

# HANDICRAFTS IN KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT

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## Abstract

*Handicrafts are mostly defined as “Items made by hand, often with the use of simple tools, and are generally artistic and/or traditional in nature. They are also objects of utility and objects of decoration.” The role of handicraft industry is very important in Indian economy because economy of any country directly related to the foreign currency of different country. People try to show their originality and identity by presenting new products made by combining their national identities with their crafts. The Indian Handicrafts are known the world over for their rich variety, grace, and elegance and skilled. Varieties of Handicrafts are produced over time in all parts of the country including tribal areas. Thus Handicrafts of any given time and space reflect and preserve in them the results of centuries of patient experiments of man under varying circumstances. Kanyakumari extends quite a few fascinating picks to visitors in terms of shopping options. It is suitable to mention that Shopping in Kanyakumari is an integral part of tourism of Kanyakumari. Broadly speaking, Kanyakumari is famous for handicrafts, souvenirs, textiles and ready-mades, electronic commodities and so on. Let's get to know more about the Handicrafts in Kanyakumari. This article is aimed at exploring the different types of handicrafts that are found particularly in Kanyakumari district.*

## Keywords

Handicrafts, artistic, excavation, tourism, pottery, economy

## 1. Introduction

Handicraft products have very large market in the world due to its growing potential in the world. Regarding the role of Handicrafts in tourism and development, the World Craft Council (WCC), affiliated with UNESCO, was established in 1964 to support economic growth and promote artisans around the world. Handicrafts, as cultural souvenirs, also play an important role in tourism. Many countries consider Handicrafts as a major centre of tourism development and establish tourism facilities near major handicraft manufacturing centres. The role of handicraft industry is very important in Indian economy because economy of any country directly related to the foreign currency of different country. Innovative giftware products which promote the consumer to purchase this product. Handicraft is very important sector to earn foreign currency for our country.

## 2.Literature Review:

A book written by Cooper C. (1999) entitled “Tourism Principles and Practices” was elaborating theoretical framework of tourism. He underlined concept and indicators of tourism demands. He also emphasized on economic, environmental and socio-cultural impact on tourism development. Romila Chawla (2003) wrote an important book entitled “Tourism in the 21st Century”. She emphasized on important features of the tourism industry, its contribution to the national integration and creation of harmonious social and cultural environment and also suggests the promotion of arts, crafts and culture and brings about prosperity and sustainable development. Twenty first century is the age of information technology and tourism. Ghouse, S.M.(2012) in his research “Indian Handicraft Industry:

Problems and Strategies” has recommended the government in more promotional activities. Dash, M. (2015) in her paper titled “The role of family influence in buying handicrafts products” this paper has explained where and who are the buyers of handicrafts. Diance Jesanlal, J. (1992), "Problems and Prospects of Tourism Industry in Kanyakumari District", M. Phil Dissertation, M.S. University.

### 3. Methodology:

The research method used in organizing the present study is historical method which highlights the handicrafts of India its role and growth. Authentic and descriptive methodology is used in the research.

### 4. Profile of Kanyakumari district:

Kanyakumari district is one of the 38 districts in Tamil Nadu state and the southernmost district in mainland India. It stands second in terms of population density among the districts of Tamil Nadu and the second most urbanized, next only to Chennai district. It is also the richest district in Tamil Nadu in terms of per capita income, and also tops the state in Human Development Index (HDI), literacy, and education. The district's headquarters is Nagercoil.

Kanyakumari district has a varied topography with the sea on three sides and the mountains of the Western Ghats bordering the northern side. Except for a small stretch of land to the west of Kanyakumari town, almost the entire district is sandwiched between the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea – the only district in Tamil Nadu state facing the Arabian Sea.

Geologically, the landmass of the district is much younger when compared to the rest of the state – faulted as late as 2.5 million years during the Miocene, after which numerous transgression, as well as regression of sea, had shaped the western coast of the district. Historically, Nanjinad and Edai Nadu, which comprise the present-day Kanyakumari district, were ruled by various Tamil and Malayalam dynasties: the Cheras, the Ay/Venad/Travancore dynasty, the Pandyan, the Chozhans and the Nayaks. A few artifacts have been unearthed by archeological excavations. It was part of the princely state of Travancore during the colonial times prior to India's independence; four of the eight tehsils of Thiruvananthapuram district were separated from the erstwhile Travancore Kingdom to form the new district of Kanyakumari, and they were made the part of Madras Presidency under recommendations from the States Reorganisation Commission in 1956. The Presidency was later renamed Tamil Nadu and Kanyakumari, today, is one of the 38 districts of Tamil Nadu state.

### 5. Handicrafts of Kanyakumari

Apart from the long list of tourist destinations, Kanyakumari is also famous for its handicrafts.

In fact, the region opens the gate to a whole new world of magnificent ethnical heritage and the glory of artistic customs and traditions of the yesteryear. Vadasery, a small town in Kanyakumari district is renowned for manufacturing of temple jewellery which was extensively used to beautify the divinities and also the royal family of the region in the past. Some of the celebrated handicrafts of Kanyakumari include temple jewelry, stone carvings, lace and embroidery items, wood sculptures, metal castings, sea shell crafts, korai grass mats, palm leaf items, cane and bamboo made items, fibre products, musical instruments, jute based handicrafts, silver jewellery, pipal/tapioca pith, artistic claywares, items made from coconut shells, wooden lacquer ware and so on. It is important to note that the local administration of Kanyakumari is associated with DC Handicrafts and Indian Overseas Bank and has established a new enterprise to encourage the handicraft tradition of the region. It is not a big deal to spot a shop that merchandises traditional handicrafts in the region as the district is the home of a lot of small handicrafts shops scattered across the length and breadth of the city.

## 6. Types of Handicraft found at Kanyakumari district:

1. Clay & pottery
2. Wooden Handicrafts
3. Stone
4. Palm leaf
5. Coconut Shell Handicrafts (Coconut fibrous husk and shell)
6. Button Sea Shell
7. Leather
8. Metal Handicrafts
9. Lace
10. Hand Embroidery

Vadacherry village in Kanyakumari District is the birthplace of temple jewellery, which was once used to decorate deities and as royalties. The village of Myladi is known for stone carving, places like Thalakkulam and Sundankadai are characterized by artisans who have Kaivinaiygnar Pottery Creation Centre is located in Nagercoil. Weavers Colony, Kanyakumari is a design studio for lifestyle products in clay, banana fibre, bamboo and many more eco-friendly materials. The designers at Kaivinaiygnar strongly believe that the healing touch of nature is more a necessity than an amenity in these modern times. Wooden Handicrafts are specialized skills passed on from one generation to the next. The term 'wooden Handicrafts' refers to a wide range of wooden items carrying utilitarian and artistic value that are made by hand, or with the use of simple tools. Wooden Handicrafts reflect unmatched workmanship, fine designs, and subtle elegance. This makes one of the chief exporters of wooden Handicrafts in the market.



In the temple at Suchindrum which is known for its exquisite stone carvings is a standing monument of the ancient architectural marvels. This traditional art has found its way into the 20th century also, for example the Vivekananda Rock Memorial was constructed meticulously with blue and red granite. The red granite used for the Palm leaves are green and made up of several small leaves that are attached to a central point, depending upon shape. Palm leaves can be either palmate or pinnate in shape. The palm leaf is available locally but sometimes needs to be sources from outside the region. Availability is subject to seasonal fluctuations. The leaves can be harvested all through the year except during the rains. Palm trees are commonly found in the coastal regions of India. In Nagercoil, Kanyakumari

District, kitchen utensils made from coconut shells, including tea cups, have been well received by the public. Coconut shells are highly available as coconut farming is the main occupation in Kumari district. Thus, products such as tea cups, plates and watches are made with minimal investment. Craftsmen who are involved in the industry say that food items placed in containers made of coconut shells will not spoil for many days.

Coconut fiber is a great product of the coconut tree. Coconut fiber plays a major role in many of the most valuable products available through the coconut tree. Coconut fiber can be used to make rugs, mats, brushes and charcoal. And since it is natural, most of the products made from it have no side effects. A seashell is a hard protective outer layer created by an animal that lives in the sea. The shell is a part of the animal's body. Seashells are commonly found on beach slides, which are natural detritus that are placed in strands on the shores by waves. The shells are often washed on the empty and clean beach, the animal is already dead. Empty sea shells are often taken by beachgoers. However, the vast majority of commercially available sea shells are collected alive (mostly in bulk) and then slaughtered and cleaned, especially for commercial purposes. This type of large-scale exploitation can sometimes have a strong negative impact on local ecosystems, and sometimes significantly reduce the distribution of rare species.

The concept of leather art came at a time when humans were killing for their food. Gradually, they discovered the use of leather with the intention of using leather for dressing. In India, the tanning industry is headed by "mosses", who take the skins of dead animals from the bodies of dead animals for tanning. Kanyakumari District is a prominent place in the manufacture of toys, leather paintings and bags. The craft was popularized in Kanyakumari district by the early missionaries. The workmanship of the needle craft practiced in the district is superb. The craft is now so important especially for its prospects in employing the largest number of rural women folk. The artisans have their own designs, colours and patterns. Lace and embroidery manufacturing centers are found concentrated in Nagercoil, Marthandam, Neyyoor, Mulagamood, Kanjiracode, Irenipuram, Killiyoor, Rajakkamangalam, Kuruthancode, Thuckalay and Thiruvattar. The C.S.I. Lace and Embroidery unit, Nagercoil is the pioneer institution, which manufactures and exports the lace and the embroidery products of village women. The delicate fabric made of thread in the open web, such as machine or hand-shaped is called lace. First linen, silk, gold or silver threads were used. Now lace is mostly made of cotton thread, although linen and silk threads are still available. Manufactured lace can be made of synthetic fibers. A few modern artists make laces with fine copper or silver wire instead of thread.

## 7. Findings:

This study helps to know what are the Handicrafts are produced in Kanyakumari district. This study is being conducted to evaluate the role of Handicrafts at Kanyakumari and its various types. Handicrafts are the main tool for developing the country's economy. Many industries are found here at the village level and people get their livelihood through these industries. The district has numerous Handicrafts which are produced by these industries attract a large number of local as well as the tourists. Promoting urban businesses is a characteristic of tourism. This trade has had a significant impact on the Indian economy and as a result many factors such as high foreign exchange, inflows, jobs, conservation of natural resources, and rural development have contributed to such cosmic growth.

## 8. Conclusion:

Even though, most of the souvenirs of Kanyakumari are an outcome of intense handiwork, they unquestionably need a special credit. A lot of roadside shops deal with delicately beautiful seashell novelties, hand-crafted jewelry, pen stand, basket, awe-inspiring palm leaf drawings, multi-colored sea sands, small curios made of many varieties of sea-shells and so on. Visitors can easily find the shops at beach front that deals with most of specialty items of Kanyakumari. The finest thing about shopping in Kanyakumari is that visitors can bargain. So, it will be effective to have a friendly conversation with shop keepers to strike a good deal! Tourists love fresh air and atmosphere. Hence Handicrafts sector also plays an important role in the development of tourism. Handicrafts are on

display at every tourist site. They attract a lot of tourists. Tourists go shopping for Handicrafts. It will help in the development of tourism as the Handicrafts industry grows. As the growth of tourism and the growth of Handicrafts increase they can earn cash income to increase. Kaniyakumari will be a wonderful country where everything will be available to all the people as the personal income will rise and the living standards of the rural workers will rise. Thus it out as the best district in the country in terms of Handicrafts.

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