot be traced without repeating an edge and, therefore, it does not have a Euler path or an Euler circuit. Symmetry in the Kolam designs could be reflectional symmetry, rotational symmetry, or both or in some cases "near symmetry".

The mathematical details explained in the paper gives a clear picture on how a Kolam is designed and drawn. This further helps in knowing the intricate nuances behind the
symmetry which gives it the beauty it possesses and thus makes it what it is believed to be – an art that wards off the evil eye with its closed loop design.

2.36 Socio-cultural dimensions of ritual objects

The Nagarathar community (which originated from Tamilnadu, India), follows elaborate rites of passage (Shreen, 2010). Various elements of material culture such as sacred objects, ritual implements, ethnic jewellery, food, festive decorations, traditional attire, ceremonial music and songs play a vital role during the performance of these ceremonies. Material objects are primarily products of human action though objects produced by nature can also play an important role in understanding the material culture of rituals.

Ritual things also impose behavioural restrictions on the wearer/bearer/keeper and associated to immediate kin members. Many of the ritual objects have undergone transformations due to modernization, acculturation, migration and changing the economic status of the Nagarathars. This paper thus deals with the socio-cultural dynamics of material objects in select rites of passage in the Nagarathar community. The Nagarathar community belongs to the Vaishya caste and hail from Tamilnadu, South India. Today they have also travelled and settled in places like Burma, Singapore, Malaysia, U.S.A., U.K., and Canada.

Drawing sacred designs called Kolams is an essential element in most Hindu rituals including the Nagarathar rites of passage. Every auspicious Nagarathar ceremony would require the place in which it is being conducted to be ceremoniously decorated. These designs are put up not just for aesthetic appeal but more importantly because of the community’s beliefs in their ability to invite prosperity, exude sanctity and ward off evil forces. Women therefore by creating the designs of Kolam transform the otherwise ordinary space (such as thresholds and private halls) into a ritual and sacred space.

This article thus provides a critical overview of Nagarathar ritual objects and the interplay between the objects and the Nagarathars. Three examples of ritual things were used to analyze how the ritual objects serve as a mechanism to demonstrate, showcase, express and ethnicity and ethnic identity. It also showcases how they become a
repository of history and ethnic ancestry, carriers of stories and the group’s collective memories and medium for transmission to the next generation.

The ritual objects also become indexical of myriad socio-cultural agencies. The ritual objects, through their regulative protocol, have caused changes and transformations in contemporary ritual performances and also demonstrates their ability to orchestrate social relations and bonds. Another theme explored is the possible correlation between the diaspora and the changes seen in the objects and rituals. The article also traces the biographical components of the objects and examines the processes of commoditization and appropriation and the shifting boundaries between ritual objects and other categories like curio items, home collectibles and ethnic objects in the public display.

2.37 Drawing practice in the threshold

The author (Banks, 1937) takes it back to Scotland in 1937, where he sees a woman who draws a pattern on the entrance stone of the cottage. The pattern had a line drawn from side to side. Here we can see that the practice of drawing in front of the house comes not just from India but also exists in other parts of the world too. The poem:

“Tangled thried and rowan seed

Gars the witches lose their speed”

talks about how using rowan (mountain ash tree) seed and thread can ward off the evil. It is a practise which is very popular in Scotland. It is very similar to the Indian practise of Kolam, where we trace patterns in front of our houses, every day, to welcome everyone in, in good faith. This paper would help in comparing the practice of drawing in Scotland with the Kolam practice in India.

2.38 A Study in the psychology of pictorial representation

In his book (Gombrich, 1956) Art and Illusion, Gombrich highlights the relationship between an artist and style, and how this relationship is forever changing in terms of objectivity but remains unaffected in essence. The author has explored the “true” and “false” connotations of art, stating that neither can it be applied to art in entirety nor can it be considered as an absolute representation of an artist’s interpretation of life. Historians have observed that in art, there is a constant battle raging between
information imparted by a painting or portrait, and the aesthetics of it. In other words, what art is supposed to depict, and the message it actually delivers. Gombrich has quoted several historians and art professors such as Professor Gangwill, F.C. Bartlett etc to understand their position on the accuracy vs. aesthetics war. He has also made ample use of metaphors and anecdotes to comprehensively illustrate why and how artists represent real life scenarios and people.

2.39 Visuals, society, and language

The book “The Visual in Social Theory” by Anthony Woodiss argues between visuals and language depictions (Woodiss, 2001). It is a book that strongly supports the theory of visuals. The author tries to bring a distinction between vision and visuality. He explains the same in a very clear-cut diagrammatic representation. There are key elements such as the symbol subject and the object. He implies that in order to understand a certain material, we need to know much more than the language and we need to be aware of the visual theories in order to sense the content better.

The Visual in Social Theory argues that, because of its uncritical use of terms like modernity, postmodernity, globalisation and the Third Way, the contemporary social theory has become a participant rather than a critic of 'promotional culture'. In short, in forgetting its past social theory has effectively forsaken its future. The Visual in Social Theory aims to restore the self-discipline and critical edge intrinsic to any analytical work on visuality. The book will be essential reading not only for those interested in contemporary debates around vision but for a broader readership concerned for the critical relevance of contemporary social theory.

2.40 Art as social system

This book (Lubmann, 2000) by Niklas Lubmann talks about the role of perception in communication. It says that consciousness is preoccupied with perception and through perception it is captivated by an outside world. The external world is brains own construction. Talking about psychic systems, it says that it works on consciousness. The author says that the nervous system help in the process of perceiving. It also says that consciousness takes for granted every perception and makes it happen. It says that even though consciousness functions very fast communication takes its own pace.
Communication cannot receive or produce perceptions. But it can only communicate about perceptions.

As we know that aesthetics states that mere perception of the art cannot trigger aesthetic pleasure. An additional force is required to transform it into an art work that is perception and consciousness. When the Nervous system stops operating, our consciousness starts working and when the consciousness starts working, then our social system compensates for it. They conclude saying that questions regarding consciousness will arise when it is discussed with respect to the communication. Therefore, claiming that a theory of communication must be developed in the presence of abstraction.

2.41 Women’s role in Buddhist art and religious practices

The article Invalid source specified. talks about women who played a visible role in supporting medieval Indian Buddhist institutions. It also talks about two objects donated by two nuns that were examined to discuss the continuing existence of the Buddhist nuns’ order in twelfth-century India. This order had a considerable command over economic resources and attempts to uncover the voice for lay female donors and addresses their participation in religious practices in a medieval Indian Buddhist context. The development of Tantric Buddhism certainly had a positive impact on women’s participation in Buddhist practices, especially among the laity. Textual and art historical evidence from the eleventh century onwards suggests that married lay couples could become vajra masters.

Another source of valuable insight into the active involvement of women in Buddhism during this period is illustrated Buddhist manuscripts, most of which dates to the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the precise period when Tantric Buddhism held sway in eastern India. The earliest surviving illustrated manuscripts from Bihar and Bengal of the eleventh century, and among the dated works half of the donors are women.

The majority of female donors are represented alongside their husbands and identified as somebody’s wife. Thus, their role in the commissioning of the donation may be questionable. However, it was possible for a woman to be the primary donor even when she is identified through and represented with her husband. Although there is no inscription to identify any of the women by name or social status, the scale of the
donation and their bejeweled appearance imply that their donation was a financial contribution to the monastery.

The article will enable the researcher to relate to the values and practices, and merge the concepts of different religions in order to come to a conclusion, which will help in increasing the scope of this research.

2.42 Floor art in education

The article is written in order to understand, compare and contrast the cultural practices with India and United States. The researcher has selected three practices, guided meditation, rangoli decoration and eating on the floor, from the Sattva Montessori to analyse the everyday cultural practices in India that can help children in the United States to open their minds to differences (Adair & Bhaskaran, 2010).

Starting with meditation these children are trained to sit and meditate at a very young age. This helps these children to be very strong in mind and soul. The researcher says that this is practiced twice (daily), after outdoor playtime and before lunch. The preparations for the meditation are done by the students as well as the teachers which bring a bond between them. The researcher also found that by this technique, those children who tend to get distracted easily also enjoy sitting silently because of the music and process of the meditation. The researcher lists out various benefits of doing silent sitting for young children.

Another Indian culture that is practiced in Sattva is decorating with rangoli. The benefits and reason for decorating with rangoli are given in this article. At Sattva, parents and teachers refrain from taking over rangoli to achieve a polished look. Instead, they follow the children’s lead and offer support with shapes and outlines. “Rangoli is an opportunity to include traditional art in a preschool classroom as children from varying backgrounds work together on a common design to celebrate a holiday or special event” – Lilly

Another tradition that they practice is eating on the floor. At Sattva, children eat meals on the floor every day. First, the children wash their hands thoroughly, and then they get their bags and a mat from the shelf. They spread their mats and sit cross-legged in a circle. Next, they spread their napkins in front of them, open their lunch/snack box
and place the food on the napkin. The children and teachers say a short prayer in English/Sanskrit about blessing the food they receive.

Teachers sometimes wonder how to introduce cultural differences in early childhood classrooms when all the children come from the same racial, ethnic, and linguistic background. Teachers may worry about stereotyping the culture they want to introduce. Focusing on cultural practices that could become part of the child’s everyday life at school, rather than a one-time lesson or celebration, avoids passing on a one-dimensional view of people or cultures (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti 2005). Adding everyday practices meets young children’s need to learn by doing.