

.Dissertation

**“DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA
PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT”**

Submitted to the French department of St. Teresa’s college Autonomous,
Ernakulam

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of degree of

MASTER OF TOURISM AND TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

(MTTM)

SUBMITTED BY

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REG NO: SM20MTTM003

UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF:

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ST. TERESA'S COLLEGE, (AUTONOMOUS)

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Affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University: 2020-2022

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation report titled “DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT” submitted by ALEENA SEBASTIAN towards the partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of degree of MASTER OF TOURISM AND TRAVEL MANAGEMENT (MTTM) is a record of bonafide work carried out by her during the academic year 2020-2022.

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PROJECT GUIDE

Viva /Voice examination held on.....07/06/2022.....

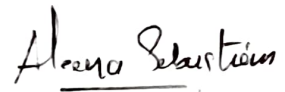
INTERNAL EXAMINER

EXTERNAL EXAMINER

DECLARATION

ALEENA SEBASTIAN, do hereby declare that the project entitled titled "**DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF "SARPPA PATTU" AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT**" is bonafide record work done by me under the guidance of **Ms. AMITA SARAH VARGHESE**, French department, St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), Ernakulam, and is submitted to the Mahatma Gandhi University as a dissertation for the Post Graduate Degree in Tourism and Travel Management.

I also declare that this project has not previously been formed on the basis for the award of any academic qualifications, fellowship or another similar title of any other university or board.



ALEENA SEBASTIAN

Date: 2/6/2022

Place: Ernakulam

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to take the opportunity to express my profound gratitude to all the people who have helped me to successfully complete the dissertation with their sound advice and able guidance.

First of all, I would thank god almighty for guarding me & keeping me safe from all misfortunes.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to **Dr. LIZZY MATHEW**, Principle of St. Teresa's college, for her good gesture of approval.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to **Ms. SABEENA BASKER**, Head of French Department for the encouragement throughout the project.

I am greatly express my deep sense of sincere thanks to **Ms. AMITA SARAH VARGHESE**, for providing her valuable guidance and assistance in the completion of my dissertation.

Last but not the least I whole hearty thank my parents, all my friends & well-wishers who contributed in various ways towards the accomplishment of the project.

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PREFACE

As part of the M.T.T.M curriculum and in order to gain practical knowledge in the field of travel and tourism industry. I was required to do a dissertation which is related to Tourism. The basic objective of doing this project is to gain in-depth knowledge about the possibilities of music therapy methods in holistic health care. In this report, I have included different observations done during the period of study and made necessary suggestions regarding the study.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION:

Kerala is a land of arts and festivals. It has everything to entertain the people all over the world. Most popular traditional art forms of Kerala are Kathakali, Mohiniyattam, Chakyar Koothu, Nangiar Koothu, Theyyam, Panchavadyam, Ottamthullal, Padayani, Onapottan, Pulikali, Krishnanattam, Koodiyattam, Kalaripayattu, Pavakathakali, Thirayattam, Shastham Paatu, Ayyappan Vilakku, Chavittunatakam, Duffmuttu, Kakkarissi Natakam, Margomkali, Oppana, Thiruvathirakali, Arjuna Nritham, Kalamezhuthu, Kavadiyattam, Mudi yettu, Paana, Poothanumthirayum, Theyattu, Tholppavakkoothu, Velakali, Kannyarkali, Kolkali, Kummattikkali, Garudan Thookkam, Sarpam Thullal, Pulluvan Paattu, Yakshagana, Pettathullal, Mappila Paattu, Parichamuttukali, etc.

Kerala is notable for its different types of performing arts. The different networks in Kerala add to its rich and brilliant culture. For tourists who search for something other than what's expected in this staggering area can investigate the Art Forms of Kerala which are extraordinary and commendable. Kerala has an abundance of social practices and a variety of customary works of art than whatever other express that draws in individuals from everywhere the world, offering a gala of craftsmanship, dance and music for vacationers and workmanship darlings.

Kerala is rich in folklore like many other regions of India. The folk tradition of Kerala is fostered till today. The cultural heritage of Kerala is reflected in folk which is the basis for modern music. The folk deities are related to the puranic stories and myths which are linked with tribal or primitive people.

Kerala is home to Hindu saints and swamis of all castes. Bhagavan Sree Narayana Gurudeva, Sant Adinatha, Sant Ilakkulaccanrar, and Sant Tiruppana were all outside the Brahmin caste fold, Cheraman Nayanar was a Kothayar, Chattampi Swamikal, Swami Satyananda Saraswathi and Swami Chinmay Ananda were of the Nair caste, and Adi Shankara and Melpathur Narayana Bhattathiri were Namboothiri Brahmins. The Harijan Parayas of Kerala claim to descend from Sant Vasishta Kollengode has a structure near Thirthala-Koottanad Road, in memory of a Harijan saint, Sant Paakkanar. In the Rapayan

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Tujjal, the narrator (dancer-reciter) is a Harijan and a descendant of Sant Pakkanar. The *Periya Puranam*, possibly written by a Paraya, describes the Parayas. Further, the *Vishwakarma Purana* was written by a sonar (goldsmith). Hinduism is the most widely professed faith in Kerala. and Hindus represent the biggest religious group in all districts except Malappuram.

The mythological legends regarding the origin of Kerala are Hindu. Kerala produced several saints and movements. Various practices of Hinduism are unique to Kerala. Different cults of Shiva and Vishnu are popular in Kerala. Lord Krishna is worshipped widely in all parts of Kerala, Guruvayur being one of the most famous temples in the state. Malayali Hindus also worship Bhagavathi as a form of Shakti. Almost every village in Kerala has its local guardian deity, usually a goddess. Hindus in Kerala also strongly believe in the power of snake gods and usually have sacred snake groves known as Sarpa Kavu near their houses.

In Hinduism Serpent is believed to be a living God. it is because serpents have great relevance to one of the main deities in Hinduism which is lord shiva who is considered to be the supreme god also known as Mahadev which means the lord of the lords.

In the historical context it says that by the end of the Kaliyuga when the iconic incident of palazhimadhanam took place, the serpents happened to get a boon from lord shiva for the sacrifice they faced along with Mahadev where he had to consume the high venom of Vasuki (serpent worn by lord shiva around his neck) which otherwise would have resulted in the deaths of all the living creatures and would have put an end to the cycle of lives. The blessing of lord shiva designated the serpents to be treated in the same manner as him many kinds of disregard towards the serpents would be considered the same towards Mahadev himself.

Thereafter anyone who indulges in any kind of negligent behaviour or any harm towards any kind of snakes (not necessarily serpents.) has to do the poojas or any deeds as part of their atonement to rescue themselves from the curse of lord shiva who is considered to be the lord with the utmost anger.

The three prominent gods in Hinduism are Brahma (the creator) Vishnu (the preserver), and Maheshwara (the lord of destruction) and the two of the eminent serpents are Vasuki and Aadishesha where Vasuki is the one which lord shiva wears as an ornament around his neck and aadishesha lord Vishnu lays on aadishesha which is known as Anandasayanam. Thus, serpents are regarded as the most relevant figures in Hindu mythology.

1.2 OBJECTIVES:

1. To study the importance of sarpa pattu as a religious ritual in Hinduism. The general information on the origin of sarpa pattu and how it is related to sarpa dosham.
2. To study various instruments used to perform sarpa pattu
3. Prominent temples in Kerala have serpents as their main deity.
4. Highlights of Ayilyam festival about Sree Nagaraja Temple, Mannarsala.
5. Temples performing sarppa pattu in Kerala – Ameda, Mannarsala, pabummekattu temple.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

This study is intended to study the relevance of sarpa pattu and to highlight it as a tourism product. Sarpa pattu has an important role in the Hindu community or Hinduism. They worship serpents like lord shiva. The rituals are done according to socio-cultural values and also it is done based on hereditary order. The sarpa pattu is mostly done in temples that adore serpents as lords, mainly in Ameda and Mannarsala temples.

The sarpa pattu is performed by certain selective families who have more knowledge and got it through their ancestors. This art form is performed at sarpa kavu, temples dedicated to Nagaraj, and rarely in households. Sarpa pattu is performed and supervised by the people belonging to Pulluva Community. This art form is performed by women artists after observing the required austerities. The presiding deity is Nagaraja, who has the form of Vishnu and the spirit of Shiva. Sarpayakshi and Nagayakshi are his consorts. The custodian of the shrine is an ancient Brahmin family of Mannarsala. The soft music offered on the eastern side of the temple in accompaniment of small veenas is meant to earn the blessings of the divine serpent. The belief is that gods and goddesses existed at the feet of open grooves. Those who incur their wrath face the prospect of mental and physical agony. To appease them, expiation ceremonies have to be performed. The real history of the ancient shrine is

lost in a maze of legends, folklore, time, and memory. Among the offerings at the shrine, the most famous one is Uruli kamazhthal. Naga Devatas blesses the couples who do the offering with devotion. the ritual is famed as a boon to childless couples

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The research methodology is done by collecting primary and secondary sources which are included in this thesis.

Primary sources are done by collecting the data from surveys, interacting with local communities, and preparing questionnaires.

In the secondary sources, details are gathered from various books, articles, and internet resources.

1.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The time allotted was short for this kind of research undertaken.
- The prejudice of responsibilities.
- Unavailability of enough data required.
- Limitation of ensuring the accuracy of data collected.
- Difficulty in understanding and interpretations.
- Unable to collect direct data from resources.

CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

SUBJECT REVIEW:

Culture plays an important role in the development of any nation. It represents a set of shared attitudes, values, goals and practices. Culture and creativity manifest themselves in almost all economic, social and other activities. A country as diverse as India is symbolized by the plurality of its culture. Because some of the world’s major religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam either began or flourished in India, much of Indian art is based in religious or political subject matter. Here, we uncover the history of Indian folk paintings, architecture, and sculpture, and explain how each evolved from the sociopolitical influences reflective of the period from which they originated.

Sarpa Pattu is a ritual art performed in the [Nagaraja](#) temples and shrines. ‘Sarpa’ meaning snake and ‘Pattu’ meaning song literally forms the Sarpa Pattu. It is performed in front of a ‘Sarpakalam’ (snake designs on the floor) in a decorated ‘pandal’ (canopy), by a woman of the [Pulluvas](#) caste. She dances in a frenzy to the rhythm of the Sarpa Pattu and fall down exhausted. Veena, [Kudam](#) and Kaimani are the instruments accompanied. Serpents and Snakes as Symbols. In religion, mythology, and literature, serpents and snakes often stand for fertility or a creative life force—partly because the creatures can be seen symbols of the male sex organ. They have also been associated with water and earth because many kinds of snakes live in the water or in holes in the ground. The ancient Chinese connected serpents with life-giving rain. Traditional beliefs in Australia, India, North America, and Africa have linked snakes with rainbows, which in turn are often related to rain and fertility. As snakes grow, many of them shed their skin at various times, revealing shiny new skin underneath. For this reason snakes have become symbols of rebirth, transformation, immortality, and healing. The ancient Greeks considered snakes sacred to Asclepius, the god of medicine. He carried a caduceus, a staff with one or two serpents wrapped around it, which has become the symbol of modern physicians. For both the Greeks and the Egyptians, the snake represented eternity. Ouroboros, the Greek symbol of eternity, consisted of a snake curled into a circle or hoop, biting its own tail. The Ouroboros grew out of the belief that serpents eat themselves and are reborn from themselves in an endless cycle of destruction and creation. Living on and in the ground, serpents came to be seen in some religions and theologies as guardians of the underworld. In this role they could represent hidden wisdom or sacred mysteries, they also

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had other, more sinister meanings. The use of serpents Snakes appear in the myths and legends of the Aborigines of Australia. This wall painting located near the town of Kuranda, Queensland, shows a snake among many different animals.

Once a childless couple of the family, Vasudeva, and Sridevi tended serpents caught in a forest fire. With great care, the couple nursed them back to health. Khandava forest fire mentioned in the Mahabharata is believed to be linked to this episode. Immensely pleased with their sacrifice, Nagaraja appeared before the couple and blessed them. He assumed the form of a baby snake and was born as a child of the couple along with a human child. They grew up as brothers. Later he decided to stay with the family. Before vanishing into nilavara (family cellar), Ananthan had granted his mother the right to worship him and suggested certain inviolable rituals to preserve the sanctity of the shrine. Since then the senior-most female member of the family has been assuming the role of chief priest. The serpent king is believed to be still in nilavara doing tapas for the welfare of his dependents.

Only Amma is allowed to enter nilavara. Members of the household reverentially refer to him as appooppan and muthassan (grandfather). Appooppan kaavu, a dense grove near the temple, is his favourite haunt.

Poojas are conducted only by family members. Thevaram chamber is a small room to the southwest of the sanctum sanctorum of Nagaraja where Amma offers worship to Nagaraja. Among the offerings at the shrine, the most famous one is Uruli kamazhthal. the ritual of keeping upside down a shallow bell metal vessel. Naga Devatas blesses the couples who do the offering with devotion. The ritual is famed as a boon to childless couples. Another popular offering is Noorum paalum (rice powder and turmeric powder mixed in cow's milk). The offering can be anything according to a devotee's capacity. The annual Ayilyam festival in September-October draws huge crowds. A procession of serpent deities is taken to the priests' family. Sivaratri too is celebrated with gusto'

The fascinating legends surrounding the hoary past and experiences of devotees add to the mystique of this shrine. During World War II, when the state was reeling under famine, the Mannarasala family became the target of a dehoarding drive. The local tahsildar seized all the grains stored there, including what was meant for the naivedya. Interactions with senior

family members reveal how they scrupulously follow the age-old traditions at the shrine. Patriarch of the family, M V Subrahmanian Namboothiri, the president of the family trust, explains that important decisions concerning the temple are taken by consensus. Astrologers too are consulted. On the choice of the priestess, the octogenarian says, “Only women married into the family become eligible for priesthood.” Once a person is chosen as Amma, she has to lead an ascetic life and do penance. Only after one year of the learning process, can she conduct poojas. In case Amma falls sick, no pooja is conducted during that period. The trust has been striving to extend all possible facilities for the multitude of devotees. Now the trust manages an upper primary school. Sanskrit and Ayurveda schools that ran earlier have been closed down due to poor patronage.

India has a rich history of serpent worship. The hooded serpent, known as

Serpents in Hindu mythology

The epic, Mahabharata has a very popular myth about the origin of major serpent deities who are worshipped today. Mahabharata’s slokas, from 657 to 2197, tell the story of two sisters, Kadru and Vinita, who were married to Sage Kashyapa. Pleased by the devotion of his wives, Kashyapa granted one boon to each of them: Kadru asked for a thousand powerful and valiant sons, and Vinita asked for two sons more powerful than her sister’s. According to the story, Kadru gave birth to a thousand serpent children—the gods of *patala* (underground) in Hindu mythology—and is considered the mother of the whole serpent race, whereas Vinita had two sons, Aruna and Garuda. Lord Anantha and Lord Vasuki are often called *Nagaraj*’s (kings of serpents) and are significant deities in Hindu mythology. Anantha has a thousand hoods and is often depicted as the closest accompaniment of Lord Vishnu; the image of Vishnu reposing on Anantha is much celebrated in Hindu art and literature as the iconic *ananthashayana* (Vishnu sleeping on Anantha) posture. It is believed that when Vishnu took the Krishna avatar, Anantha accompanied him as Balarama, and when Vishnu incarnated as Sriram, Anantha took birth as Lakshmana.

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On the other hand, Vasuki is often associated with Lord Shiva. Shiva is called *nagabhushana* (the one who is adorned with snakes), and he wears Vasuki around his neck. Vasuki also played an important role in the ‘Samudra Manthan’ (churning of the milk ocean) episode described in the Mahabharata and Vishnu Purana. He was used as the rope tied around Mount Mandara to churn the milk ocean, Palazhi; in the process, Vasuki vomited a deadly poison called *Kalakoda*, and Lord Shiva consumed it to protect the world.

In Kerala, serpents are often seen as guardians of ancestral treasures. They are considered the protector deities of a clan or family. Believed to be possessors of a rare gem called *nagamanikya* (serpent stone) which turns fortunes from rags to riches, serpents are said to guard family treasures for centuries underground. It is said that in a time of crisis or poverty, when the family members pray to the serpents, the treasure surfaces itself.

Pambumekattumana Illam in the Thrissur district of Kerala is very famous as a serpent worship centre. It is said that, years ago, the *illam* (Brahmin household) was suffering from utter poverty, and its *Namboothiri* (male head) went to do penance at Thiruvanchikulam temple at Ernakulam; pleased by the devotion of the Namboothiri, Nagaraja Anantha gifted him the *nagamanikya*. Since then, Pambumekattumana became famous and prospered.

Serpent Deities and Iconography

The eight most important serpent deities worshipped in Kerala are known as the *ashtanga* (eight Nagas). Just like human beings, the deities are also categorized into four different castes namely, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vysya, and Shudra. The eight deities are considered to be the guardians of the different eight directions and are attributed to different symbols.

DEITIES	CASTE	DIRECTION	ATTRIBUTES
Ananta	Brahmin	East	
Vasuki	Brahmin	Southeast	
Shangapala	Kshatriya	North	
Gulika	Kshatriya	Northeast	
Thakshaka	Vyshya	South	
Mahapadman	Vyshya	Northwest	
Karkotaka	Shudra	Southwest	
Pathma	Shudra	West	

HISTORY

Snakes and Snake worship, primarily the cobra and associated subspecies of snakes have been revered from ancient times all over India. Snakes are mentioned in Vedic books or they are depicted in religious epics like Mahabharata and Vishnu Purana. Hindu Gods like Vishnu and Shiva have been associated with snakes. According to Hindu mythology, Lord Vishnu takes rest under the shade of the giant snake, Adhishehsa. Lord Shiva wears a snake Vasuki around his neck. The Nair's of Kerala claim to be Kshatriyas of Nagavanshi descent, thus maybe snake worship was popularized and brought to wider practicably by them. Mostly, snakes were seen as a symbol of fertility. Elsewhere in India, snakes are worshiped on Nag Panchami Nagaradhanae and Aashleshabali.

RITUAL

Sarpam pattu is generally held to appease snake gods for the prosperity of the family or to give offspring to couples who may have difficulties in conceiving a child. People generally take a vow is also associated with the ritual and the Sarpam part is done after the fulfilment accomplishment of the vow. But in most of the scenarios, Sarpam pattu is done to ward off any doshas of the family and bring peace and prosperity.

The temple astrologer is the one who normally initiates the processor in certain places, it is held as an annual or regular practice. Once the date is finalized by the family, the associated Pulluvan family with the temple is informed. It is the Pulluvan and Pulluvathy and their assistants who hold the skills and responsibility of creating the aesthetic requirements for the Sarpam pattu. They create a pandal and decorate them. The selection of the girls who will later become the mediums or manifestations of Snake Gods is done by the family. Generally, two girls/females are supposed to sit in the kalam but in certain places, it is six. In modern times in many places' females between the ages of 10 to 60 are not allowed and are generally performed by girls who have not reached puberty. Typically, the karnavar of the family or an elderly person will be the one who oversees the function and grants his blessing to function. The pulluvan and his team create a floral decoration using various natural colours on a specially made floor before the snake idols. The floral decoration is called Naga kalam. Naga kalam are of various types such as Basma Kalam (A Kalam that is made of just ash powder)

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and Varna Podi Kalam (A Kalam that is made up of colour powder). The *kanyas* wear Pavada and blouse. Once the pulluvan and his team are done with decorations and other preparations the *kanyas* are called to the venue. They normally sit in the kalam or beside the kalam. In certain places where there are more than two *kanyas*, they stand beside the kalam. Nagarajavu generally stands inside the kalam. *Kanyas* are given pokulas or arecanut flowers. The pulluvan starts singing and playing the veena and the pulluvathy sings along and plays the kudam. The initial lines are generally sung in praise of Ganesh, followed by other gods. Then the Tala or beat changes along with the song. The latter part is dedicated to the Serpent gods and the Kanya sitting in the kalam. The *kanya's* general start to get into trance state within 20–30 minutes and it is reported that they feel that the snake which is drawn on the floor has come alive. Some of them have experienced vibrations all over their body and they feel their body is resonating with that the vibrations. The girls are generally not given any training to dance and, in many cases, it might be the first time they are watching the ritual. They move towards the vibration. They swing their hair and rub the powder of the kalam (the divine solace created). So, the induced trance state is highly revered as girls are generally supposed to be too young to perform any sophisticated acting to make the onlookers believe in the ritual. The ritual has strong parallels to the function of an Oracle and generally speaks to the onlookers after entering into the trance state and informs them on the behalf of the snake gods. It can be seen that the *kanya's* do not speak the normal day-to-day language while in the trance state adding to the mystery. The women dance in frenzy to the rhythm of the sarpa pattu, until they fall steady. The sarpa pattu is performed to the accompaniment of pulluvakudom, a stringed instrument. For Sarpam pattu, the veena is used as a shruti and tala accompaniment. It is held like the violin and sometimes tucked to the ankle of the right foot. Most art forms of the Pulluvar community are ritualistic, though songs are based on the Puranas and agriculture. Pulluvan Pattu is also known by other terms such as *Sarpa Pattu*, *Sarpam Thullal*, *Nagam Pattu*, *Sarpolsavam*, *Pambum Thullal* or *Pambum Kalam*.

Sacred groves (kavukal) are seen throughout Kerala, having varied forms, cultural practices, and belief systems. The vegetation in the groves is highly varied viz. mangroves, freshwater swamps, or other tropical forest types. Deities worshipped in the groves are also highly varied. One such type is the sacred grove dedicated to serpent God and serpent worship is considered to be one of the oldest and most prevalent forms of nature worship in the world.

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Pulluvan Pattu or sarpa pattu is accompanied by different musical instruments made by the community - the one-stringed violin known as the Pulluvan veena, the Pulluvan kudam, an earthen pot with a string fastened to it, Pulluvan mizhavu and cymbals. Out of these, the Pulluvan veena plays a major part during the rituals. The veena is made out of a hollow bamboo stick, teak, coconut shell, or wood and is played with a bow made out of a piece of sharpened bamboo. This one-stringed instrument, which resembles the violin, is also known as the *veena Kunju*. The string is made from the Nagachitamrada plant and is known as the *There*. The string is stretched over the round-shaped resonator with a calf's skin and passes through a small bridge. The other end is connected to the wooden stem having the peg. At the end of the bow, a couple of metal jingles are attached at times and wooden rods are fastened to these metal jingles. The pulluvan and his team will play the veena, kudam, and sometimes the cymbals, during a performance. Valluvanad in Kerala is still popular for Pulluvan pattu. Normally this form of the song is accompanied by the veena on occasions where there is a Nagaraj pradistai being done at a temple and where the inmates of the house offer the Pullavan food and clothes.

During rituals, the songs of the Pulluva community praise 'holy serpents' such as Ananthan, Manimudgaran, Adiseshan, and Mahapadman. For snake worship, usually, a snake is drawn on the ground after a purification ritual and necessary pujas. This ritual is known as Pambin Kalam where snakes are invoked by the Pulluva community; it is generally an elaborate one. The pullavars fast for 41 days to perform a *Sarpam Pattu* ritual.

The ways and forms of worship by primitive societies being varied in different parts of the world. Living in close interaction with nature, the ancient man knew that natural resources, are necessary for his survival and wellbeing, and their misuse would be disastrous, in due course, this nature worship evolved as one of the means of nature conservation of natural resources, where the resources acquired a sacred or sanctified status.

In Kerala, one way of worshiping serpent gods is by laying symmetrically designed floor drawings, that are called 'Kalams', with bright and colourful powders made from natural objects. Beautiful pictures of serpent gods are drawn using these powders on the ground smeared with cow dung in the first phase of the ritual. Following this, a senior priest consecrates the floor drawings and two types of physical performances follow. The three

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performances are orchestrated by wild rhythmic music, using folk instruments. In the next stage, a verbal recitation is followed by the main performance of the ritual, the dancing of the female oracles.

Mannarsala Sree Nagaraja Kshetram is an ancient pilgrimage center situated in southwest Kerala. Of all the places of serpent worship in the world, there is none that is more benign, awe-inspiring, and legendary than Mannarsala, as blessed and envisaged by Lord Parasuraman, the creator of Kerala.

HISTORY OF MANNARSHALA TEMPLE

The evolution of Mannarasala as the supreme place of worship of the serpent Gods is associated with Parasuraman, the son of Jamadagini and a descendant of Bhrigu. When Parasuraman decided to seek atonement from the sin of killing the Kshatriyas, he approached the holy Rishis. They suggested that he should make a gift of a land of his own to the Brahmins. Parasuraman propitiated Varuna Deva (the Lord of the Seas) to get some land for himself. Varuna appeared before and advised him to throw his parasu, the axe which Lord Siva had given him, into the sea to reclaim land. He throws it and raises a piece of land from the sea and gives it as a gift to the Brahmins. This land is believed to be the present-day Kerala.



Mannarasala Amma – The Supreme Priestess of Mannarasal.

The beliefs and rituals associated with the Mannarasala temple are different from most other temples, and this is one rare temple where the pooja pattern is headed by a Brahmin lady. Legends say that when Nagaraja reincarnated and was born to the then Mother of the Illom and left to Nilavara, he had given certain rights and instructions to his mother. He instructed, “Mother herself must offer me worship”. On certain special days, men may be given a chance to worship. After Mother's time, the senior-most Brahmin lady in the family will have the status of the mother. From that time the mother assumes this high position, Mother should live as a Brahmacharini and observe penance. Thus, being the ‘Mother’ of the Lord himself, Mannarasala Amma became the mother of the land. She is popularly referred as Valiya Amma. Being the heart and soul of Mannarasala, pilgrims cannot leave Mannarasala without seeing that fascinating divine glow with their own eyes. Faithful devotees who come here to seek the blessings of Nagaraja, wait patiently to have a glimpse of Valiya Amma, and seek her blessings and advice to lead a prosperous life. That resplendent brightness of Valiya Amma who has turned into a symbol of Naga deities through fasting and other austerities, and performing rituals and poojas, sheds brilliant light on the temple and the environment, and endows it with heavenly glory.



Like every temple in Kerala, Mannarasala Sree Nagaraja Kshetram too is home of many festivals. Maha Shivaratri, Kumbham, Kanni and Thulam Ayilyam are the most important festivals at Mannarasala.

Mannarasala Ayilyam (Thulam Ayilyam)

The most celebrated festival at Mannarsala is the Ayilyam in the Malayalam month of Thulam. It is known the world over as Mannarasala Ayilyam. It was a regular custom for the Maharaja of Travancore to visit this temple on Ayilyam day in Kanni. On one occasion, the Maharaja could not reach the temple as usual and had to postpone the visit to the Ayilyam day in Thulam. The royal palace met all the expenses for the celebrations of that Ayilyam. Thus, the Ayilyam of Thulam came to secure a royal splendour and henceforth became the festival of mthe asses.

The Ayilyam days of Kanni and Kumbham are still celebrated with befitting grandeur. The Ayilyam in Kanni is the birthday of Nagaraja and that in Kumbham is the birthday of Anantha, the Muthassan of Nilavara (cellar).

Ezhunalathu – the holy procession

Pulasarppam Pattu is an annual offering in Pulakkavu, situated to the north-east of Illom. The main Pooja here is Nurum Palum. Valiya Amma has the right to offer pooja. (Nurum Palum is offered here regularly on Ayilyam Day in Kumbham or on any other Ayilyam coming thereafter).

Mahasivaratri

Mahasivaratri, the day of the great festival in Siva temples, is given equal importance Mannarasala. The installation of the Nagaraja is in accordance with the concept of Siva. The poojas also are on the Saivite model. Thus, Sivaratri assumed special importance among the annual festivities. The festivities on Sivarathri day at Mannarasala are also associated with Vasuki, the King of Serpents. Legends say that once Vasuki went round the gigantic Thanni tree in front of the temple in a sportive mood and stretched his hoods shining with jewels towards the east; opened his mouth and hissed; all the sands in that place flew away; and a little pond came into being. This is Karoli pond (Karoli Kulam). On Sivarathri day, it is believed, he goes in procession in that direction to have a glimpse of his playful creation.

Sarpam Pattu – An offering of a lifetime

Sarpam Pattu is the most pleasing of all poojas to the serpents. Though a very rare and laborious process in terms of the poojas and execution, this holy ceremony is to be conducted once every forty-one years. Only a few blessed ones gets to witness this pooja twice in their lifetime. There are records of Sarpam Pattu held several times.

Conducting Sarpam Pattu requires huge spending and manpower for many months. Six to Seven Kanyakas (virgin Brahmin ladies), Cheria Amma and Valiya Amma participate in the poojas that may last for many weeks, until Valiya Amma realises in her trance that Nagaraja is satisfied with the pooja. Separate poojas are offered to the nine Nagas namely Nagaraja, Sarpa Yakshi, Naga Yakshi, Naga Chamundi, Nilavara Muthassan, Kuzhi Nagam, Kari Nagam, Mani Nagam and Para Nagam during these days. The ladies of the family who partake in this festivity avoid rice meals during these days, as part of the rituals.

The Yajnavedi (the altar of sacrifice) is in the yard, south of the cellar. When floor decorations, songs, serpent dance, and sacrifice for serpents as well as Nurum Palum are performed in the presence of Valiya Amma, the place around the altar becomes a fantasy world of devotion, thanks to the songs of poojas and dances, the many types of musical

performances, the decorations, the accompaniments, etc. At such times the temple gates are not closed. The rituals that go on for days and nights last until the day when Valiya Amma becomes divinely possessed and makes prophetic announcements.

AMEDA TEMPLE

Every land has got its own unique story of origin and history to narrate to the generations passing by. For Kerala it is the axe of Lord Parasuraman, one of the many incarnations of Maha Vishnu, retrieved land from sea. After the retrieval, he consecrated many temples at different parts, in consonance with the significance and holiness of each place. One among them is Ameda Temple, gracefully located on the banks of Vembanad Lake, in Tripunithura - Vaikom route, 20Kms south of Ernakulam. The sanctum sanctorum is dedicated to Sappthamathrukkal, viz: Veera Bhadran, Ganapathy, Brahmani, Maheshwari, Kowmari, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Indrani and Chamundi. The shrines dedicated to Nagaraja and Nagayakshi are located North West and North East respectively. Towards North one can see the shrine of Sree Maha Vishnu.



HISTORY

Lord Parasurama once travelling through the western coast of India, incidentally reached the place where the temple is presently situated. As usual he stepped into the lake for 'Sandhyavandana' during sunset. Then he saw a bright light at a distance. Curiosity to know about the source of light prompted him to walk forward toward the centre of the lake. Suddenly divine knowledge came to him that the origin of the light is 'Sapthamathrukkal' who were travelling through the lake on the top of the tortoise.

Meanwhile the tortoise had become unable to travel as the water had paved way for Lord Parasurama who was moving towards the centre of the lake. The place where the tortoise became standstill came to be known as 'Amaninnayidam' and later on become 'Ameda'. Since his spurt of movement towards the centre of the lake caused the stillness of the tortoise and thereby the stoppage of the journey of the 'Sapthamathrukkal', Lord Parasurama decided to construct a magnificent temple at the same place where the tortoise stopped its travel. And hence the Ameda temple came into its being at its present position.

HISTORY OF AMEDA MANA

The family reached Ameda about 600 years ago. The myth about the voyage of the Mangalam family for reaching Ameda and settling there is also an interesting one. The story starts with a Namboodiri family lived at a place named 'Vettam' in a village called 'Sukapura' which was situated at the North West parts of Kerala. In the course of time, the brothers of the family quarrelled with each other resulting the elder brother and his family leaving the house. Through Tripangode, Thirunavaya, Guruvayoor, Vadakkunnathan, Triprayaar, Kodungaloor, Tripunithura, they reached Chottanikkara. After coming to know about the financial problems of the Brahmana, the 'Pallipurathu Namboodiri family' who managed Chottanikkara temple, gave a house for them to live.

During their course of stay at Chottanikkara, the family decided to go to Ameda temple to worship 'Sapthamathrukkal' for 12 days. For the first 11 days life was as usual as for any other devotee for the family at the temple. But on the night of the 11th day everything

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changed for the better for the poor Namboodiri family. Through the darkness of the night a thief entered the temple. After hearing some unusual sounds, the elder brother who was fast asleep near the temple woke up and went inside. To his surprise, he saw the 'Chamundi Devi' with sword in her hands. She asked him to chase the thief off with her sword. He got his hand injured during the fight with the thief. The pain of the injury did not deter him from keeping the sword in the 'Nilavara' after overpowering the thief (Till recent years the sword was in the 'Nilavara' for all to see).

On the night of the attempted theft, something else dramatic happened elsewhere. The Goddess came to the dreams of the 'Namboodiri's' who managed the affairs of the temple till then, and was instructed upon to leave the management to the Mangalam Namboodiri's. The Namboodiris acted accordingly and left the management of the temple to the Mangalam Namboodiris and since then the family came to be known as Ameda Mangalam. According to a 'Devaprashna' conducted about 20 years ago in the 'Thekkumpattu Illom' in the village of 'Sukapuram', it was found that the present 'Punnamana Narasimha Swamy Temple' was the old 'Vettathu Vishnu Temple' and the management and the ownership of the temple goes to Ameda Mangalam family. Since the 'Devaprashna' the temple has been owned and managed by the Ameda Mangalam family and 'Thekkumpattu Illom' jointly.



THE POORAM FESTIVAL OF AMEDA

The main festival of Ameda temple is conducted during the "Meenam" month of Malayalam calendared during the March-April period. The main festival will start at Ameda temple with "Kodiyettu" on Malayalam star "Makayeeram" and the other significant events are the ,Aayilya darshanam on "Ayilyam" ,Uthsava bali on "Makam" ,Valiya Vilakku or Pallivetta on "Pooram" and "Aarattu" on "Uthram" .The "Kodiyettu" and "Aarattu" will be performed by eldest member of Ameda Mangalam family or by the "Vadakkan Puliyannur Namboodiri" who is the Thanrthi of the Ameda temple. "Aarattu" will be performed in the Ameda temple pond in the morning after the Usha pooja and "Kodiyettu" will be performed in the temple in the evening.

"Aarattu" is performed on every morning during the festival time but the main "Aarattu" is performed during evening time. On "Aarattu" day, the 3 doors of the Sreekovil will be opened and there will be 5 poojas instead of 3 Poojas. The 3 doors of Ameda temple Sreekovil will be opened only for 2 days in a year. One is on the 41st day of Guruthy pooja and next is on the "Aarattu" day of main festival on "Uthram" star. On the rest of the days, only 2 doors of the temple will be opened.



AYILYA DARSHANAM

Even though all Ayilyam Nakshatras are good for worshipping the serpents (Sarpaaradhana), the ones coming in the months Kanni, Thulam, Vrishchikam and Meenam (Malayalam Months) are the more sacred and important. In the English calendar, it is coming in the months of September, November and April. Besides the above 4 days, 'Pathamudayam' and 'Naga Panchami' are the other important days for worshipping. During these days a huge crowd of devotees assembled in the temple.



SARPA BALI & ASHTANAGA POOJA

Sarpabali and Ashtanaga pooja is offered to Nagaraja for avoiding sarpadosham/rahudosham and also to attain Sarpapreethi.



Pambummekkattu Temple

Pambummekkattu Mana, situated at Vadama near Mala Town, Mukund Puram Taluk in Thrissur District, Kerala. It is believed that the divine presence of “Vasuki” and “Nagayakshi” are there in the “Kizhakkini” of Pambummekkattu Mana. Daily poojas are offered to Nagaraja and Naga Yakshi residing in the eastern portion of Mekkattu Mana. The Pambu Mekkattu is spread over six acres of land with five sarpakavu. The Mekkattu Namboodiri’s also treated the outsiders but now due to the advance in medical science people rarely comes for it.

The oldest member of the family is the head of the Mana members who have covered teenage are given administrative power. A trust is formed and each trustee will get an year’s administration. The mantras and the rituals are passed from one generation to another orally. The members of the family are bound to follow the rules. The devotees are to strictly follow the instruction of the administrator. When something affects the sanctity of the premises, poojas (rituals) will be restarted only after “Punyaham” (cleansing). When such things happen, snakes are seen in waste ditch, indicating impurity

About Pambummekkattu Mana, Vadama, Mala Thrissur



Features and Importance of Pambummekkattu Mana

On the 1st of the Malayalam month “Vrischikam” (November 17) of the Keralites’ calendar many devotees of Sabarimala Ayyappa come to Pambu Mekkattu in order to get the blessing of Serpent Gods. “Noorum Palum” (food and milk) offering to the snakes is on this day. The oil from the “Kedavilakku” is used as a medicine for skin diseases which is believed to be caused due to the fury of snakes. The sanctum sanctorum of “Nagaraja Vasuki” and Nagayakshi is in the Kizhakkini of a Nalukettu. There is no idol in the sanctum sanctorum of Pampumekkattu Mana. In its place there is all time burning oil-lamp (Kedavilakku). The Prasadam given to the devotees is the oil from the lamp. The oil Prasadam has the power to cure the diseases caused due to the curse of snakes. Besides Noorum Palum, the other main offering to the serpent gods is Kadali Pazham. In the center court of the Pambummekkattu Mana there is shrine of Bhadrakali.

There is a legend behind how Mekkattu Mana became Pampumekkattu Mana.

Once Mekkattu Mana was suffering from acute poverty and miseries. The sufferings were so unbearable that the Head of the family decided to stay in prayers and meditation in Thiruvanchikulam Temple at Kodungallur, about 15 km away from Mala. He stayed there

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and prayed continuously for twelve years. One day early morning he went to the temple pond of Thiruvanchikulam to fetch some water where he saw a strange man near the pond with extra-ordinary body structure had an unusual divine power and asked him to give the precise ring that he was wearing to show his friends and Kodungallur Thampuram. The ring so given to the Namboodiri was returned and immediately on receiving it back the man disappeared. On the next day Namboodiri went to the Thiruvanchikulam pond and saw the same mystery man near the pond. Upon request he revealed himself as Vasuki and to prove his identity he squeezed himself to a ring similar to the one Lord Parameswaran wore in his finger. At this strange sight, the Namboodiri got fainted. On recovering as blessing the Brahmin asked the Lord's presence in him Illam. Soon after he got the blessings of Vasuki, the Namboodiri returned to his Illam. He put his palm-leaf umbrella in the Kizhakkini of the Mekkattu Illam and went for bath. After the bath when he came to take the umbrella, he saw a snake on the umbrella greeting him. The snake transformed himself to Vasuki and added that Nagayakshi (goddess of serpents) will also soon be presented there.

After a while, the eldest Antharjanam of the Mekkattu Illam came there. She put her palm-leaf umbrella in the portico before stepping into the home. Soon a snake appeared there on the umbrella and slowly moved to the Kizhakkini of Mekkattu Mana and manifested into a beautiful lady. They both ordered the Namboodiri to install them as idols at the place they stand and consider them as their family deities. They also suggested to keep two “Kedavilakku” in the Kizhakkini of the Mekkattu Illam ever lighting. The Mekkattu Namboodiri did everything according to the directions and continued daily rituals to appease them. Thereafter, the Mekkattu Mana (Illam) came to be known as “Pampumekkattu Mana” (pampu means snake in Malayalam) and became prosperous day by day and very famous. The memories of the Great Serpent Gods who to the Pambummekkattu Mana as snakes still fill the hearts of the devotees with blessings and happiness.

Offerings At Pambummekkattu Mana

Vella Nivedyam, Kootupayasam, Palpayasam, Kadalipazha Nivedyam, Manjalpodi Charthal, Vilakkuvekkal, Sarpabali, Payasa Homam, Naga Prathishta, Noorum Palum, Pushpanjali, Malakku, Prathima Pooja, Abhishekamv, Thulabharamv, Annaprasham, Ayilya Pooja and Rahu Pooja. The favourite offering to Serpent Gods is ‘Kadalipazha Nivedyam’(a kind of banana). ‘Noorum Palum’ (lime and milk) is offered only in special occasions. ‘Thulabharam’ and ‘Annaprasham’ are offered to get a baby.

Lamp Oil Prasadam

The oil in the lamp and the collyrium formed by burned wick are given as medicines for skin diseases caused by the rage of snakes. The oil in the ‘Kedavilakku’, kept in the ‘Kizhakkini’ – where Vasuki and Nagayakshi are placed – is given as Prasadam. There are strict methods to use this oil.

Goddess Kali is installed at the central courtyard of Pambum Mekattu Mana. ‘Kootupayasam’ is the main offering. ‘Mudiyettu’ is conducted on either Tuesday, Friday or Sunday in the month of Medam (mid-April). ‘Noorum Palum’ is given to Serpent Gods during festival time and five days long ‘Sarpapattu’ is also conducted.

Special Days

1. First of the month of Vrishchikam (mid November)- Festival
2. Ayilyam in the month of Kanni (mid sept-mid oct).
3. From Thiruvonam to Bharani in the month of Meenam (mid-March to Mid-April).
4. Tenth of the month of Medam (mid of April).

During the festival which is first of Vrishchikam, deity is pleased by giving lime and milk. It is believed that only the members of the Mekkattu family have the right to conduct Sarpabali.

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From the first of Vrishchikam to 41 days, Sarpabali is conducted as a special offering every evening. Other than this, the Bali is conducted on chosen days decided by the Mana. During Mandala kalam (41 days from Vrishchikam 1), ‘Kalamezhuthum Pattum’ is conducted. Only ‘Sarpapattu’ is conducted and not ‘Pulluvanpattu’.

Pulluvan Paatu, the song dedicated to the serpent deities, is the traditional folk music of Kerala rendered to usher in the new year



Folklore in general has been described as man’s dialogue with Nature. Interestingly, its communication assumes varied dimensions with change of seasons. Perhaps, Pulluvan Paattu is a striking paradigm.

August 17 marked the birth of Malayalam new year and the month of Chingam, which is considered auspicious. To welcome a year of prosperity, Pulluvan paatu, a traditional folk song rendered by the members of the Pulluva community, is sung through the month of Karkidakam, which is considered as the month of rain and poverty. Pulluvan (male member of the Pulluva community) and Pulluvatti (woman) would render the songs to the accompaniment of Pulluvan vina, (single string fiddle with a bow), played by the male singer, and Pulluvan kudam (earthen pot with a string attached). The duo visits houses, mostly in the rural areas, to present the songs, for which they will be given rice and other items as a token

of gratitude. For the Pulluvans, majority of whom live in abject penury, such presents are really a treasure.

The Mahabharata connect

Pulluvans are snake worshippers, who render the songs extolling the serpent deities. Excerpted from the epic Mahabharata they describe the lineage of the serpent deities. Interestingly one of the songs narrates the birth of 1000 serpent sons of Kadru, who was one of the two wives of sage Kashyapa. Other songs include king Parikshit's death due to a snake bite; Janamejaya, the son of Parikshit performing a sarpa sacrifice; the encounter between Krishna and Kaliya; serpent Ananta's penance and his becoming Mahavishnu's recliner. The songs are rendered to the accompaniment of the pulluvan vina. The body of the pulluvan vina contains a resonator made of light wood and covered with a lizard's skin.

The pulluvan kudam, the earthen pot, is used to amplify the sound of the string that is held taut with the help of a bamboo piece called kudathum kuzhal and a carefully designed stick. The string is made of two twisted leather thongs. The artiste holds this pot to his left and the string is plucked with the vayanam, the plectrum.

WORSHIP OF SNAKE AS A DIETY

Snakes are animals that fascinate many people while frightening others. Good or bad, most people have strong feelings about snakes, but few people remain neutral [11]. The rituals devoted to the propitiation and supplication of the sarpa, as the common snake is called in Sanskrit, as well as the snake’s supernatural counterpart the Naga are present in the Indian sub-continent for more than two millennia. Worship of the Snake Gods (Naga) has taken a prominent place in various forms of literature, traditional paintings, art, sculpture, folklore, architecture, and so on. The ancient civilizations throughout the world treated Nagas as a part of society. The snake therefore can be seen in old traditional cultures where snakes are the entities of strength and renewal. There are different kinds of festivals associated with Naga/snake throughout India. In northern India king of snakes, Nagaraja is worshiped whereas in southern India; the snakes are worshiped as a whole. Snakes are considered demigods in southern India, especially in Kerala. People in the Hindu religion worship Snakes in temples and in their natural habitats. The devotees offer snake god with milk, incense, and prayers. In Hindu rituals and spiritual tradition, the snakes represent divinity, eternity, materiality, life and death, and time as well as timelessness. It symbolizes the three processes of creation, namely creation, preservation, and destruction. Throughout Kerala there are temples devoted to snake worship. , Kumaranalloor Nagaraja Temple and Madanmarukavu Nagaraja temple in Alanadu. The presence of these temples and the number of devotees visiting these temples point to the deep rooted spiritual beliefs and religious values related to snake worship. This religious tradition in Kerala is directly connected to the ancient mythology and literature of Hinduism in India. The ancient literature and the epics like Mahabharata and Ramayana give ample documents on the Nagas. The characterization of Naga in art is common during the historical period. It is hard to track down when and how Naga Aradhana began in Kerala. Mythology through Keratopathy, a history of Kerala points to the period when Brahmins settled in Kerala after the lord Parasuraman. On the request of Brahmins, Parasuraman allotted a different residential area for the Nagas to eliminate troubles they might cause to human beings. In Hindu mythology Nagas play a prominent role, through various legends. Shesha also called as Aadi shesha or Ananda is the snake on whom Lord Vishnu does his Yoga Nidra (sleep), otherwise called as Ananda Shayna. The snake Vasuki is considered to be the king of Nagas, who allowed demons and gods to use her body

as a rope to bring out the elixir for saving people. Lord Shiva, the god of gods wears a snake around his neck. It is believed that Shiva has given an important place to Nagas. In India, there are families who worship the Naga as their family god and have monuments around their homes and sometimes even inside their homes. The families devoted to Naga worship thus follow rituals to please the snake God. A researcher pointed out how snake worship and protection of the environment correlate to one another and also about the different varieties of snakes present in Kerala.

The Pulluvars - Messengers to the Snake Gods

At the corner of the temple area is a large and ancient Banyan underneath which are the idols of the various snake gods sculpted in stone and adorned with turmeric, vermilion and fresh flower garlands seated on a solitary bench in a corner of the Banyan tree is a hunched old man holding a one stringed musical instrument.



the Pulluvan breaks into a song with his one-stringed musical instrument as his accompaniment. The song bears the mention of the name and star sign that the woman had mentioned. The woman in the meanwhile is bowing down in front of the snake idols to seek their blessings. She is possibly praying for a curse to be lifted or for the good health of her family. It is a ritual that repeats throughout the day with various devotees whose name and *nakshatra* along with the message are conveyed to the snake gods.

The *Pulluvan* is the messenger to the snake gods. Through his music he conveys the prayers of the devotee to the snake gods that have lived in that land. The *Pulluvars* are a caste

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in Kerala that is closely connected to the ritual of serpent worship. The ritual of Serpent worship is an exclusive right of the Pulluvan caste and no other. Thus, the occupation is passed on from one generation to another. They consider the snake gods as their presiding deity (*kula deivam*) of their clan and perform certain sacrifices and sing songs.

Known as 'Pulluvan Paattu', this is performed in the houses of the *pulluvar* caste. Upon invitation they also perform the song and dance ritual at the houses of higher castes, in addition to serpent alcoves in most temples.

They would perform the ritual to invoke the snakes that would be forced out of their natural habitat to make way for a human dwelling. It was thus that a *Sarpakavu* (a shrine for the serpents) would be built before the house is even built. We note that most ancestral homes built in Kerala would have a *Sarpakavu* or a shrine where a lamp is lit every evening and a pooja ritual is performed to the snake gods who lived there.

The curse of a snake is believed to be responsible for many forms of human suffering that could be transferred to future generations. It is believed that a snake if killed, would curse the person and generations of his family would suffer as a consequence. Particularly ill health, marriage proposals not coming through or childlessness are associated with the curse of the snakes that were unintentionally or intentionally killed in the past. It is known as 'sarpa dosha' or the curse of the snakes.

A Pulluvan through his music and rituals possesses the power to appeal to the snake gods and mitigate the curse. Pulluvan pattu, the song of the snake messenger is an enchanting, mesmerising music sung with a one string instrument called the *Naga Veena*. *Pulluvan pattu* evokes nostalgic memories perpetuating an eco-myth. Apart from the songs, the ritual dances associated with *Sarpam Thullal*, the *Pulluvan* women hand over from one generation to another the art of *Kalamezthu*, the art of drawing a ritualistic rangoli using herbal colours or snakes, down the line.

This is an occupation that is transferred from one generation to another.

Although there still are many households that perform the annual snake worship. The occupation does not have too many competitors as all Pulluvans are a closed community and possibly related to each other. If anything, they are a dwindling lot as an occupation, because not many from their families do take up the occupation that can only be passed from one generation to another. Some Ancestral homes commission the Pulluvars to perform, 'Sarpam

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Thullal’ on religious occasions. This is when the members of the Pulluvar community are called upon.

We also spot a woman – *pulluvatti* singing to the snake gods in yet another temple in Alappuzha, Kerala. Evidently Unlike many other occupations, it is not forbidden for women to take up the occupation from their ancestors. There are many who perform alongside their menfolk in *Pulluvan pattu* rituals.

However these rituals do require women to be ‘pure’ which implies that women in their reproductive age that is who would menstruate every month would be prohibited to take up the profession until they have reached menopause. Young girls who have not yet attained puberty are trained in *Pulluvan pattu* and also participate in rituals later on unless they are menstruating during the ritual. In that case they would stay out of the ritual.

This is an occupation that is transferred from one generation to another.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

This chapter teaches us about selling cultural aspects as a tourism product. Specially sarppa pattu as a tourism product. This indicates the importance of the cultural art forms and their relevance. The study is based on the importance of Sarppa pattu as a religious ritual in Hinduism, the general information on the origin of the sarppa pattu and how Sarppa pattu is related to Sarppa dosham. The sarppa pattu have different styles and different songs. and also, there is two kinds of instruments used in sarppa pattu. the musical instruments used by pulluvars on sarppa pattu are Pulluvan veena and Pulluvan kudam.

Just like the rest of the india the caste system was very much prevalent in kerala in ancient times. The people were divided into different cast according to their colour, religion and financial status. Pullva was a community of a lower cast comes under hindu religion. The sarppa pattu was performed and arranged by the pulluva community. Snakes and Snake worship, primarily the cobra and associated sub species of snakes have been revered from ancient times all over India. Snakes are mentioned in Vedic books, or they are depicted in religious epics like Mahabharata and Vishnu Purana. Hindu Gods like Vishnu and Shiva have been associated with snakes. According to Hindu mythology, Lord Vishnu takes rest under the shade of the giant snake, Adishesha. Lord Shiva wears a snake vasuki around his neck. The Nairs of Kerala claim to be Kshatriyas of Nagavanshi descent, thus maybe snake worship was popularized and brought to wider practise by them. Mostly, snakes were seen as a symbol of fertility. Elsewhere in India, snakes are worshiped on Nag Panchami, Nagaradhane and Aashleshabali.

The song performed while sarppa pattu is known as pulluvan pattu. The name Pulluvan originated from the name of a bird called bird of Omen whose cry is considered as ominous and this community can predict from the sound of these birds. The pulluvan pattu is closely connected to the serpent worshipping and they consider the snake gods as their presiding deity and perform certain rituals such as pulluvan pattu. The instruments used for this song are a one stringed violin calle Pulluvan Paattu is an art form of Kerala related to snake worship. The word pulluvan refers to a male member of the low caste group known as pulluvar; pullu means a bird of omen and hence the term probably originated as 'a person who predicts from the sound of birds'.d as Pulluvan veena and earthen pot with a string attached to it called the Pulluvan Kutam. The art of pulluvan paattu is related to rituals of snake worship, ghost worship and magic. Snakes are extensively worshipped in Kerala in serpent temples and sacred groves. As part of the worship, kalam (large geometrical patterns drawn using rice

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powder, turmeric or other colourful powders on the floor to invoke a deity) are drawn, and offerings of noorum paalum (lime and milk) made to the serpent deities. This is followed by pulluvan paattu (also called naagam paattu, sarpapaattu) and sarpam thullal (a rhythmic and frenzied dance with movements often resembling that of snakes). The intensity of the sarpam thullal increases gradually with the music and at its height, their prophecies are believed to come true. The worship ends with the dancers writhing on the floor in a trance and rubbing off the kalam.

Pulluvan paattu is also performed in houses. The ritual is usually conducted on the days considered sacred to snakes like aayilyam day (the star aayilyam). There are many famous temples dedicated to snake worship in Kerala, chief among them being Mannarassala (Alleppey), Paambu Mekkattu (Thrissur).



Ecosystem linkages

Pulluvan paattu is closely connected to nature in many ways. The subject of worship is the snake as a deity. The musical instruments used by the singers are an indigenous veena, kutam and thalam (bell metal cymbals). The veena is made out of a hollow bamboo stick, a wooden shell and brass wire; it is played with a small bow made out of bamboo.

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The kutam is a pot with a hole at the bottom which is covered with a piece of calf skin stretched over it. One end of a string is tied through two holes on the side where the skin is attached and the other end to a long stick with a small splint to elevate it. This string is plucked on to create the music.

The sarpakkalam designs are usually Ashtangakkalam, Nagayakshikkalam, Sarpayakshikkalam, Bhasmakkalam, Sudarsanakkalam, Santhathikkalam, Nagarajakkalam, Nagakaniyakkalam & Anathasayanam. The serpent worship is about 3,000 years old, it became widespread and popular in Kerala in the 7th & 8th century. The idols worshipped in the groves are Nagaraja, Nagayakshi, Chithrakooda kallu, Maninagam, Anjana maninagam & Termite mound. In most of the groves, the deities are seated beneath a tree at the entrance of the grove either on granite or cemented platform or directly on the soil. The rituals & rites associated with the sarpakavu were found to be of two types. In the sarpakavu owned by Namboothiris rituals are in Vedic style involving manthra & thanthra. In the sarpa kavus of Nair, Ezhava & Thandan, the rites & rituals are in primitive type, which comprises Noorum pallam as it is popularly called as Pulluvan pattu & Pambu thullal.

The main sacred groves are Bhagavathi kavu, Durga kavu or Vanadevatha kavu, Ayyappa kavu or Sastha kavu, Madan kavu or Yekshi kavu & Sarpa kavu. In Kerala sacred groves are mostly seen in Kollam, Alappuzha, pathanamthitta, Kannur, Kasarkode, and Kozhikode districts. India has a rich history of serpent worship. The hooded serpent, known as *naga* or *sarppam*, is venerated and worshipped in different parts of the country. In the book *The Sun and the Serpent* written by religious historian C.F. Oldham, serpents are described as demigods who are ‘the celestial serpents belonging to Surya’ (the sun god).

Serpent worship or ophiolatry is deeply rooted in the tradition of Kerala since time immemorial. The *sarppakavus* (serpent groves) in many parts of Kerala are maintained and protected by Hindu families. Each *kavu* (grove) has a protector family that is supposed to ensure that the kavu’s flora and fauna is not disturbed or destroyed, and they conduct occasional pujas and light lamps. It is believed that cutting down trees and killing snakes in a sarppakavu is a sin which invites the curse of the serpents. Sarppakavus in Kerala are rich in exotic flora and fauna,

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especially medicinal plants. Apart from the sarppakavus found in Kerala, one can also find many other kavus (groves) dedicated to local deities and demigods. They are broadly categorised as *mrigadaivakavukal* (dedicated to animal gods) which includes the sarppakavus, *ammadaivakavukal* (dedicated to mother goddesses), and *purushadaivakavukal* (dedicated to male gods).

People draw elaborate colourful pictures on the floor with *sarppakalam* (images of serpents) with natural colours. Each colour is also associated with symbolic implications; green symbolises fertility and is made by crushing leaves of gulmohar and bead tree, rice flour is used to make the white colour symbolising purity, black means strength and is made by burning rice chaff and powdering charcoal, yellow made from turmeric powder shows faith, and red made from a mixture of turmeric powder and lime (calcium carbonate) is anger. The kalam (figure) is drawn by members of the Pulluva community of Kerala and is regarded as their birth right.

Once the drawings are completed, the Pulluva people start singing the Pulluvan pattu with musical instruments specific to the serpent worship ritual. Men and women dance in a frenzy in serpent-like motions to the tune of Pulluvan pattu and rub out the sarppakalam. Pulluvan pattu invokes the serpent gods and it is believed that anyone standing near the sarppakalam is possessed by the gods. When asked, the devotees in trance identify themselves as Nagaraja, Nagayakshi or other serpent deities and bless the gathering. The ritual culminates when the sarppakalam is erased completely.

TEMPLES DEVOTED TO NAGARAJA

Mannarasala Sree Nagaraja Temple

Mannarasala Sree Nagaraja Temple is one of the very few temples in India, dedicated exclusively for serpents. This temple is under the patronage of a Brahmin family headed by a priestess, whereas in all other temples, only males are allowed to do poojas. The ancient temple is an internationally renowned pilgrim centre dedicated to the serpent God Nagaraja. It was the temple, directly installed by Lord Parasuram himself, who is believed to be the creator of Kerala. As per the mythology, Sarpa Yakshi and Naga Yakshi are the beloved consorts of Nagaraja. It is believed that Nagaraja as the installed deity is endowed with the form of lord Vishnu and the spirit of lord Shiva. Legend says that the first priestess of Mannarasala gave birth to a five headed snake.

Here, barren women are believed to be blessed with children praying to the serpents. A special turmeric paste given at the shrine is credited with powers to cure leprosy too. There are over thousands of snake idols seen in the temple premises. Women seeking fertility, come to worship here. Upon the birth of their child, they instal snake images around the temple as thanksgiving. ‘Mannarasala Ayilyam’ is the main festival of this temple celebrated in the months of September and October. All the serpent idols in the region around the temple are taken in procession. The oldest female member of the family carries the idol of the Nagaraja and the procession is conducted with great pomp and rejoyce. The temple is frequented by a lot of snakes all over among the pilgrims. None have been reported by its bite is an amazing fact.

Ameda Temple

Ameda temple is one of the famous snake adoring temples in Kerala, located on the banks of Vembanad Lake, on the Tripunithura-Vaikom route, 20kms south of Ernakulam. The temple is unique in its status as an abode of snake idols brought from abandoned groves across Kerala. Most of the villages have Sarpa Kavu, where idols of snakes are consecrated below Banyan trees of villages. One of the very important temples dedicated to Naga Raja and Naga Yakshi is located in Ameda temple .

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The name Ameda itself point to the history of the temple. Once the ‘Sapthamathrukkal’, the Gods to whom the temple is dedicated, including Veerabhadhran, Ganapathy, Brahmini, maheshwari, kowmari, vaishnavi, varahi, indirani and chamundi were traveling through the lake mounted on a tortoise. Temples dedicated to Nagaraja and Nagayakshi are in the north-west and North –east of this temple. Towards the North there is a temple dedicated to Maha Vishnu. It is believed that Sage Parsurama who came to this place once was doing Sandhyavandana in the back waters near the temple. Suddenly he saw a very bright light in the middle of the water. As we enter the temple, we can see many idols of snakes made up of different materials. Mostly carved in rock, the sculptures are a part of the sacred grove in the temple. While Sapthamathrukkal is the main deity of the sanctum sanctorum, there are shrines dedicated to Nagaraja & Nagayakshi in the northwest & northeast, and a shrine dedicated to Mahavishnu in the north respectively. Sage Parasurama built a huge temple dedicated to the seven mothers at this place and gave the responsibility of looking after it to a Namboodiri family, who settled down there. Later over years the name Aama ninna idam came to be known as Ameda.

Pambummekkattu Mana, situated at Vadama near Mala Town, Mukundapuram Taluk in Thrissur District, Kerala. It is believed that the divine presence of “Vasuki” and “Nagayakshi” are there in the “Kizhakkini” of Pambummekkattu Mana. Daily poojas are offered to Nagaraja and Naga Yakshi residing in the eastern portion of Mekkattu Mana. The Pambu Mekkattu is spread over six acres of land with five sarpakavu. The Mekkattu Namboodiri’s also treated the outsiders but now due to the advance in medical science people rarely comes for it.

The oldest member of the family is the head of the Mana members who have covered teenage are given administrative power. A trust is formed and each trustee will get an year’s administration. The mantras and the rituals are passed from one generation to another orally. The members of the family are bound to follow the rules. The devotees are to strictly follow the instruction of the administrator. When something affects the sanctity of the premises, poojas (rituals) will be restarted only after “Punyaham” (cleansing). When such things happen snakes are seen in waste ditch, indicating.

SARPPAM IN HINDU MYTHOLOGY

Kavu is the traditional name given for sacred groves across the Malabar Coast in Kerala, South India. The site is believed to be inhabited by snakes, and the area usually contains a representation of Manasa ('Goddess of the Snakes'), *Naga Raja* (*King of the Snakes*), and other *Naga Devatas* (*snake deities*), where offerings and rites are performed during special ceremonies. This is a Hindu ritual performed by certain sects of Namboothiri's, and all castes hold the Sarpa Kavu in reverence, with access forbidden to the area unless for due ceremonies. Mythology says that Kerala was created from the Arabian Sea and given to the Brahmins (Namboothiri's) as a "donation" by Parasuraman to save himself from the sins of killing numerous Kshatriyas. The land was full of forests and poisonous snakes were found in plenty. So, the Brahmins refused to stay there. Parasuraman requested Lord Shiva to provide a solution. Shiva told Parasuraman to start worshipping Manasa, Ananthan, and Vasuki the king of snakes. Parasuraman did so and they advised him to start snake worship in Kerala and provide some forests, especially for snakes in the form of Sarppakkavu (Snake forests). Parasuraman later installed the idols of Goddess Manasa, Ananta, and Vasuki at Mannarsala (near Harippadu in Alappuzha district) and Vettikkottu (near Kayamkulam in Alappuzha district) and started worshipping them. The Brahmins also worshipped Goddess Manasa, Anantha, and Vasuki and the pleased snake deities made Kerala suitable for living. Sarpa Kavus even helps in soil and water conservation besides preserving its rich biological wealth. The ponds and streams adjoining the groves are perennial water sources. These are the last resorts for many of the animals and birds for their water requirements, especially during summer. Sacred groves also enrich the soil through their rich litter composition. The nutrients generated thus are not only recycled within the sacred grove ecosystem but also find their way into the adjoining agroecosystem systems.

ORIGIN OF SARPPAPATTU AND ITS HISTORY



A ritual art form was performed at Sarpa Kavu (Serpent Grove), temples dedicated to Naga (Snake, God), and rarely in households. Performed and supervised by the people belonging to Pulluva Community, Sarpam Pattu is also known as Pambu Thullal, Pambin Kalam, Nagham Pattu, and Sarpolsavam. This art form is performed by women artists after observing the required austerities. Held on the *Ayilyam* asterism of the Malayalam months *Kanni* (September-October), *Thulam* (October-November), and *Kumbha* (February-March), the performance will be accompanied by percussion instruments such as Pulluva Vena and Kudam.

Sarpakkalam (ritual powder drawing) will be drawn in the temporary thatched hut (Pandal) made for the performance. Kalams such as *Sarpayakshi Kalam*, *Nagayakshi Kalam*, and *Ashtanga Kalam* will be visualized us multi-colored powder by the pulluvan. Then Pandal will be decorated with lamps and things like rice, coconut, betel leaf Vettatta), areca nut (pazhukka), and a pot of milk will be placed in the pandal. Once the Kalam pooja has been completed, the performer will be invited to the stage.

The performer's dancing will be conceived as Nagaraja (Snake King), Naagayakshi (Snake goddess), Sarpayakshi (Serpent goddess), Maninagam, Erinagam, Karina gam, Kuzhi nagam, Para Nagam, and Kanyavu. The woman performer with the cluster of areca nut leaf (Kavuginpookula) starts dancing once the ritualistic ululation is over and is accompanied by the song sung by Pulluvan along with Veena, Kudam, and Kamani. As the songs reach their peak, the dance will also become more frenzied. And finally, the dancer will erase the Kalam.

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Mannarsala Sree Nataraja Temple, the foremost centre of serpent worship, is located in the middle of a 16-acre dense lush green grove. Off 3 km from NH 47 near Haripad, in the Alappuzha district, this unique temple has two sanctum sanctorum, and the rituals associated with the temple are different. The presiding deity is Nagaraja, who has the form of Vishnu and the spirit of Shiva. Sarpayakshi and Nagayakshi are his consorts. The custodian of the shrine is an ancient brahmin family of Mannarsala. The striking departure is that the rites are headed by a priestess, popularly called Amma. Along with hymns, the temple premises reverberate with pulluvan pattu (music rendered by members of the Pulluva community). The soft music offered on the eastern side of the temple in accompaniment of small veenas is meant to earn the blessings of divine serpents. pulluva women use a special kind of covered earthen pot connected with strings to produce enchanting music in the environment. The belief was that gods and goddesses existed at the feet of open grooves (kaavu). Every traditional Hindu family used to have a sarppa kavu. (Sacred grove which is the abode of snakes). As the pressure on land increased, it became difficult to set aside land for kaavu. Many of the images in the temple are those brought by families who were unable to maintain the sacred groves. Snakes are considered very powerful divine spirits who are not to be trifled with. Those who incur their wrath face the prospect of mental and physical agony. To appease them, expiation ceremonies have to be performed.

The real history of the ancient shrine is lost in a maze of legends, folklore, time, and memory. The temple traces its origins to antiquity. But it is linked to the mythical Parasuraman. It is believed that the land of Kerala rose from the sea when Parasuraman hurled his axe into the sea from Gokarna. The land became fertile only after the creator did penance to propitiate Nagaraja, the serpent king. Literally meaning the place where the soil has cooled down, Mannarasala is the deserted jungle chosen by him to do the penance. Parasuraman himself installed at the hallowed spot Nataraja's idol and assigned a priest to conduct poojas at the shrine.

Naga or sarppam, is venerated and worshipped in different parts of the country. In the Sun and the Serpent written by religious historian C.F Oldham, serpents are described as demigods who are 'the celestial serpents belonging to Surya' (the sun god). Oldham says:

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“It is to these ancient deities, rather than to the great gods of the Brahmins, that the Hindu people first turn in times of trouble. To the Naga, they pray for rain for their crops... they pay their vows in times of pestilence or famine. To these also, they offer the first milk of their cows and first fruits of their harvest.”

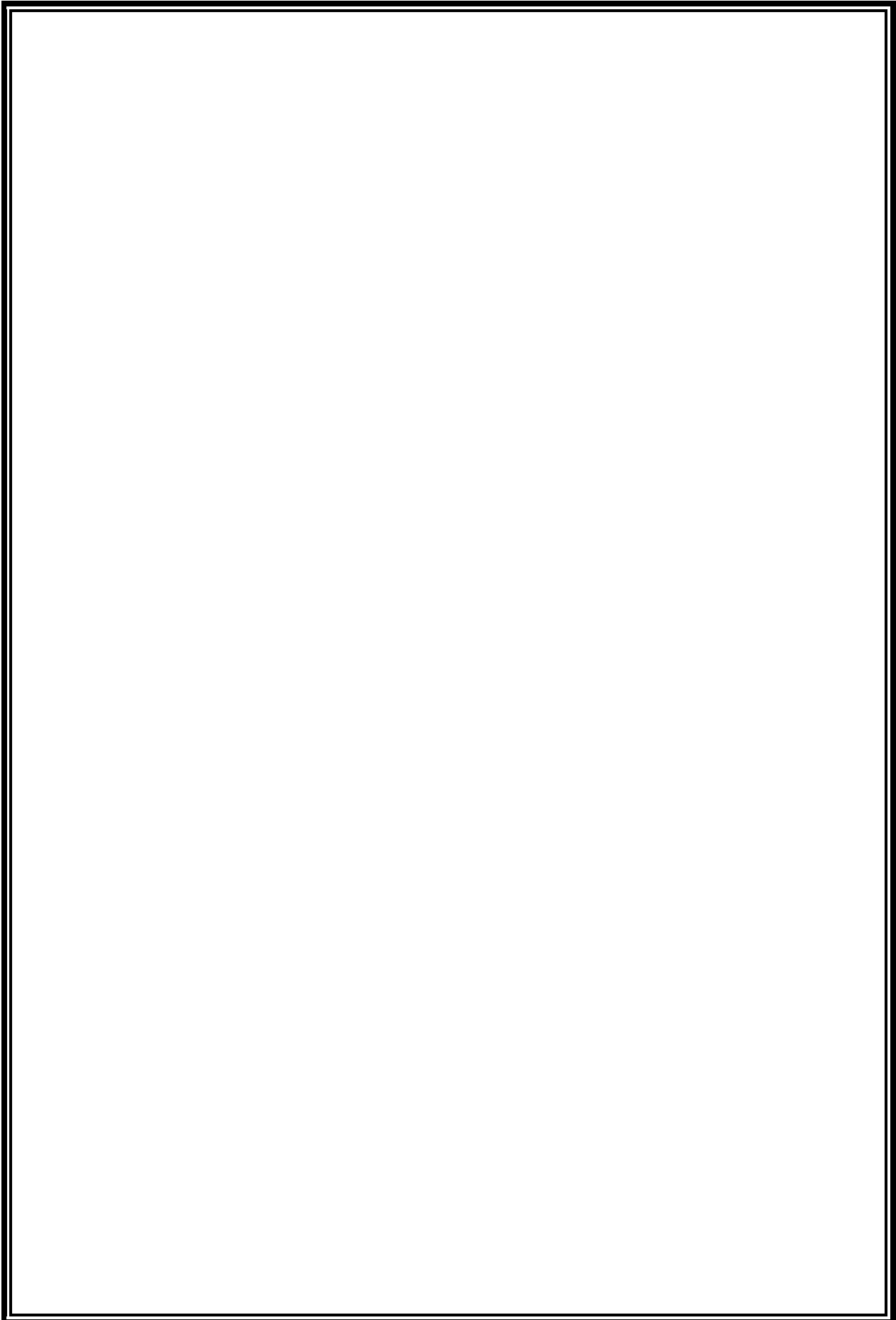
Serpent worship or ophiolatry is deeply rooted in the tradition of Kerala since time immemorial. The sarppakavus (serpent groves) in many parts of Kerala are maintained and protected by Hindu families. Each kavu (grove) has a protector family that is supposed to ensure that the kavu’s flora and fauna are not disturbed or destroyed, and they conduct occasional pujas and lights lamps.

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DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT



DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETAION

1. Do you know about Sarpa pattu

Responses	No: of respondent	percentage
Yes, I know	7	31.8%
I've heard about it	10	45.5%
I don't know	5	22.7%
Total	22	100

Table4.1

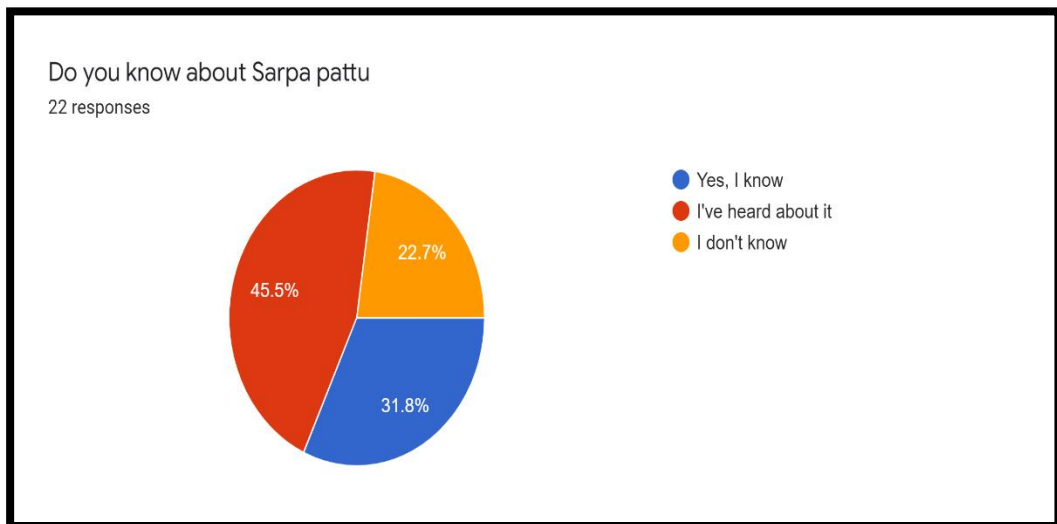


Figure4.1

Interpretation: Here , most of the people heard about the Sarpa pattu. They are of 45.5%. They know some aspects about the Sarpa pattu and it’s importance. 31.8% are fully know about the sarpa pattu and its importance and history.22.7% didn’t know anything about this art form/ritual.

2. Did you know about the Aameda and Mannarsala temple

Responses	No: of respondent	percentage
I've visited the temple	7	31.8%
I don't know about the temple	15	68.2%
Total	22	100

Table4.2

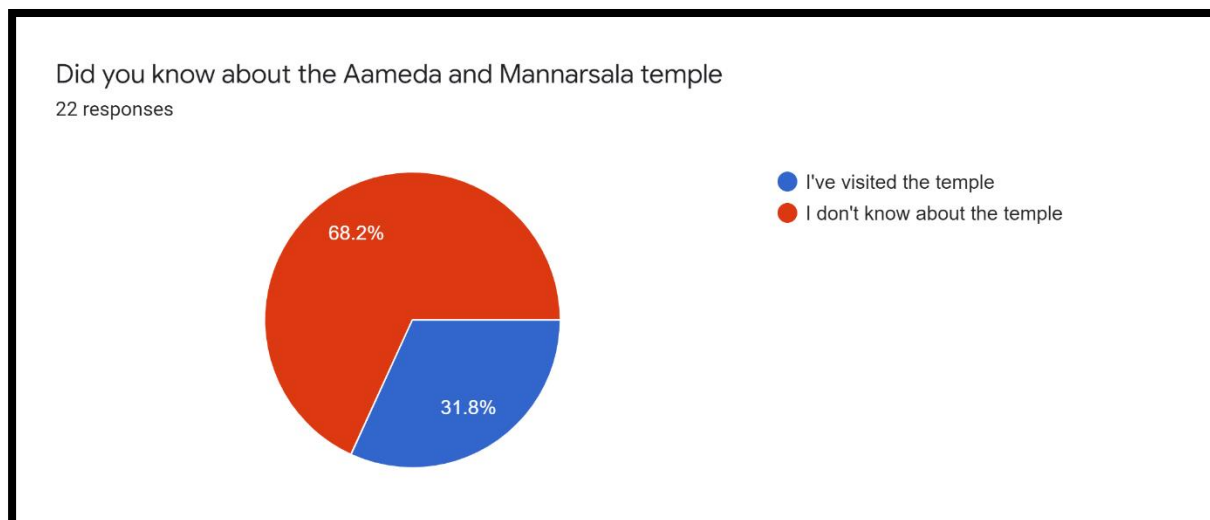


Figure4.2

Interpretation : In this chart it shows that 68.2% of people don't know about the Aameda ana Mannarshala temple. Only 31.8% people knows about the temple and it rituals and importance.

3. Are you aware of the relevance of sarpa pattu and the history behind it.

Responses	No: of respondent	percentage
Yes, I know	8	26.4%
NO I don't	14	63.3%
Total	22	100

Table4.3

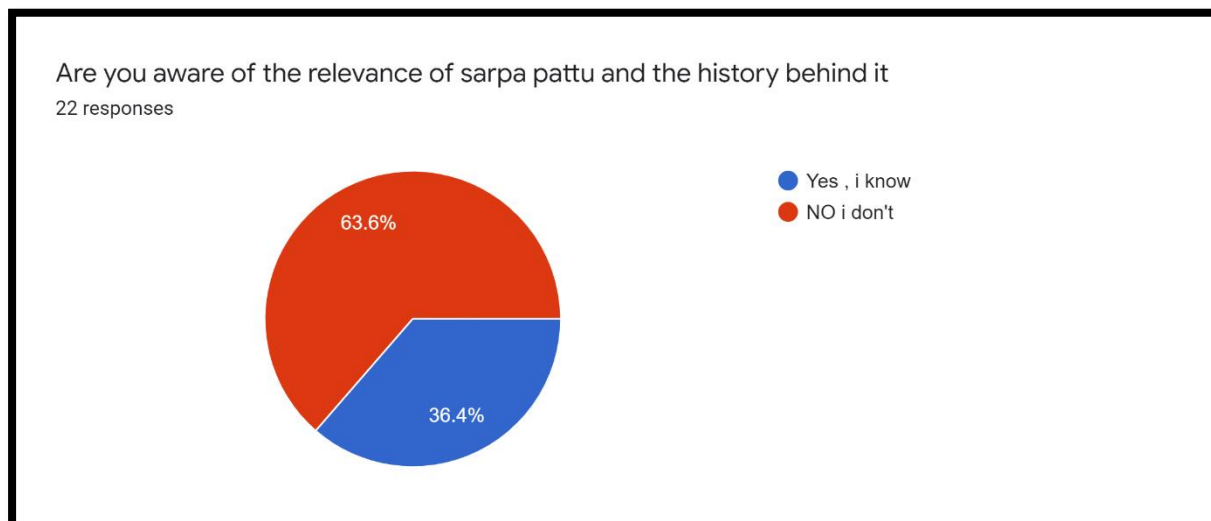


Figure4.3

Interpretation: Most of the people didn't know about the relevance of the sarpa pattu and its history. 63.6% don't know about it. Only 36.4% knows the relevance and history.

4. Do you think we can promote sarapa pattu as a tourism product

Responses	No: of respondent	percentage
Yes	7	31.8%
No	7	31.8%
Maybe	8	36.4%
total	22	100

Table4.4

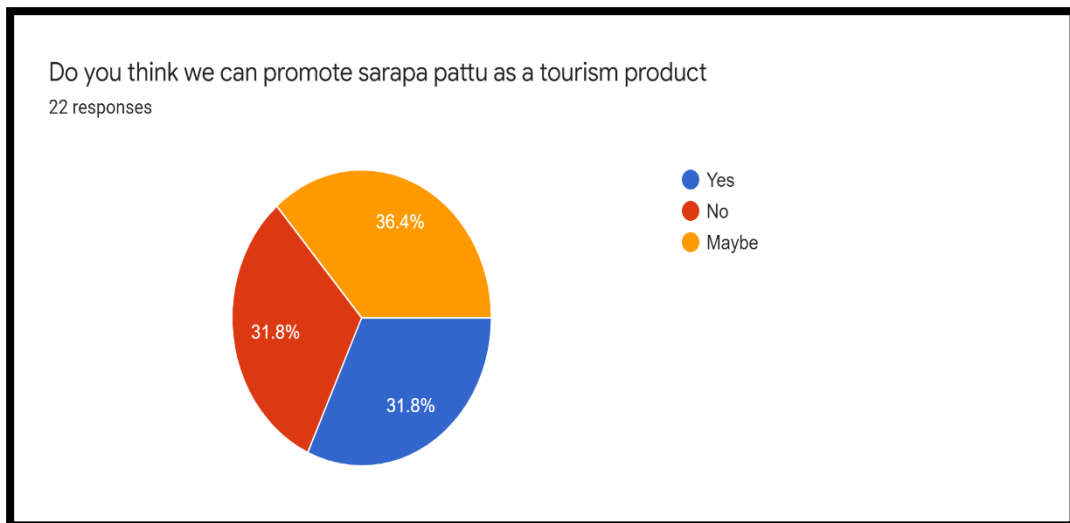


Figure4.4

Interpretation: this chart depicts that the 36.4% people thinks that we can promote sarapa pattu as a tourism product . they know about the art form and they think that they can sell sarappa pattu as a tourism

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

5. Did you believe that sarpa pattu is important to get rid of sarpa dosham

Responses	No: of respondent	percentage
Yes	9	40.9%
No	4	18.2%
Maybe	9	40.9%
Total	22	100

Table4.5

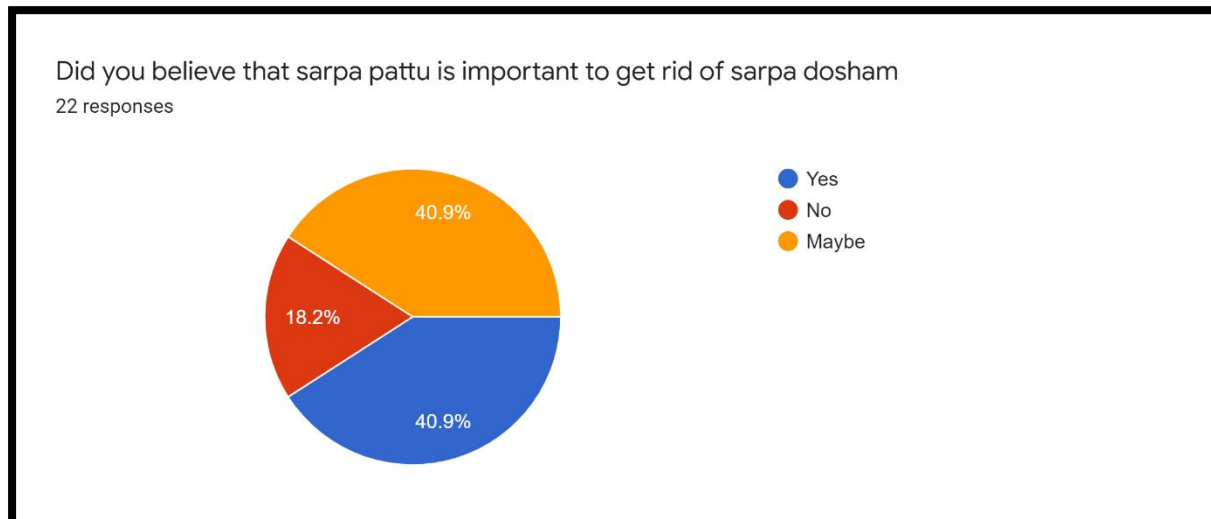


Figure4.5

Interpretation: this chart shows that most of the people thinks that sarpa pattu is important to get rid os sarpa dosham. there is 40.9% of people who thinks sarpa pattu is important for get rid of sarpa dosham.

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

6. Did you know about "Sarpa Kavvu"

Responses	No: of respondent	percentage
Yes	17	77.3%
No	5	22.7%
Total	22	100

Table4.6

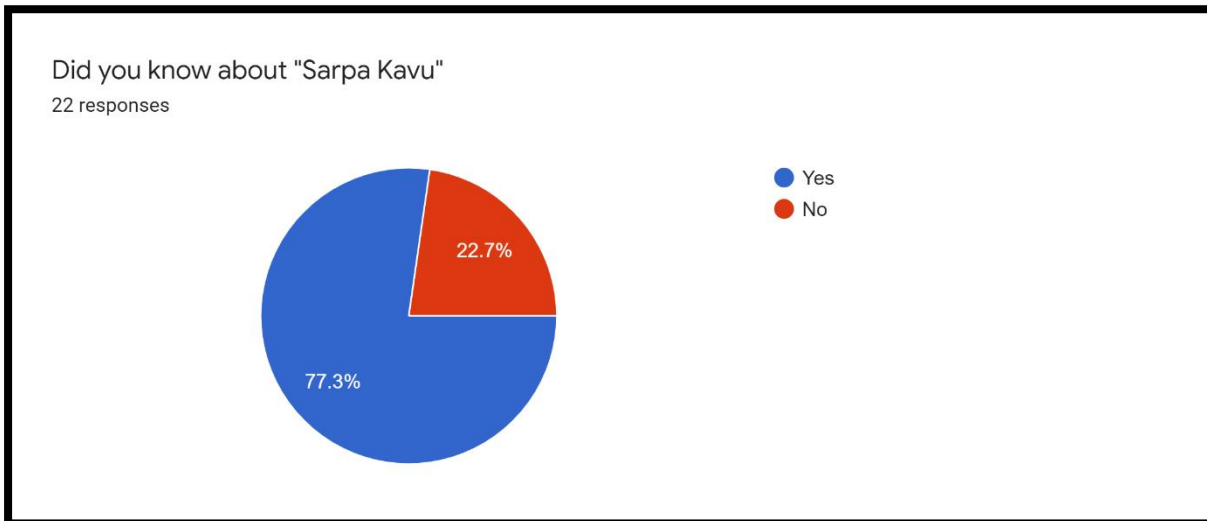


Figure4.6

Interpretation: This chart explains that 77.3% of people know about sarpa kavvu. 22.7% of people didn't know about sarpa kavvu.

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

7. Do you know about the months in which sarpa pattu is performing

Responses	No: of respondent	percentage
Yes	17	22.7%
No	5THis	77.3%
Total	22	100

Table4.7

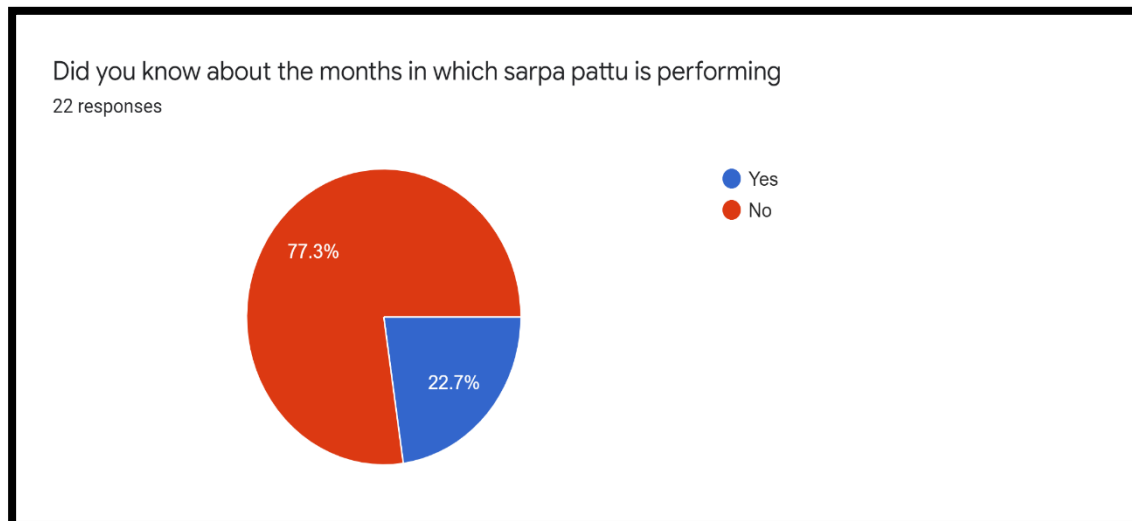


Figure4.7

Interpretation: This pie chart represents an average of 77.3% of people didn't know about the months in which sarpa pattu is performing. Only 22.7% of people know the exact month in which sarpa pattu is performing.

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

8. Did you know about the history of the ancient shrine Mannarsala

Responses	No: of respondent	percentage
Yes , i 've heard about it	10	45.5%
No, I'm not aware of it	12	54.5%
Total	22	100

Table4.8

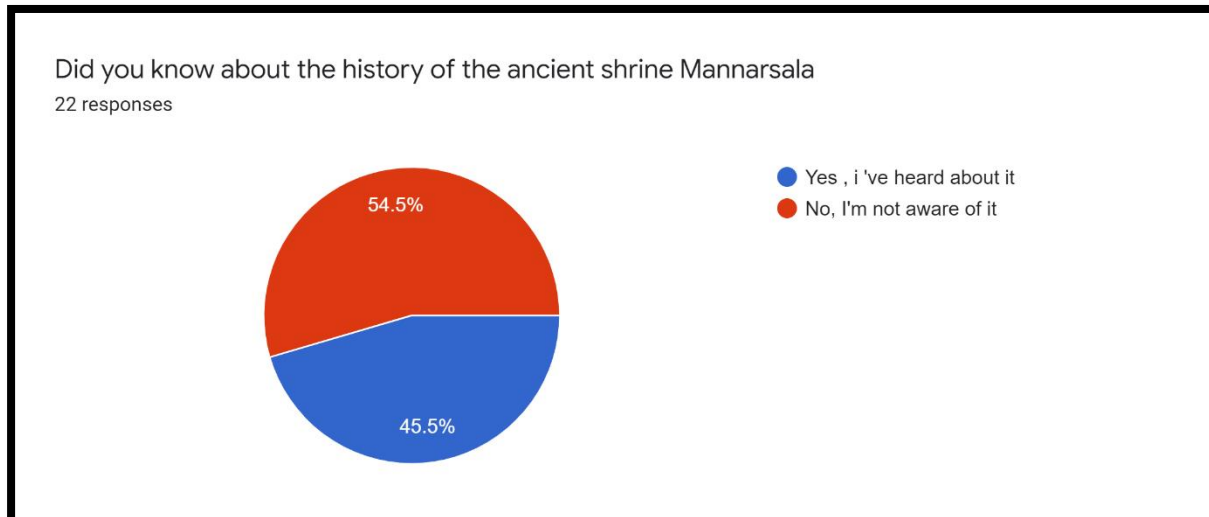


Figure4.8

Interpretation: this chart represents that 54.5% of people didn't know about the history of the ancient shrine Mannarshala. The rest of the people that is 45.5% of respondents know the history of the temple.

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

9. Did you know the legend behind sarpa pattu

Responses	No: of respondent	percentage
Yes	14	63.6%
No	8	36.4%
Total	22	100

Table4.9

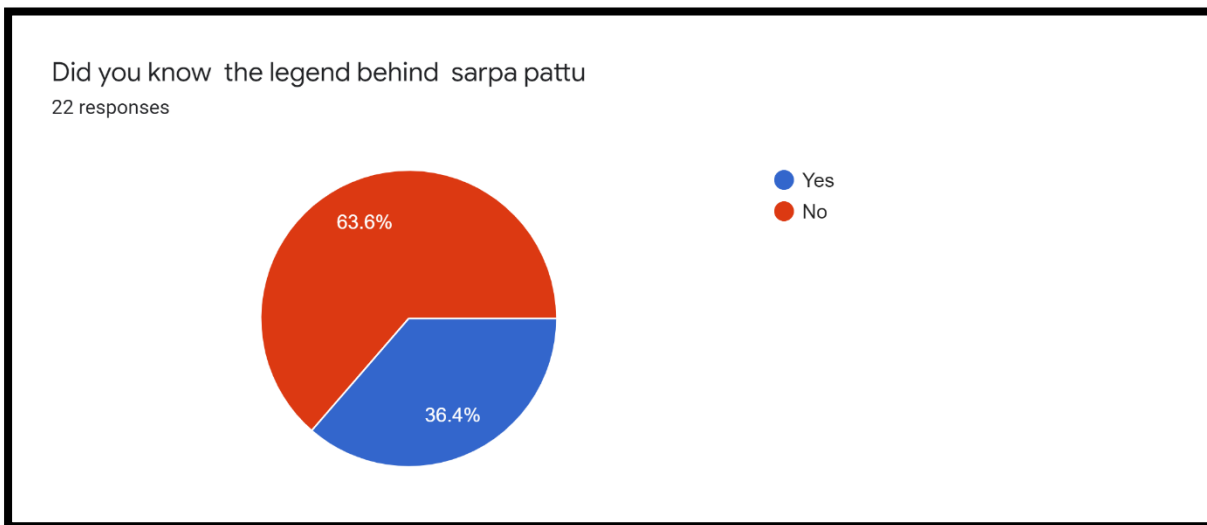


Figure4.9

Interpretation :Most of the peopl didn't know about the legend behind the sarpa pattu. That is a percentage of 63.6%.

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

10. Did you know about the famous offerings in the shrine

Responses	No: of respondent	Percentage
Yes	8	36.4%
No	14	63.6%
Total	22	100

Table4.10

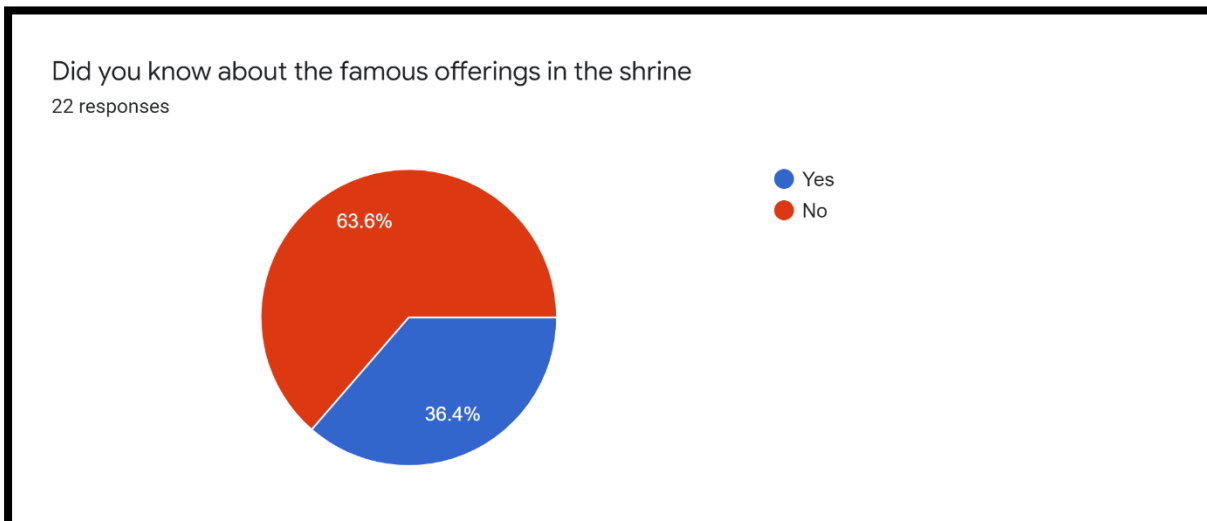


Figure4.10

Interpretation: this chart represents the number of respondents who know about the famous offering at the temple is 36.4%. Rest of the 63.3% of respondents didn't know about the offering in the temple.

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

11.How many names did sarpa pattu have.

Responses	No: of respondent	Percentage
5	5	22.7%
3	3	27.3%
2	2	18.2%
1	1	31.8%
Total	22	100

Table4.11

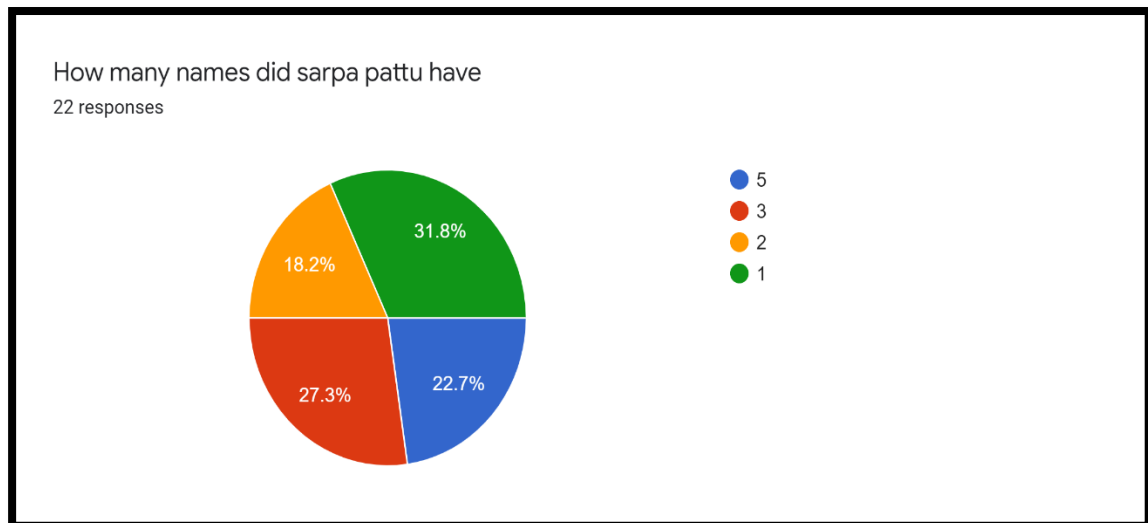


Figure4.11

Interpretation : most of the people believes that the sarpa pattu have only one name . it depicts an percentage of 31.8% . 27.3% of peopl says that tehr is 3 names fir the sarpa pattu.

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

12.What do they devote to art form

Responses	No: of respondent	Percentage
Nagaraja	14	63.6%
Maharaja	4	18.2%
None of the above	4	18.2%
Total	22	100

Table4.12

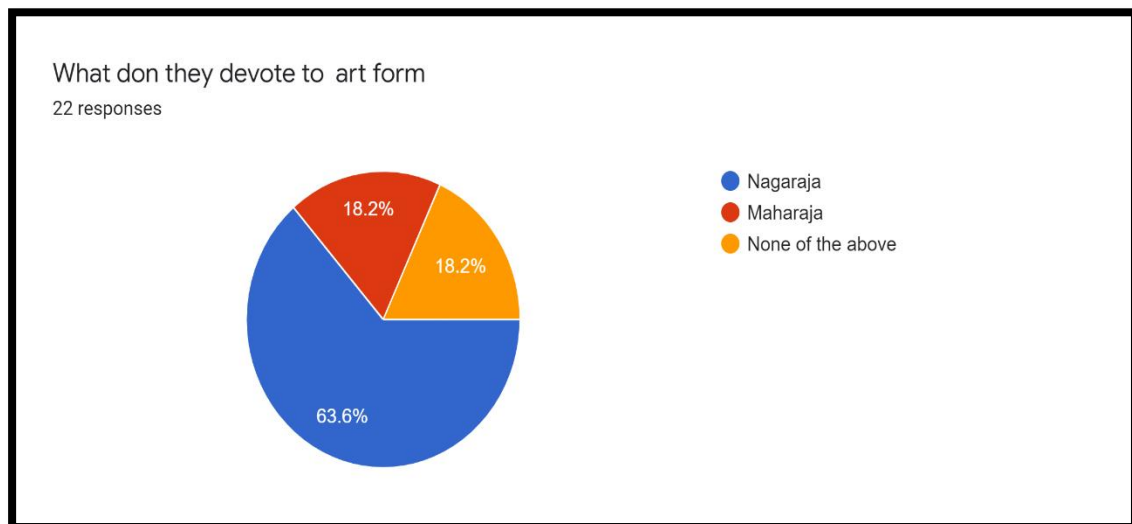


Figure4.12

Interpretation: This pie chart shows that 63.6% of respondents knows that the main devotee in sarpa pattu is Nagaraja. 18% of respondents thinks that it is representing Maharaja.

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

13. Who performs the sarpa art form

Responses	No: of respondent	Percentage
Man	6	72.7%
Women	16	27.3%
Total	22	100

Table4.13

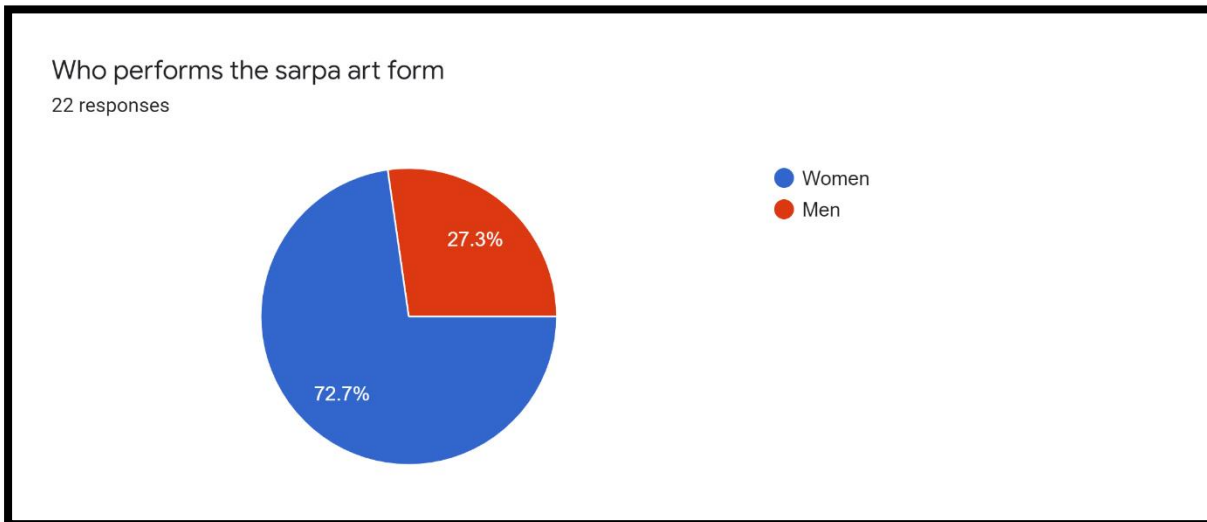


Figure4.13

Interpretation: This chart shows that the 72.2% of respondents know that sarppa pattu is performed by women. 27.3% of respondents doesn't know about it .

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

14. Do they decorate the art form of sarpa

Responses	No: of respondent	Percentage
Yes	10	45.5%
No	3	13.6%
Maybe	9	40.9%
Total	22	100

Table4.14

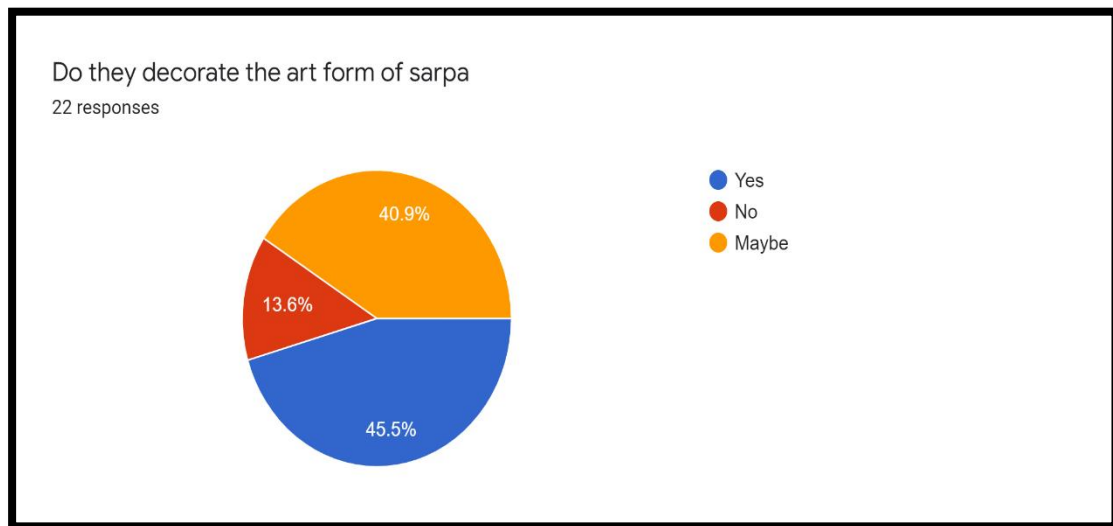


Figure4.14

Interpretation: In this chart 45.5% respondents says that they decorate the sarpa art form. 40.9% of respondents are saying maybe they decorate the art form.

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

15. Where does sarpa patu performed

Responses	No: of respondent	Percentage
Sarpa kavu	7	31.8%
Temples devoted to Nagaraja	7	31.8%
Households	3	13.6%
All of the above	5	22.7%
Total	22	100

Table4.15

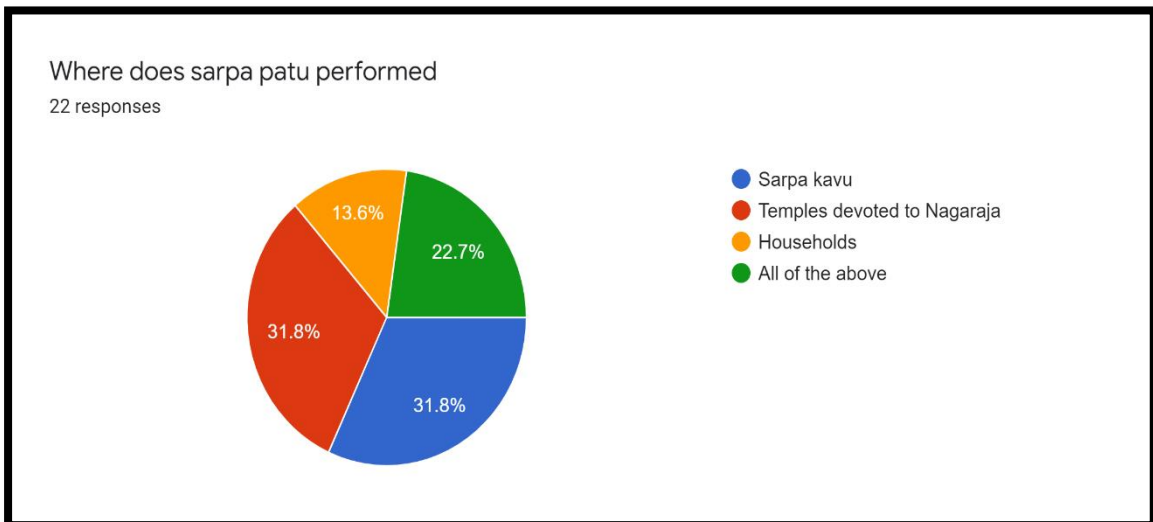


Figure4.15

Interpretation: this chart shows that the 31.8% of respondents knows that the sarpa pattu is performed in the Sarpa kavu. 31.8% depicts that sarpa pattu is performed at temples devotted to Nagaraja.

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

16. What kind of powder do they use in sarpa artform

Responses	No: of respondent	Percentage
Natural colors	17	77.3%
Artificial colors	5	22.7%
Total	22	100

Table4.16

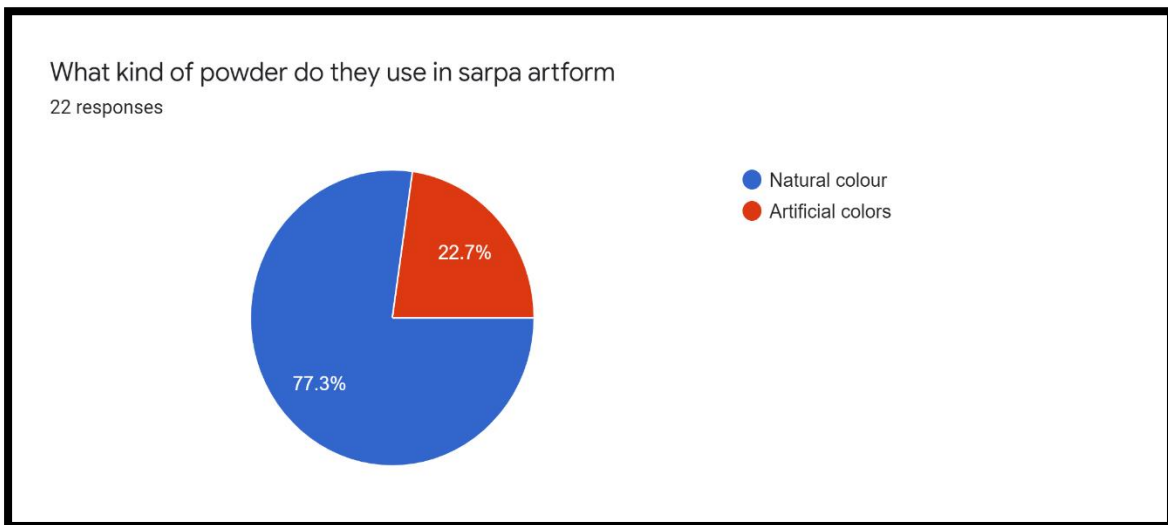


Figure4.16

Interpretation: This chart shows that 77.3% of respondents knows that natural color is used by the sarpa pattu. 22.7% respondents shows that artificial colors are using.

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

17.How many colors did they use in the sarpa art form

Responses	No: of respondent	Percentage
5	11	50%
3	3	13.6%
2	2	9.1%
4	6	27.4%

Table4.17

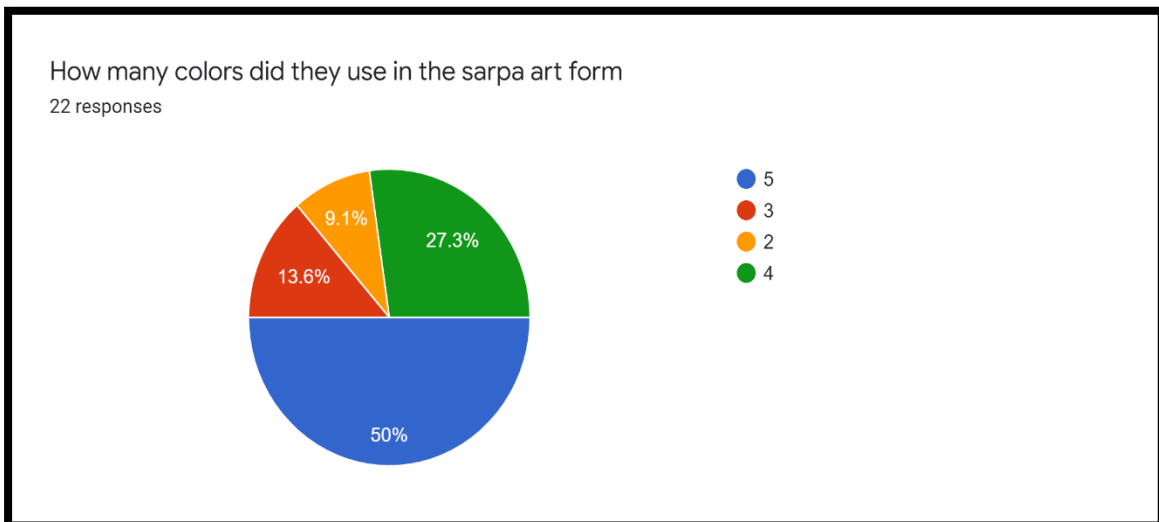


Figure4.17

Interpretation: This chart shows that the 50% of people knows that 5 colors are used in sarpa pattu art form to decorate. 27.3% says that 4 colors are using in this art form.

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

18.What do they mainly draw in sarpam art form

Responses	No: of respondent	Percentage
Snake idol	7	77.3%
Other idols	3	13.6%
None of the above	2	9.1%

Table4.18

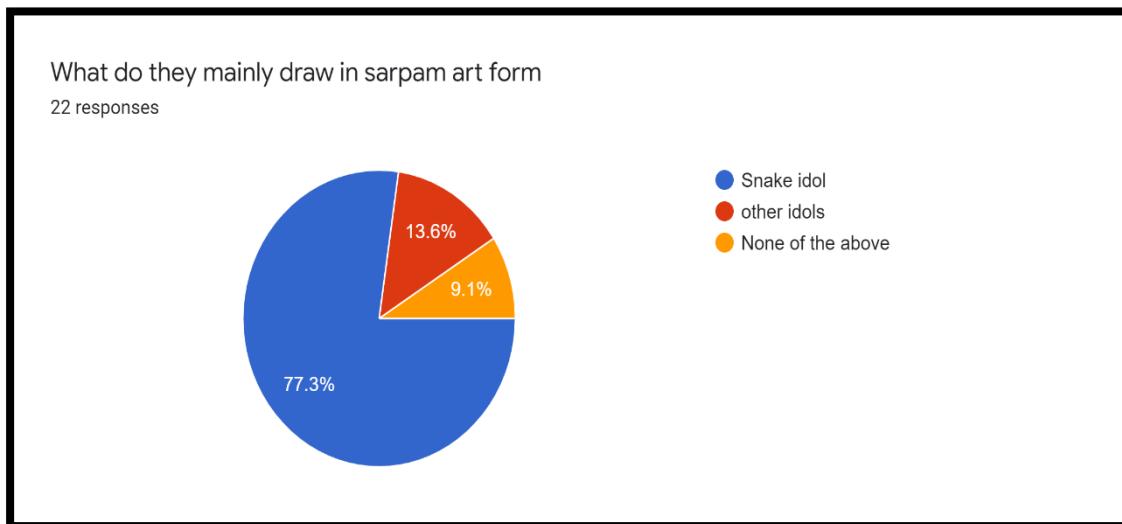


Figure4.18

Interpretation: This chart shows that the 77.3% says that sanake idol is mainly drw in the art form.13.6% says that other idols are drawn in the sarpa pattu.

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

19.What is the name of the floral decoration done in sarpam art form

Responses	No: of respondent	Percentage
Nagakalam	15	68.2%
Karnavas	5	22.7%
None of the above	2	9.1%
Total	22	100

Table4.19

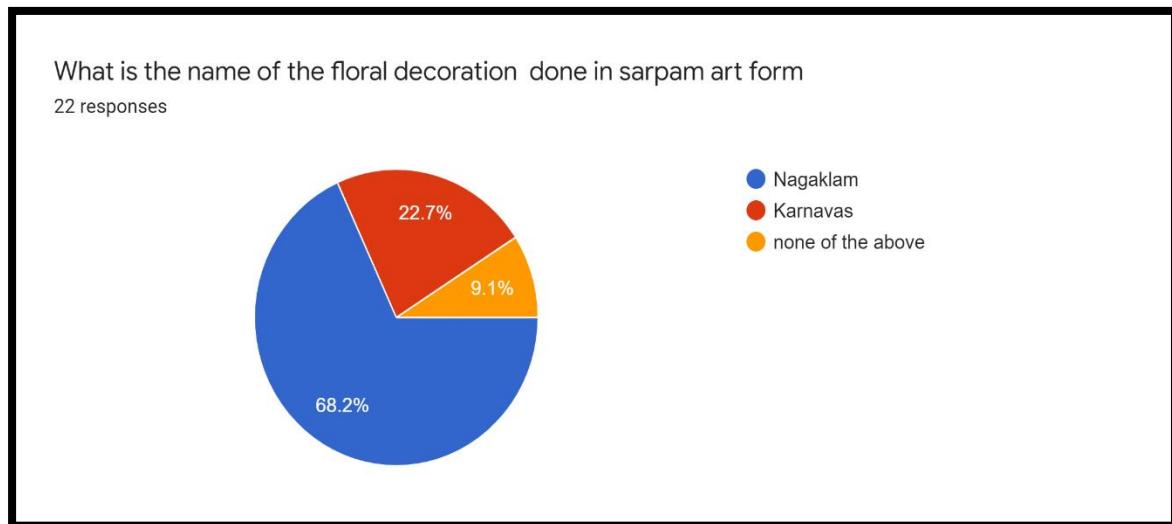


Figure4.19

Interpretation: In this chart 68.2% of respondents says that Nagakalam is the floral decoration that is done in the sarpa pattu art form. 22.7 % says that Karnavas are the floral decoration done while the performance but 9.1% of them choose non of the above.

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

20.How many types are the floral decoration done in sarpa art form

Responses	No: of respondent	Percentage
2	2	27.3%
3	5	22.7%
4	4	27.3%
1	1	22.7%
Total	22	100

Table4.20

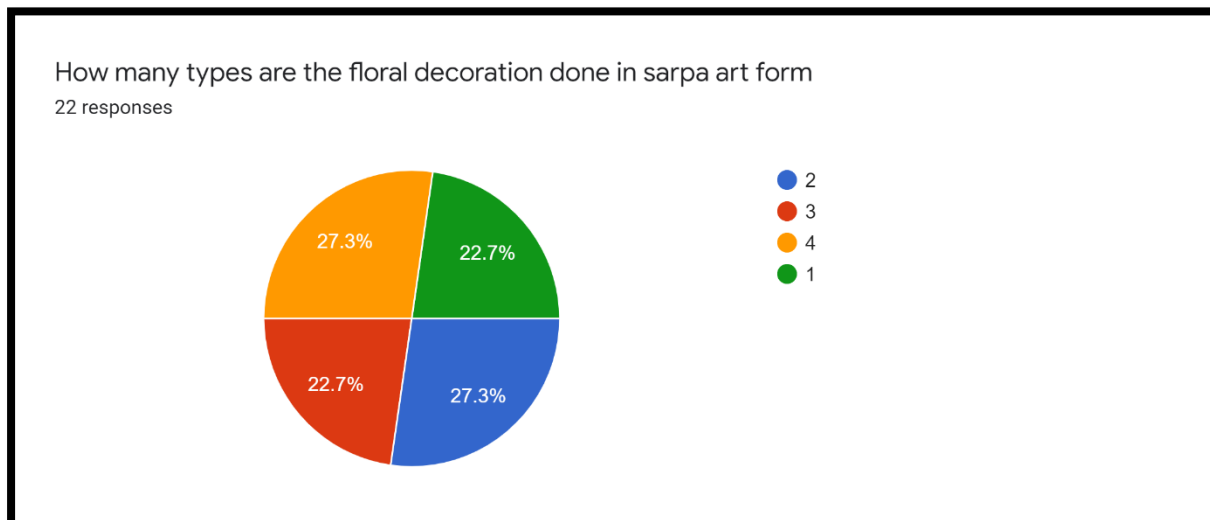


Figure4.21

Interpretation: Here there is 27.3% respondents says that there are 2 types of floral decorations. And 27.3% of people says that there are 4 types of floral decorations. 27.3% of respondents says that there are 1 type of floral decorations are in sarpa apattu.

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

21. Do you think that sarppam pattu comes to an extinction

Responses	No: of respondent	Percentage
Yes	9	40.9%
No	6	27.3%
Maybe	7	31.8%
Total	22	100

Table4.22

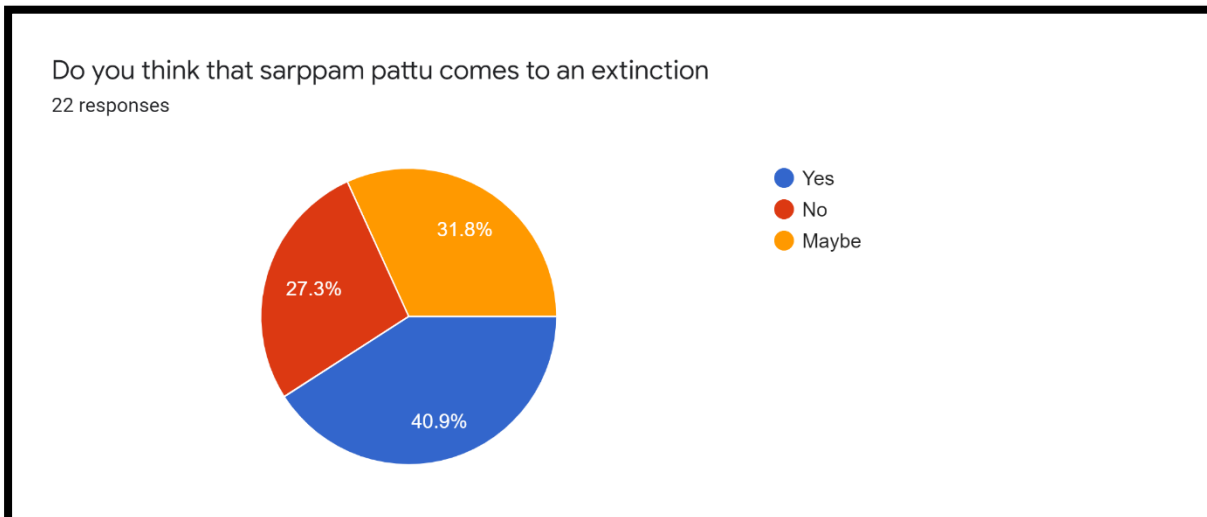


Figure4.22

Interpretation: In this pie chart 40.9% of respondents says that sarpa pattu is coming yo an extinction . 31.8% respondents says that sarpa pattu maybe comes to an extinction. And 27.3% chooses that it will not comes to an extinction.

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

FINDINGS:

- Most of the people in Kerala know about sarppa pattu and they believe that sarppa pattu is needed for getting rid of sarppa dosham.
- Sarppa pattu is mainly performed at temples devoted to Nagaraja. And in some households.
- Pulluvan community is the community that performs sarppa pattu . it is known as pulluvan pattu.
- Pulluvan veena and pulluvan kudam are the two instruments used while performing sarppa pattu / pulluvan pattu.
- The sarppa pattu is performed by women.
- Mannarshala, Aameda, and pampummekavu are the main three temples that are devoted to Nagaraja.
- Mannarshala temple is famous for snake worship and rituals that are held over there.
- Sarppa pattu is also performed in sarppa kavu or sacred grooves.

SUGGESTIONS :

- Everybody should be aware of the art forms in Kerala especially those related to rituals and casts.
- Sarpa pattu should be promoted as a tourism product.
- Most of the natives didn't know about the sarpa pattu performances and their importance.
- The people didn't aware of the relevance of the sarpa pattu and pulluvan pattu.
- Mannarshala temple, Aamedada temple, and pampumekavu temple should be promoted as a tourism product.

CONCLUSION

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

A ritual art form performed at Sarpa Kavu (Serpent Grove), temples dedicated to Naga (Snake God) and rarely in households. Performed and supervised by the people belonging to Pulluva Community, Sarpam Pattu is also known as Pambu Thullal, Pambin Kalam, Nagam Pattu and Sarpolsavam. This art form is performed by women artists after observing the required austerities. Held on the *aayilam* asterism of the Malayalam months *Kanni* (September-October), *Thulam* (October-November) and *Kumbham* (February-March), the performance will be accompanied by percussion instruments such as Pulluva Vena and Kudam. *Sarpakkalam* (ritual powder drawing) will be drawn in the temporary thatched hut (Pandal) made for the performance. Kalams such as *Sarpayakshi Kalam*, *Nagayakshi Kalam*, *Ashtanaga Kalam* will be visualized using multi-coloured powder by the pulluvan. Then Pandal will be decorated with lamps and things like rice, coconut, betel leaf (vetta), arecanut (pazhukka) and pot of milk will be placed in the panthal. Once the Kalam pooja has been completed, the performer will be invited to the stage.

Sarpa Pattu or Pulluvan Pattu - A ritual art form performed at Temples in Kerala. Most of the Kerala temples have 'Sarpa Kavu', where idol of snakes are consecrated. Kerala traditional folk singers, 'Pulluvans' are sing devotional songs to the accompaniment of the ethnic single-string violin called 'Pulluvaveena' in front of snake idol or 'Naga Yakshi' temple. It is known as Sarppa pattu or Pulluvan pattu. You have to tell the name of the person and birth star to the Pulluvan and she or he would pray to the Goddess as well as Nagayakshi for your betterment in melodious song.

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APPENDIX

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

QUESTIONNAIRE

I am Aleena Sebastian, MTTM student of St. Teresa’s College (Autonomous), Ernakulam writing my final semester internship on” DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT” You are kindly requested to spare a few minutes and fill the following questionnaire, This research is purely academic and any information provided will be treated with at most confidentiality.

1) Do you know about Sarpa pattu

- Yes, I know
- I've heard about it
- I don't know

2) Did you know about the Aameda and Mannarsala temple

- I've visited the temple
- I don't know about the temple

3) Are you aware of the relevance of sarpa pattu and the history behind it

- Yes , i know
- NO i don't

4) Have you even seen the performance , if yes mention the place

5) Do you think we can promote sarapa pattu as a tourism product

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

6) Have you heard about the songs that play and the family which performs the ritual, if yes mention the name?

7) believe that sarpa pattu is important to get rid of sarpa dosham

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

8) Did you know about "Sarpa Kavvu"

- Yes
- No

9) Did you know about the months in which sarpa pattu is performing

- Yes
- No

10) Did you know about the history of the ancient shrine Mannarsala

- Yes , i 've heard about it
- No, I'm not aware of it

11) Did you know the legend behind sarpa pattu

- Yes
- No

12) Did you know about the famous offerings in the shrine

- Yes
- No

14) How many names did sarpa pattu have

- 5
- 3

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

- 2
- 1

15) What do they devote to art form

- Nagaraja
- Maharaja
- None of the above
-

16) Who performs the sarpa art form

- Women
- Men

17) Do they decorate the art form of sarpa

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

18) Where does sarpa patu performed

- Sarpa kavu
- Temples devoted to Nagaraja
- Households
- All of the above

1) What kind of powder do they use in sarpa artform

- Natural colour
- Artificial colors

2) How many colors did they use in the sarpa art form

- 5
- 3

DISSERTATION TO STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE OF “SARPPA PATTU” AND TO HIGHLIGHT IT AS A TOURISM PRODUCT

- 2
- 4

3) What do they mainly draw in sarpam art form

- Snake idol
- other idols
- None of the above

4) What is the name of the floral decoration done in sarpam art form

- Nagaklam
- Karnavas
- none of the above

5) How many types are the floral decoration done in sarpa art form

- 2
- 3
- 4
- 1

6) Do you think that sarppam pattu comes to an extinction

- Yes
- No
- Maybe