COLOUR CULTURE AND IDENTITY:
INFLUENCE OF COLOURS ON KERALA MURAL ART
Sandhya Ravi
Assoc. Prof. Dr., KLE’s Fashion Technology and Apparel Institute Sandhyaravi1206@gmail.com

Abstract
The word ‘mural’ is derived from the Latin word ‘murus’, meaning ‘wall’. Murals refer to paintings embellished on visual components like the wall, ceiling, or other huge lasting surfaces. The murals of Kerala unfathomably stand out for their prominence in beauty, clarity and symmetry with unmatchable linear accuracy. The tradition of mural painting in Kerala is unique in the world, and it is extremely rich with symbolism. Made only with natural mineral pigments, the colours represent the qualities of the three gunas-sattva, rajas and tamas. Sattva is purity, which is usually represented by the colour green; the figures painted with green are those for whom knowledge is the chief characteristic. Those in whom rajas, the spur to activity, is predominant, are painted in golden yellow. Tamas, inertia, the least pure is, curiously, represented by white. The traditional colours used in this art are red ochre, yellow, green, blue, white and black. Sometimes blue is also used. This traditional style mural art form uses natural pigments and vegetable colours.
The subjects for the painting, derived from various Vedic texts, are not a fanciful representation but drawn from the description in the invocatory verses or dhyana slokas. Flora and fauna and other aspects of nature are pictured as backdrops, in highly stylized manners.

Keywords: Mural, Painting, Natural, Style, Vegetable colour, Vedic Texts