



Research Article

## Tradition, Technology and Culture: A Study of the Material Culture of Bettakuruman Community in Kerala

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### Abstract

Kerala is the home of a number of tribal communities. Majority of them inhabit in the western slope of the Western Ghats. Wayanad district has the highest concentration of tribes in Kerala. They form 18.5% of the total population of the district. There are 11 distinct tribal communities are living in this district. Paniyan, Adiyar, Kurichiyar, Mullukuruman, Kattunayakan, Thachanadan Mooppan and Bettakuruman are the major tribal communities in Wayanad. This study mainly focuses on the material aspects of the Bettakuruman, an artisan community of Wayanad. Material culture includes, dress pattern, ornaments, weapons, utensils, etc. The study of material culture is an essential aspect for an understanding of culture and also helps to understand social life. It also shows the changes happening in the society. Material culture enables us to visualize them. It also helps to understand the history of technological and cultural development. In all communities; there exists a body of knowledge in fashioning the implements, extracting or collecting materials and also for practicing manual art and skills. This body of knowledge is known as technology. Technology is a system of knowledge rather than a means of production of material objects and artifacts. The knowledge of production and their use in the form of implements, weapons and facilities hand over from one generation to the next generations. The present study attempts to understand the material culture of the Bettakuruman especially the pottery making.

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## INTRODUCTION

A tribe could be defined as a social group, usually live within a definite area, having common dialect, cultural homogeneity and unifying social organization (Tylor, 1987: 546). India is a home land of many tribal groups. They are considered as the early inhabitants of the land. In Kerala, 37 scheduled tribe communities are living mostly they are found in Western Ghats regions. Wayanad, Idukki, Palakkad, Kannur and Kasaragod are the major tribal concentrated districts in Kerala. Wayanad district comprises an area of 2126 square kilometers. The presence of hills and valleys, rivers and streams meadows and paddy fields between the hills earned its name Wayanad. The Malayalam word *Wayal* means paddy field and *Nadu* means an area demarcated and owned by its inhabitants (Bhanu: 2009) [2]. Geographically Wayanad has unique features. The altitude of Wayanad is around 700-2100 meters from sea level. It is bounded on the east by Nilgiris and Mysore district of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka respectively, on the north by Coorg district of Karnataka, on the south by Malappuram, and the west by Kozhikode and Kannur.

The present study is based on the fieldwork undertaken among the Betta Kuruman of Wayanad district. The Bettakuruman are commonly known as Uralikurumar and community members themselves refer them as Uralikurumar. The study focuses on the material aspects of the community. The study of material aspect of a community is of important mainly due to intrinsic interest and also due to the question of diffusion. Further, artifacts and techniques have great importance by virtue of their relation to the whole social organization and to religious and other ceremonial practices. The material culture generally includes the objects made and used for human purpose and acquired from the habitat. Thus, it refers to the material aspects of the culture. The study of material aspects of a society would reflect the uniqueness of that society. Civilization has close link with the advancement in material culture which enriches the life of the people. In any community the inherent background of material culture is shaped by other aspects of cultural systems. Food, clothing and shelter are the fundamental needs of man. Dress which is the basic needs of man and ornaments mark of one's artistic culture that cannot be divided from the day to day life of a particular community.

In all communities, there exists a body of knowledge in fashioning the implements, extracting or collecting materials and also for practicing manual art and skills. This body of knowledge is known as technology. Technology is a system of knowledge rather than a means of production of material objects and artifacts. The knowledge of production and their use in the form of implements, weapons, and facilities hand over from one generation to the next. Material culture is a product of man; it is the outcome of interaction between man and his environment. Herskovits (1952) [5] says that by means of their technology, men wrest from their habitat the food stuffs, the shelter, the clothing, and the implements they must have if they are to survive. The objects they make and use for these purposes are generally classified under the heading of material culture.

Culture can be categorized into two kinds, material culture, and non-material culture. Material culture is the tangible products of

human society. Material culture includes material or concrete things used by man, such as house, household commodities, different kinds of apparatus, instruments, weapons, pots, and means of conveyance (Vatsayan, 1981). Technical achievements had a major impact on the evolution of material culture. The study of technology is essential for an understanding of culture, just as the comprehension of the material basis of social life is indispensable to an understanding of human group behaviour. Technology is the only aspects of culture susceptible of objective evaluation. It should be noted that the technological equipment of people comprises most of the man-made element in culture that have a physical existence of their own. Dash (2004) [4] says that material culture comprises tangible thing that have been shaped to some extent by man such thing often called "artifacts" or culture such as tools, household items, apparatus, weapons etc. Material culture is the product of man and it is externalization or physical manifestation of human interaction. The culture of any people includes two groups of phenomena firstly, they are the material object which they manufacture in order to satisfy their wants such as tools, weapons, utensils, clothing, ornaments, houses, and canoes as well as temples, idols, charms, and other objects used for magico-religious purposes. These are called material culture of people.

## METHODOLOGY

This study mainly focuses on the material aspects of the Bettakuruman, an artisan community of Wayanad. Material culture includes, dress pattern, ornaments, weapons, utensils, etc. The study of material culture is an essential aspect for an understanding of culture and also helps to understand social life. The study was conducted in Nadavayal in Kaniyambatta Grama Panchayat of Wayanad district. The study was carried out by the anthropological field work. House hold survey, interview, focus group discussions, observation methods and case studies are used for data collection. The secondary sources were also utilized for the collection of data.

### Material Culture

Material culture reflects the mutual relationship between man and his environment, which satisfy needs of man. Material culture is not a part of culture at all but only a result or product of it (Beals and Hoijer 1971). Material culture includes the sum or inventory of the technology and material artifacts of a human group including those which are produced for ornamental artistic or ritual purpose. The study of all these objects and all those artifacts with which mans surrounds himself in his attempt to ameliorate his position in his environment (Hutton). The main necessities of human life are food; shelter and cloth are the mirror or symbol of that society.

### Settlement Pattern

Settlement involves the whole area which is occupied by a group of people to accommodate their residential shelters the courtyards and household surroundings that help organizing their daily interactions and social living. Shelter is one of the most important basic necessities of human beings. It is the most concrete expression of human cultural activity. It stands for a

physical structure, natural or otherwise protecting from all external forces. The shelter could fulfill different purposes starting from protection to prestige and ascetic motivation. The dwelling also depends on the ecological settings as well as various other factors including the extent of accessibility to different raw material as well as to the perceptible dimension of security and sense of beauty.

### Traditional Hut

They used bamboo, mud, cow dung, *kachipullu* or *maanipullu* (a type of grass) creepers etc., in the construction of their traditional hut. Clay was the most important material used for foundation. Later, it had also been used to construct walls. The foundation was hardened by beating the mud with a wooden piece called *nillem thalli* (mud beater). Their traditional hut is known as *kacchi pura*. They erected four bamboo poles on the four corners of the plinth having four meters height. The shape of the roof was of inverted "V" shaped erected on bamboo pillars or poles. The roof was made of bundles of *kacchipullu*, (a type of grass). For thatching the roof they also use *darbapullu* and *mannipullu* (variety of grass). Their traditional hut had only single room that was partitioned as bed room, kitchen etc.

Settlement pattern of the Uralikurumar is clustered in nature. The traditional houses had a unique pattern. The walls were made of bamboo rafts (bamboo splints woven together and plastered with mud) and the roof was thatched with grass. Plaited bamboo was used to make the doors. The traditional houses lack windows, and ventilation was through the gap between the walls and the roof. The front side of the house possessed a raised platform used for sitting and receiving the visitors. A notable feature in the traditional settlement was the presence of *chittal*, an independent hut and a meeting place, where all the decisions were made in the presence of the *Moopan* (head). *Chittal* (altar) is built at the centre of the settlement and has a raised platform or basement, and on this erected the pillars without walls.

### Tiled House (Transitional House)

Presently, most of the Uralikuruman families are living in government built tiled houses. The foundation of these houses are made of granite stones and plastered with cement. The flooring was made of mud and was plastered with cow dung. The government built houses possesses two rooms; one is as bed room and the other is as kitchen. The doors and windows are of wooden made.

### Modern House

At present, they construct RCC type (Reinforcement concrete cement) houses. The walls of such houses are made of laterite stones, and then plastered with cement. The government provided finance to construct houses.

### Chittal/Daivappura

There is a sacred shrine in each settlements of the Bettakuruman. It locates centrally in each settlement. It is mainly a sacred hall. *Chittal* is thatched with coconut leaves and the floor is smeared with cow dung. There is a five pillar

and according to the people of Jeergallineage these five pillars representing the number of their *Tharam* (lineages). The four pillars in the *Chittal* were built at its four corners and the remaining one placed centrally. The *Muthali* takes his seat nearby the central pillar at the time of *Bincha*. A medium sized stone is also found inside the *Chittal* and fire lits usually near this at the time of *Bincha*. Everyone keep their footwear outside the *chittal* and men should not wear shirts while enter in to the area. The maintenance of *Daivappura* is the responsibility of the entire household in the settlement. The significance of the *Chittal* is that all the rights and rituals connected with life cycle rituals such as birth, naming and first feeding, marriage and death are performed here. All the people in the settlement consider this place as sacred and keep it neat always. During pollution they are not allowed to enter into

The *Chittal*. *Velichappadu* or oracle has certain control over it and if they want to rebuild the *Chittal* they have to get the approval of the *Muthali*.

Artifact represents one of the important aspects of material culture. Artifacts are generally viewed as modified objects which are put into human use. This is clear from the definitions (Bhanu, 1989:103) [2] of different authorities on the subject. According to Clark, it is any object modified by a set of humanly imposed attributes on consciously manufactured attribute for human use. There are different types of artifacts that can be categorized as economic artifacts, domestic artifacts and religious artifacts.

### Economic Artifacts

The artifacts that are under use in the sphere of obtaining food and in the manufacturing of goods, all of which serve the economic purposes are included under economic artifacts. The economic artifacts could also be either subsistent artifacts or non-subsistent artifacts. As subsistent artifacts, these could serve to obtain food source directly. As non-subsistent economic artifacts, their utilization is realized in the pursuit of any other economic pursuit including pottery, basketry, black smithy, which involves commercial transactions.

### Pot Making

The Uralikurumar is the artisan community of Wayanad district in Kerala. The traditional economic system of the Uralikurumar consists of hunting, fishing, pottery making, basket making, blacksmithy, carpentry etc. The Uralikuruman's pot making has some unique features. In this community, pot making is especially done by the female members. The males collect mud from nearby paddy fields. They depend mainly the *manjapallivayal* for the purpose. Mainly they collect greenish or reddish coloured mud. After that, they make the mud into gum form. They keep this mud on the top of flat bark. They beat this mud continuously with a heavy log to make it smooth and flexible. After that, they take enough mud for making pot and clear the mud by removing stones. They beat the mud with *chadungu* (tiny bat shaped wooden piece), and start making pot. They firstly make the bottom part and remove the additional mud by using small piece of bamboo, called *kalapakuthu*. They call this as *thozhuthorthu*. They use *kalapakuthu* to remove the mud at the centre. They make a clear round shape by using this

*kalapakuthu*. After shaping the outside portion they shape the inside portion. To smoothen the outside portion of the pot they use small *vellaramkallu* (stream stone) available in the river. Using a wet cloth, they smoothen the outside part. They rub the cloth all over the pot. They call this process as *mannuthekke*. This is usually done to make the pot smooth and soft. They use small piece of bamboo stick to decorate the pot. Then they dry the pot for one week. After one week they bake the pot. For baking, they place bamboo pieces and pot on the ground. They cover the pot with bamboo pieces and they burn it. They bake it for 30-45 minutes. After burning the pot, when it turns into red in colour, it would be cleaned by using ash. They bake 1-10 pots at a time.

Women are skillful in pot making. They make 3-4 big pots and also 5-7 small pots in a day. They also make different kinds of gurglet (earthen water cooling vessel), bandaram (tiny slitted pot for putting money) etc. They make different kinds of pot for different purpose like cooking, storing, etc. They made all kinds utensils useful for household purpose and, they also sold or exchanged pottery to other neighbouring communities like Chettis, Mullukuruma, Naikan, Paniyan etc. Money was paid back to them or sometimes receives rice for their pottery.

### Basket Making

Basketry is the traditional occupation of the Uralikurumar. Till few years back, basketry was their main source of livelihood, though it forms an important part of their economic life. In the past, they collected bamboo from the forest to make baskets. A small knife (*kathi*) is used for basket making. From one bamboo they make four or five baskets. They use large knife (*kathi*) and *mazhu* (axe) to cut the bamboo from the forest. Earlier, the males were mainly engaged in basket making. They made different kinds of baskets and the main products are winnowing pan, fishing basketry (*meenooda*), *komma* (used for storing the paddy), cradle, *pela* (to keep the cloths) etc. The baskets were sold to the other neighbouring communities like Mullukurumba, Naicken and Chettis. Men are skillful in basket making. They collect raw materials from forest. Women help them to split the bamboo and reed. For this, they split the bamboo into small pieces and the rafts they keep in water and drier out. This is to make it hard and clean. Then, they make it soften. Thus, a frame is made by bending the cane, forming the lower part of the basket.

### Black Smithy

Traditionally, the Bettakurumar are black smiths. Earlier, they prepared different kinds of iron implements and sold or exchanged it especially to the neighbouring communities like Mullukurumba, Naicken, Paniyan etc. They collect raw materials for the production of implements from Sulthan Bathery town. They have talent in making different types of iron implements for different purposes. For smelting process, they use coal of bamboo, because it will give more strength to the product. During 1940's the worth of a knife was one rupee. The neighbouring community of Bettakurumar, the Paniyan, collects bamboo from the forest and they exchange it to the Bettakurumar to make iron implements. The Muslim merchants mainly collect iron implements from the

Bettakurumar and they sell. The knowledge of production and the technology are handed over from one generation to another. They produce different types of iron implements for different purposes. They are *keniva* (*vettukathi*), *kodali* (axe), *pingathi* (small knife) etc. *Keniva* (*vettukathi*) is a curved iron blade having sharpened inner part and the other end with a wooden handle. It is mainly used to split bamboo, canes and also to harvest crops. *Vettukathi* also used for cutting the trees.

### Religious Artifacts

The artifacts that are connected with festival occasion of the Bettakurumar are: *Binchamura* (a small winnow), *chilambu* (bells), *kuzhal*, *thudi*, *balukuthiniku* etc.

### Binchamura and Chilambu (Winnow and Bell)

*Bincha* is a religious performance performed at *chittal* or *daivappura*. It is a kind of ancestor worship in which they see the ancestor and communicates with them. In their language *bincha* means to see the god. The headman or *Muthali* take initiatives for starting the ritual. At the time of *bincha* he holds a small winnow made of bamboo and three bells put on that. They call the winnow as *Binchamura*. There is a sacred myth related to the *Binchamura*. It is associated with the *taravad* and its division. It has connection with their settlement origin. Earlier, they heard a shivering sound from a tree and found a small winnowing pan on it. Suddenly it fell down on the lap of one of them. They took it as a sacred one and started to use it at the time of *bincha*. *Binchakalan* has the responsibility to keep the *binchamura* in safe. When the *binchamura* become old he has the duty to appoint the next one.

### Davulu Kali and Use of Davulu (Drum)

It is a musical instrument mainly used at the time of festivals. It is made of *Kumil* wood. First, they cut this into pieces and scoop both sides of it, and then the scooped portion they cover with the skin of buffalo. They also use the skin of the buffalo and cut it into long piece. After that they tie it. Before playing they place the drum near the fire. The *davalu* produce fine sound when it becomes hot. *Davulukali* is a traditional game of the Bettakurumar. It is also known as *Uchalankali*. They follow unique performances during various occasions in their life. This consists of clapping the hands or beating of drums or an orchestra of different instruments. Every dance is accompanied by a song which is sung by the performers. *Davalu kali* is the traditional and religious performances of the Bettakurumar. In their language the word *Davalu* means drum. While *Davalu kali*, they use two musical instruments i.e. drum and *kuzhal*. Only men are performing this game and this usually performed at the time of festivals. There are many temples in which they usually perform this. Cheengeri temple, Cheekalloor temple, Kavadam temple, Puthanangadi temple, Chethalayam temple, Pakkam temple, etc., are some of the temples in which they perform. They wear their traditional dress at the time of performance and before performance they lit fire and make the drum hot. They don't have special costumes and songs for this. While performance, some of them beat drum and others blow the pipe. While performance they

place themselves in circular manner and hence this is termed as *vattakali*.

### Kuzal

This is one of the important musical instruments of the Bettakurumar. It is mainly used at the time of *Davalu kali*. The *Kuzhal* is made of two piece of wood- *Veeti* and Mango tree. The distal end is funnel shaped and holes are made in the middle of it. The proximal part is the most complex one, here, they fix the feather of the duck/chicken and at the tip of the *kuzhal* they tie *Kalal pullu* or *Kuzhalpullu* (a type of grass). They prepare this grass by boiling with turmeric. They dry it before tying. They have clear motion regarding its preparation and if the *kuzhalpullu* get more dried then they add a few drops of water on *kuzhalpullu*.

### Domestic Artifacts

Traditionally, the items they collected from their surroundings were used as utensils. Now, they use utensils brought from the market. Due to the availability of bamboo in their surroundings, they make different bamboo items for their routine purpose.

*Bolla / nazhi (para)* It is aware made of brass or wood. It is a traditional measuring instrument for measuring grains, rice etc.

*Ammi and kutti* (grinding stone)-The *ammi* (grinding stone) is a rectangular stationary stone upon which a smaller cylinder stone roller (*kutti*). It is used to grind grains, rice etc. It is mainly used to make coconut into paste form to prepare curry. The grinding is done with the help of *kutti* (granite roller). To grind the items, one has to move the roller over the stationary stone.

### Thavi (ladles)

It is made of shell of coconut (*chiratta*). For this, the coconut shells keep in water for 2 or 3 days. Then, these are cleaned with knife. Two holes are made to insert the stick which forms the handle. The handle mainly prepare out of stem of arecanut.

### Choole (broom stick)

They use different types of broom sticks made of Kurumthoti, Manipullu, mid rib of coconut leaf etc. *Kurumthoti* is a small bushy plant. This plant is cut and dried and then tied together to form a small bundle which is used as the broom stick. It is used to clean the surroundings. They also make broom stick, out of leaf of arecanut palm. They use it to clean the rooms.

### Muram (Winnowing pan)

It is made of bamboo and reed. It is used to remove the husk from paddy. For making this, they split the bamboo and tie it together. Occasionally, it is also used to carry cow dung, mud etc. *Addapatte* (cap) It is made of *paala* (arecanut sheath). Two pieces of arecanut sheaths tied together for making this. It is used as covering sheath. *Thonath* (pot stand) This is to protect the unburnt pot items while it's making. They use plantain sheath to make it. For this roll the sheath to form a rounded structure.

### Dosha kallu (Frying Pan)

They utilise Vennaremkallu (granite) for making dosha kallu.

To make this, they use axe, to break it. For this, they mark the four sides of the stone, and cut it in a rectangular shape and bake it before use. If the *vennaremkallu* is not good enough then it may break. The neighbouring community Mullukurumba purchased this from the Uralikurumar. Earlier, they made one or two dosha kallu in a day. They use axe, aram, knife, chisel etc., for making dosha kallu.

### Dress and Ornaments

Each community has its own unique pattern of dress and ornaments. Cultural accomplishments of a community reflect on their dress and ornaments. The traditional dress of the Bettakurumar was *mundu* or *ottachela*. It is a piece of cloth wrapped around the chest and they wrap their body with another cloth over the shoulders. The Bettakurumar men wore only *mundu* in the past. In the past, they wore only white coloured *mundu*, but now a day they use coloured dress also. The wearing style of this is termed as *theyatheudugu* and *thonkettuka*. Traditionally they use cotton dress. In the past, they brought dress from Mysore, Bathery and also from Panamaram town. In the past, the Bettakurumar utilized the bark of *thivirkkayi* tree to wrap the body. When a child reaches the age of two or three, then they start to wear *mundu*. Both male and female children use white cotton clothes.

### Dress at the Time of Marriage

At the time of marriage, the Bettakurumar wear their traditional dress called *munduorottachela* (white loin cloth). At the time of marriage the bride wears six *mulammundu* or *pudava* (a garment worn around the waist). They do not use blouse, and the style of wearing is termed as *tettudukkal*. Earlier, the groom wore only *mundu'* and *thorthu*, (white cotton cloth). It is tacked on the right side. At the time of marriage bride use chains made of beads, purchased from the market or on festivaloccasion. Earlier, nobody wore bangles. They also adorn their hair with plastic made flowers. It is termed as *bugiri*, which they brought from the market.

Now a lot of changes occurred in their living style due to the influence of television and social contacts. Now at the time of marriage they use modern dress like silk sari, shirt etc., especially started about 20 years back. Now the bridal dress is silk sari, and blouse, and the groom wears white cotton or silk shirt and *kasavumundu*. On the day of marriage the groom's parents bring the dress and ornaments to adorn the bride.

In the past, at the time of puberty, they had worn their traditional dress called *mundu* or *ottachela*. On this occasion the girl have to spend in a temporary hut made of bamboo called *vankeera* and was not permitted to visit the temple and sacred places during these days. But at present they are not wearing their traditional dress and there is no separate hut for the stay at the time of puberty.

During burial, the women are also allowed to attend the ceremony. They wear traditional dress on this occasion. Men wear *mundu* only while they enter the burial ground. In the past, they only wore white *mundu*, on this occasion. But now, they started to use different coloured*mundu*. The relatives usually come with a white piece of cloth and they cover the body with that piece of cloth. For burial, they make pit with hoe or spade

and also with bamboo stick. After the cremation ceremony, they dispose the hand of the hoe or spade in the burial ground itself. They also dispose all the material objects used by the dead person such as dress, ornaments etc. They carry the corpse in *Manjal* (coffin). They use bamboo rafts to make the manjal. It looks like a ladder. It consists of two parallel long bamboo and nine smaller bamboo pieces arranged crossly over it. The number nine represent the relationships and these are, the first two for father second two for mother next two for grandfather and two for grandmother and the last one for *chudala* or cremation. All the close and distant relatives come with a long piece of white cloth to put on the body. At the time of taking the dead body to the cremation ground, turmeric water in a pot will be placed on the head side then each of the relatives come and take a handful of water and sprinkles throughout the body. They consider it as the bathing of the dead one. At the time of taking dead body, they break the pot, if the husband is died then the wife will break it and in the case of wife the husband will do it. This breaking of pot indicates the termination of the relationships between them. While entering the cremation ground, they avoid chapels but wear their traditional dress. The men wear a white dhoti and a *thorthu* (thin cotton towel) over the shoulders.

#### Dress at the Time of Rituals

The ritual, *daivemkanal* is performed at *chittal* or *daivapura*. *Chittalis* a sacred place. This ritual is initiated by the *Muthali* (Moopan). The *Muthali* of other settlements also come on this occasion, and one of the heads or *Muthali* sit near the central pillar of the *chittal*. On this occasion, women wear traditional dress and men also wear their traditional dress, white dhoti. But presently, only the aged women wear their traditional dress. At the time of their ritual they never let outsiders to enter. *Bincha* means *daivamkanal*, and the performer is known as *binchakalan*. *Binchakalan* is the person who communicates with the God or ancestors. Thus, he takes the role as a mediator, as sacred specialist. The main role of the person lies at the time of *bincha* that is why he is known as *binchakalan*. Earlier, the *binchakalan* only wore bangle made of silver. It is to represent the Moopan and also to differentiate him from rest of the community members. At the time of *bincha* or *daivamkanal*, the Moopan wears a cloth around his waist and the colour of cloth is based on the nature of the deities, i.e., red cloth represents the *Bagvathi* and black represents the *Kuttichathan*.

#### Ornaments

The traditional earring of the Bettakurumar was termed as *mundala* that was made of aluminum, silver, brass, paper or beads. It is circular in shape. To bore the ear, they use a bend brass hook called *kundalam*. The Bettakurumar women use ear ring made of paper, coconut leaf etc. Now also the Bettakurumar women wear *Mundala* made of paper. They also use the silver coloured wrapping paper of cigarette pack to make earring. They also wear ring, made of silver, brass, aluminum etc. They fold it in rounded manner. Earlier, men worn earrings termed *Kadukkan* (small ear stud). Most of them wore used *Kadukka* made on brass.

#### Ornaments at the Time of Marriage

At the time of marriage, the brides wear chains made of *coconut leaf*, beads, shells etc. They purchase these items on festival occasion, especially, Temple festivals. At the time of marriage the women adorn their hairs with plastic made flowers. They purchase these items during festival season. They also wear ring made of silver, brass, aluminum etc., and also the toe ring made of silver, brass, aluminum etc.

Today a lot of changes have occurred in their dress and ornaments. On the 28th day of birth of the child, they tie a black thread around the waist of the child. Presently, the women wear bangles bought from the market or temporary bazaars (*chanda*) erected during festivals. They also use ring, ear-ring, chains, anklet, nose-ring (*Mukkuthi*), etc. At the time of marriage they tie *Tali* (wedding chain), and also use fancy ornamental items bought from the market. Presently, they wear all types of ornaments available in the market.

#### CONCLUSION

In India almost all the tribes are in a stage of transition. In the process of change and transition, it is generally the material culture that receives the major impact. It is the visible part of culture and closely concerned with the basic needs of any human society. Thus, an understanding of the material culture would also indicate the extent of changes that the particular society has been subjected to, in the process of its transition. The present study thus got significance and it looks into the material aspects and the tradition, technology and culture of the Bettakuruman in various pursuits. In all communities there exist a body of knowledge in making implements, extracting or collecting materials and also for practicing manual skills and arts. This body of knowledge is known as technology. Technology is a system of knowledge rather than means of production of material object and artifacts. This knowledge of production and their use in the form of implements, weapons and facilities are handed over from one generation to the other. They use different techniques for their subsistence. Bettakuruman community has a unique knowledge of their traditional pottery making, black smithy and various utensils. However, the traditional knowledge become threatening due to the modernization and cultural contact.

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