DEP302
Systems Design

Team OGM

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Content

Initial Problem Statement

To create a system of coherent visual identity encompassing all of Kerala's diversity.

Shaky Start

Till the last feedback session, we had a very one dimensional approach to the topic . We were just focused on the visual identity of kerala and were unable to create proper causal loop diagrams. After the valuable feedback, we got a better understanding and started focusing on the cultural aspect of kerala through known issues and controversies.

Trading | Film industry | Communism | Architecture | Agriculture | Folklore | Religious Harmony | Education

Causal loops — Mythology — Historical Beliefs — Number of Male Pilgrims — political agenda

1990 Petition filed to restrict entry of women and subsequent HC order

Denial of entry of women in Sabarimala temple

Young indian lawyers filed petition for entry of women which was passed by the sc in 2018

ruling udf government supported the restriction

2017 constitution bench was made to look at the issue. cpm led government supported entry

Activists were attacked by the believers

Feminist movement

New Avenues

We already had a solid system mapping of kerala. With the help of this we were able to identify the important aspects which connected the causal loop diagrams easily
Kerala as an entity in the south west of India.

Disecting kerala based on time and space

Understanding the exchange of culture In kerala
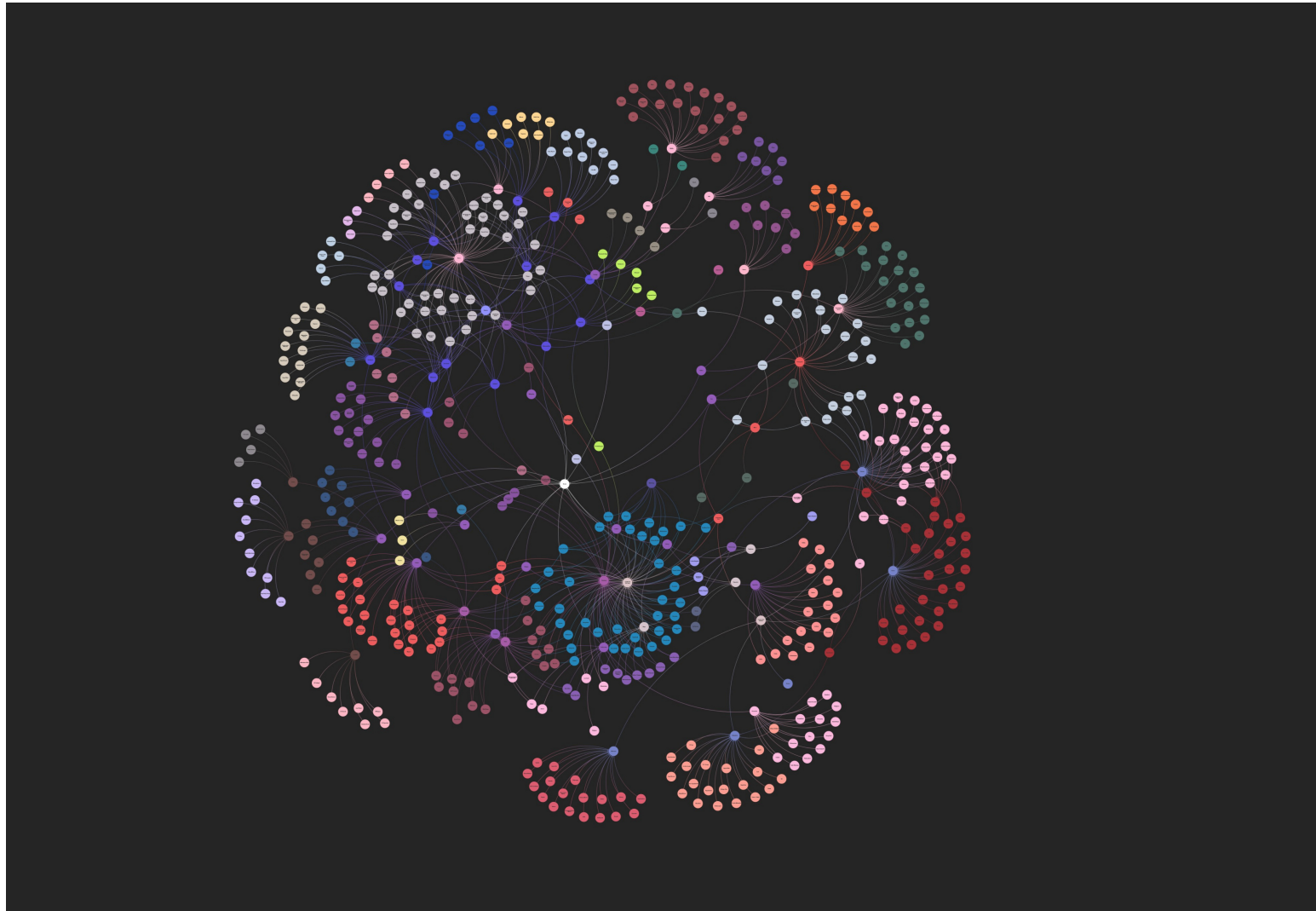trade (spice route)
migrating for job

Understand the impact of globalisation to the culture of kerala.

The impact of cultural loss.

Research and Brainstorming

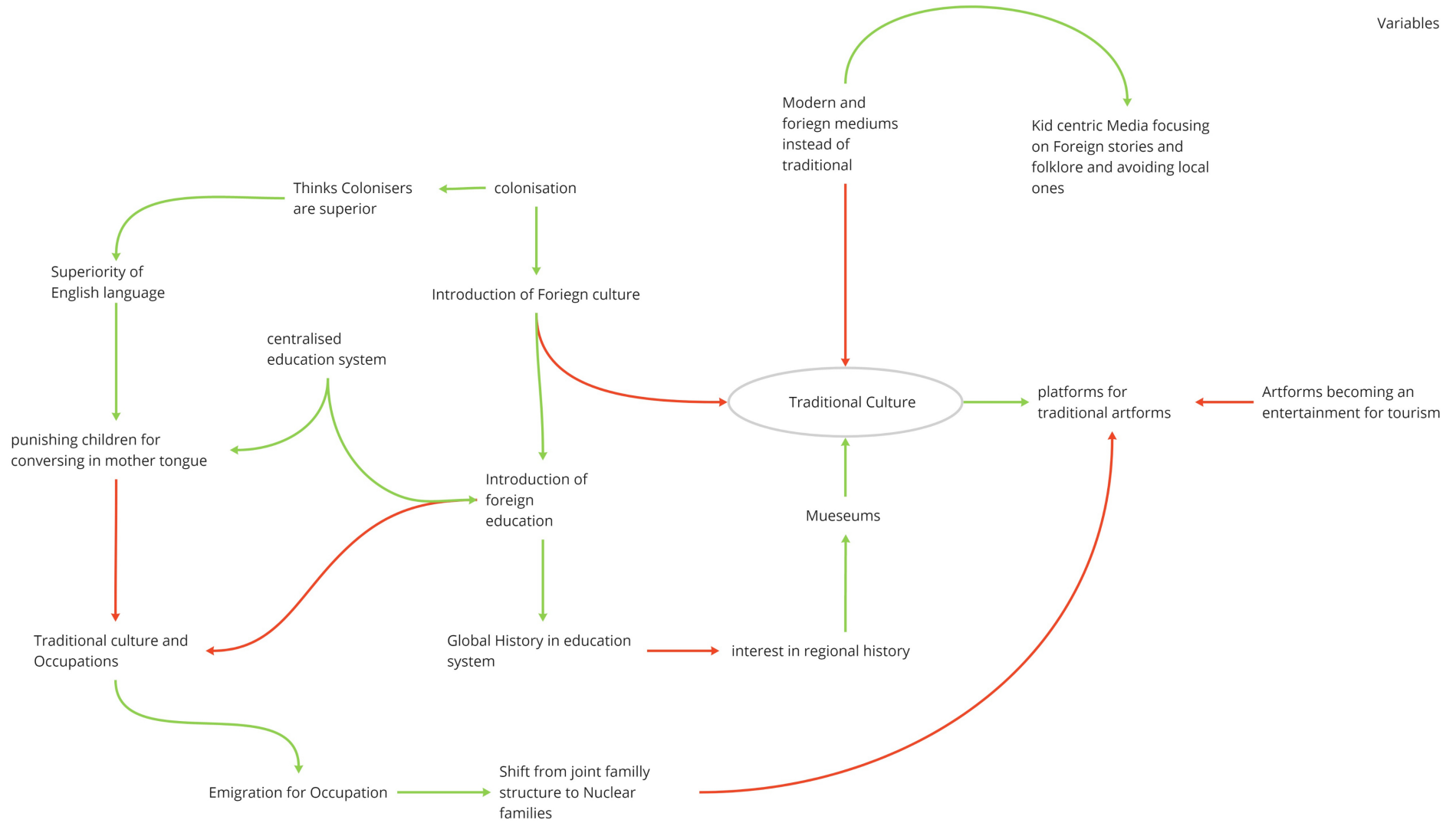*https://kumu.io/AamirNihal/kerala#untitled-map*

Redefined Focus

Creating a system to preserve the Cultural Identity of Kerala

Causal Loop Diagrams

We started off with the causal loops with the help of the system map we made before and we selected culture in the beginning. But this made it too big to work with and we thought we might miss some points, so we divided culture into its subpoints to make the causal loops. We divided it into artforms, architecture, cuisine, textile, language and agriculture. From these causal loop diagrams we could identify the leverage points and identify the major problem areas.
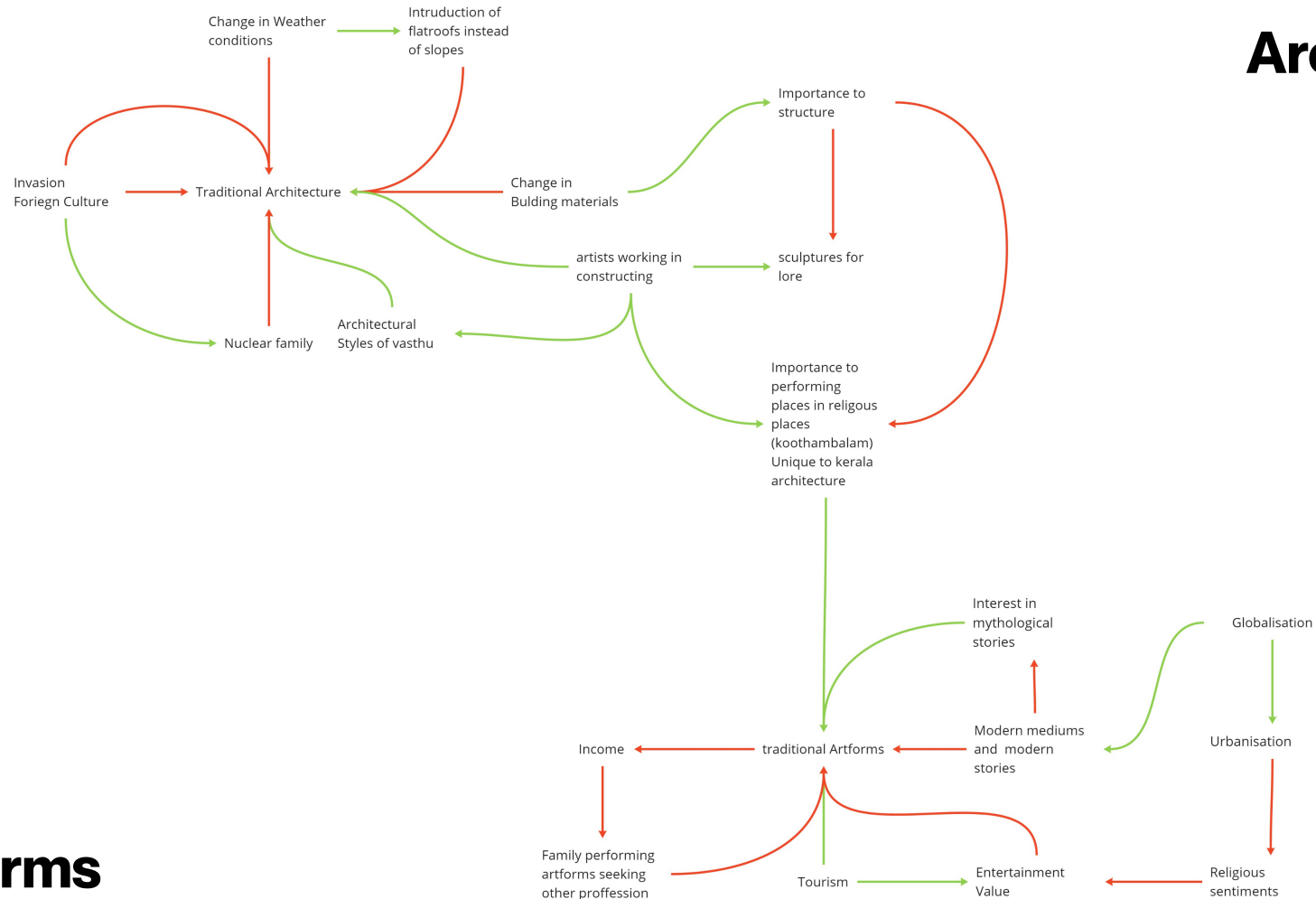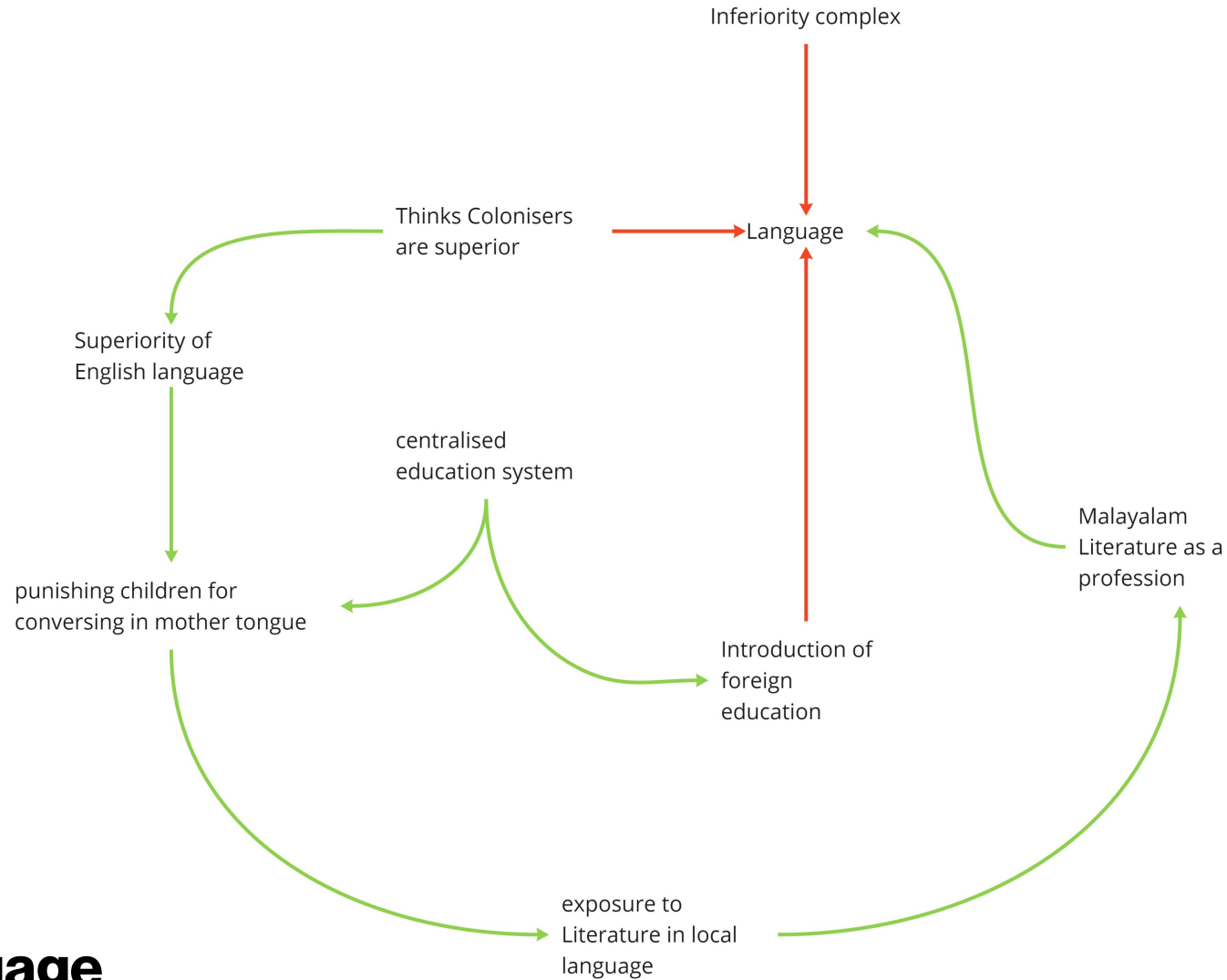
Traditional Culture

Variables

Modern and foriegn mediums instead of traditional

Kid centric Media focusing on Foreign stories and folklore and avoiding local ones

Thinks Colonisers are superior

colonisation

Superiority of English language

Introduction of Foriegn culture

centralised education system

Traditional Culture

platforms for traditional artforms

Artforms becoming an entertainment for tourism

punishing children for conversing in mother tongue

Introduction of foreign education

Mueseums

Traditional culture and Occupations

Global History in education system

interest in regional history

Emigration for Occupation

Shift from joint familly structure to Nuclear families

Taking architecture, invasion of forieign architectural styles and change in materials of construction was a major reason. Also artists and sculptors had an important role to play in early architectural styles which got extinct by construction workers taking over and giving importance to structure.
In arforms, families who used to perform these were changing to different professions because of low income and there was a lack of stages for these artforms. Another problem was the lack of interest in the mythologies and histories as people were hearing the same thing for a long time.
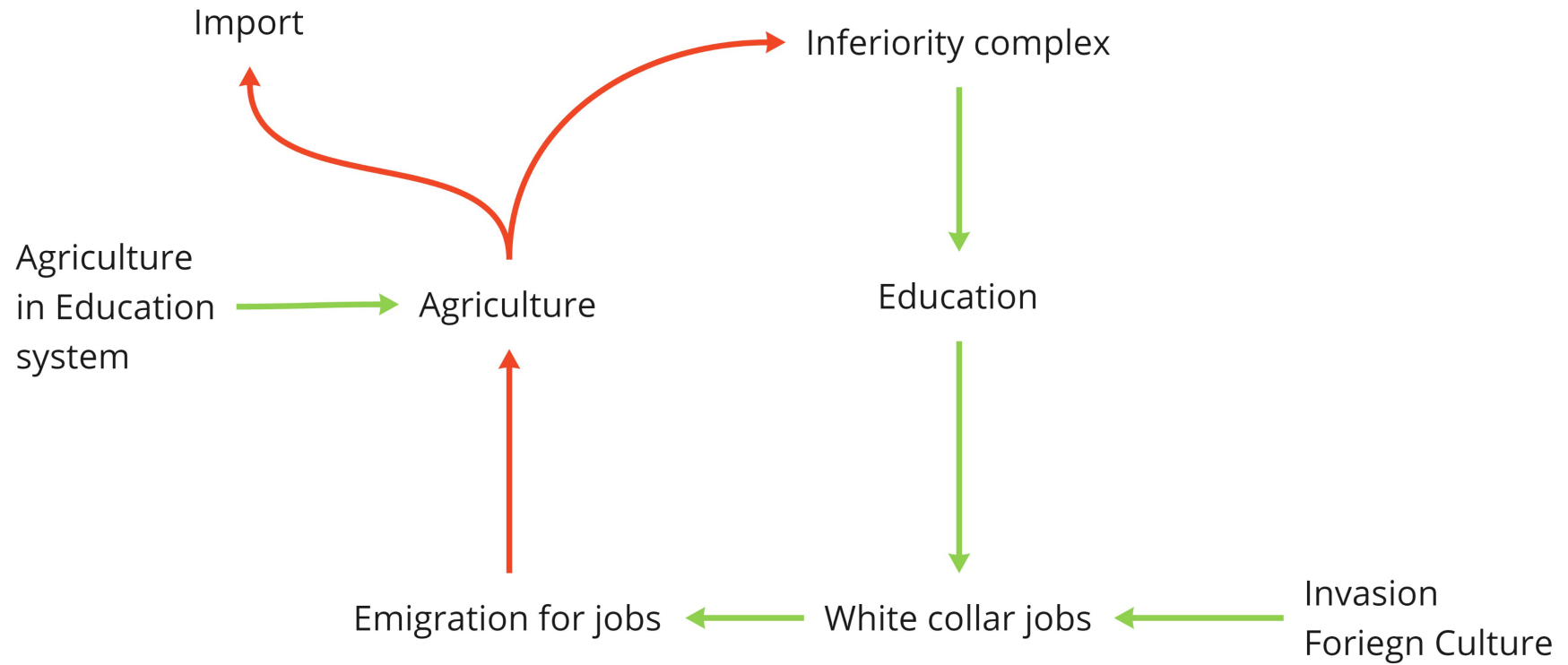
Architecture

Change in Weather conditions

Intruduction of flatroofs instead of slopes

Importance to structure

Invasion Foriegn Culture

Traditional Architecture

Change in Bulding materials

artists working in constructing

sculptures for lore

Nuclear family

Architectural Styles of vasthu

Importance to performing places in religous places (koothambalam) Unique to kerala architecture

Interest in mythological stories

Globalisation

Income

traditional Artforms

Modern mediums and modern stories

Urbanisation

Artforms

Family performing artforms seeking other proffession

Tourism

Entertainment Value

Religious sentiments

In language and many other fields also Inferiority complex is a major problem. Keralites are proud of many kerala cultures like the cuisine and the history they like to follow foreign culture as it is considered superior and better. This leads to superiority of english language and a lack of exposure to local language and dialects
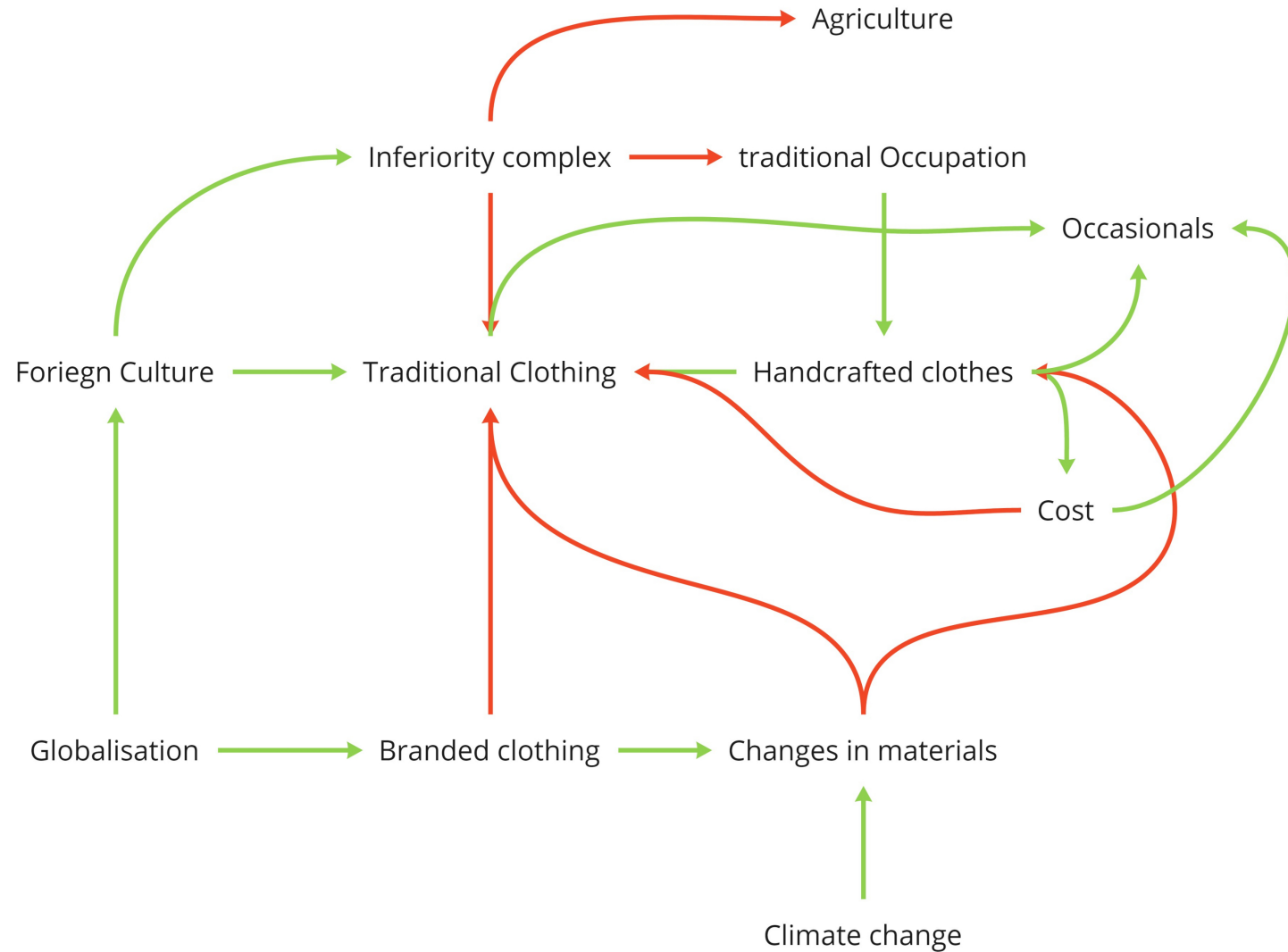
Inferiority complex

Thinks Colonisers are superior

Language

Superiority of English language

centralised education system

Malayalam Literature as a profession

punishing children for conversing in mother tongue

Introduction of foreign education

exposure to Literature in local language

Language

Faults in the education system is also a major reason for declining agriculture in the state.

Import

Inferiority complex

Agriculture in Education system → Agriculture

Education

Emigration for jobs ← White collar jobs ← Invasion Foriegn Culture

Agriculture

Coming to textile the invasion of foriegn culture led to foriegn brands taking over the sector and people now prefer that over the traditional wears which got costlier due to this.
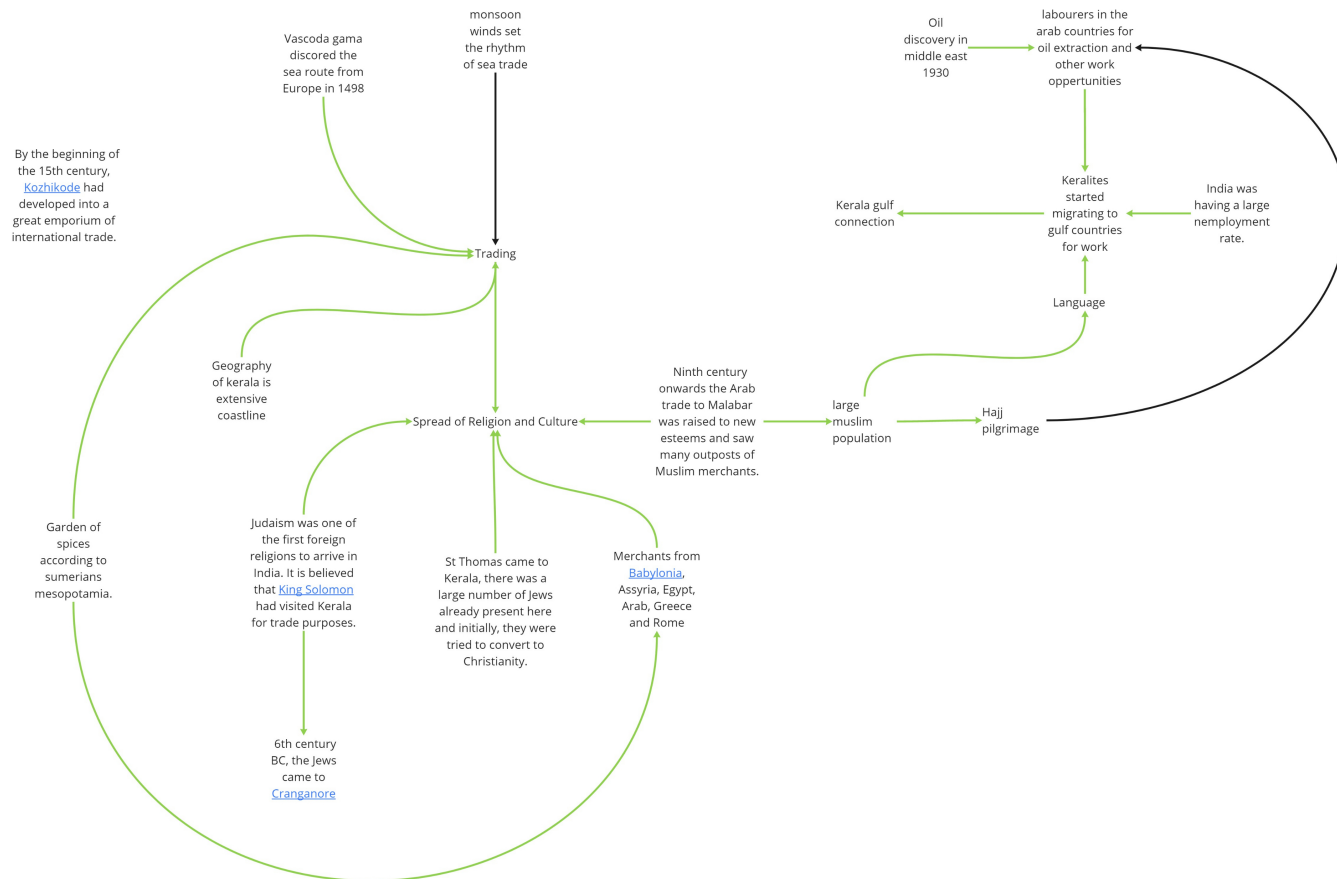
Agriculture

Inferiority complex → traditional Occupation

Occasionals

Foriegn Culture → Traditional Clothing → Handcrafted clothes

Cost

Globalisation → Branded clothing → Changes in materials

Climate change

Although cuisine is something keralites are proud of, these proud delicacies remain to be just a few recipes. Many of these tasty foods which are unique to kerala due to its trade history are now going extinct as fast foods are taking over.
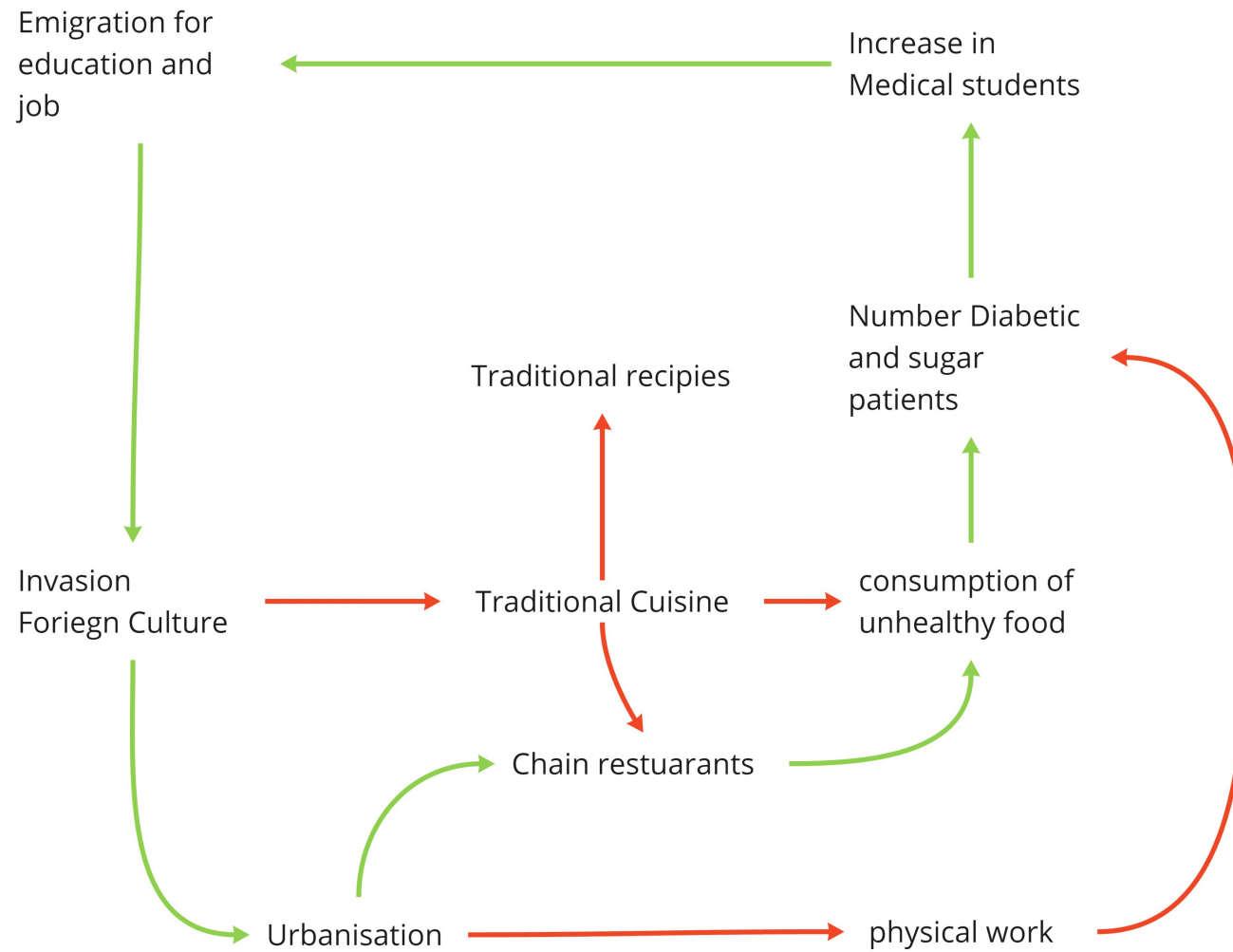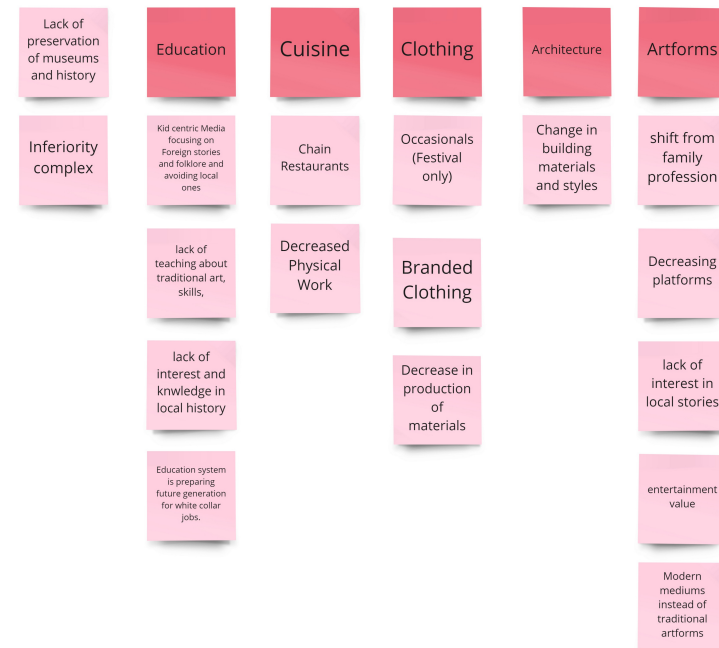
Cultural Exchange

From our initial system map we had identified various important sectors which affected keralas cultural identity and the states trade history was a major point. We went back again to map this and ajanta maams feedback helped us to identify more points like the 70s migration to the gulf countries for work when india had a major unemployment issue.

Vascoda gama discored the sea route from Europe in 1498

monsoon winds set the rhythm of sea trade

Oil discovery in middle east 1930

labourers in the arab countries for oil extraction and other work oppertunities

By the beginning of the 15th century, Kozhikode had developed into a great emporium of international trade.

Trading

Keralites started migrating to gulf countries for work

Kerala gulf connection

India was having a large nemployment rate.

Geography of kerala is extensive coastline

Language

Spread of Religion and Culture

Ninth century onwards the Arab trade to Malabar was raised to new esteems and saw many outposts of Muslim merchants.

large muslim population

Hajj pilgrimage

Garden of spices according to sumerians mesopotamia.

Judaism was one of the first foreign religions to arrive in India. It is believed that King Solomon had visited Kerala for trade purposes.

St Thomas came to Kerala, there was a large number of Jews already present here and initially, they were tried to convert to Christianity.

Merchants from Babylonia, Assyria, Egypt, Arab, Greece and Rome

6th century BC, the Jews came to Cranganore

Insights

We could identify the major points which affected the sub areas we looked at and we came down to these points

Inferiority complex was an important issue in almost all areas. Problems due to the education included usage of modern mediums and also foriegn folktales instead of local ones., lack of topics like traditional arts, folklores, history, agriculture. Basically the current system is preparing the students for white collar jobs. Under the cuisine comes the invasion of foreign foods and a lack of physical work leading to unhealthy citizens. Traditional clothing are only used as occasionals due to the branded clothes taking over and inturn decrease in production of traditional wear. Architecture had a descend due to decrease in skilled worker and change in building materials. And in artforms change in professions, lack of interesting stories, and decreasing platforms and increase in new mediums to tell these stories decreased its value.

Lack of preservation of museums and history	Education	Cuisine	Clothing	Architecture	Artforms
Inferiority complex	Kid centric Media focusing on Foreign stories and folklore and avoiding local ones	Chain Restaurants	Occasionals (Festival only)	Change in building materials and styles	shift from family profession
	lack of teaching about traditional art, skills,	Decreased Physical Work	Branded Clothing		Decreasing platforms
	lack of interest and knwledge in local history		Decrease in production of materials		lack of interest in local stories
	Education system is preparing future generation for white collar jobs.				entertainment value
					Modern mediums instead of traditional artforms

Primary Research

Based on the insight we derived, we devised a survey to understand how well our theories actually represent what the users think. We had asked questions pertaining to a variety of topics regarding the culture of Kerala.

First up we wanted to see how many people have actually experienced an artform, and surprisingly a good majority had. but not all of them enjoyed it. furthermore only the more mainstream artforms were named, this could indicate either not knowing that something was an artform, or that only a few artforms are openly accessible to the masses.

Similarly we wanted to gauge interest in regional history and culture through the popularity of museums, unsurprisingly, the results were reversed here, the vast majority hadn't visited a museum in recent years, and an even larger percent of those who did did not enjoy the experience. The main reason given for it was that it was simply boring.
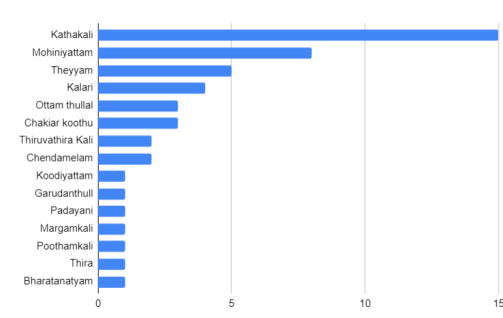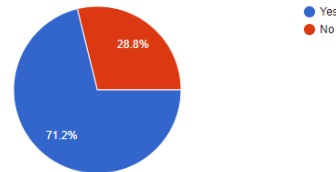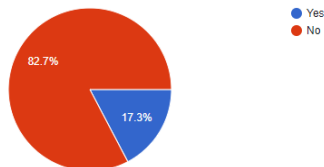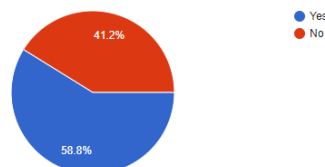
Next we wanted to look at their circumstances growing up that might give some insights into why things might be so. The easiest to gauge was the shift to nuclear families which would reduce exposure to cultural, mythological, or historical knowledge gained through the elder family.
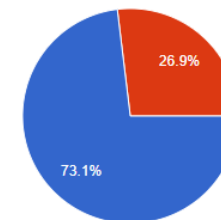
looking at the language, a fourth of the answers said they never read any malayalam literature and looking at the distribution of known characters, excluding characters from foreign media, almost everyone knew Mayavi which was a popular character in children's magazines. keeping in mind that almost all of the answers are from people over 20 years old, who had their childhood in early 2000s when foreign culture wasn't as prevalent in kerala as it is later on. Parashuraman was also a popular answer, him being a mythological avatar of Vishnu who created Kerala, characters from folk lores were less popular. And interestingly buji, which was the name used in regional dubs for boots from Dora the explorer was 25 percent more popular than boots himself. This shows the popularity of dubs of foreign cartoons which most parents complain is harming their child's language with its senseless and direct translations. They prefer children watching the original version of said cartoons though to improve their English vocabulary.
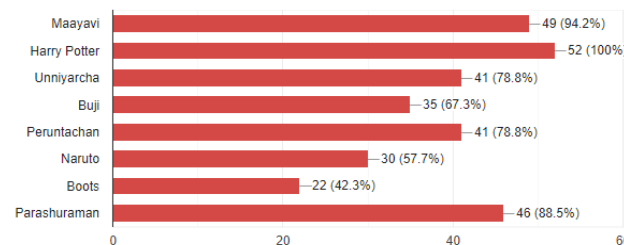
What kind of family do you live in?

52 responses
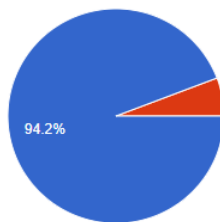
- Nuclear family
- Joint family

94.2%

Have you read Malayalam literature?

52 responses

- Yes
- No

26.9%

73.1%

Which of these characters do you know

52 responses

| Character	Responses
Maayavi	49 (94.2%)
Harry Potter	52 (100%)
Unniyarcha	41 (78.8%)
Buji	35 (67.3%)
Peruntachan	41 (78.8%)
Naruto	30 (57.7%)
Boots	22 (42.3%)
Parashuraman	46 (88.5%)

Next up was traditional clothing, as expected almost everyone wears them either during festivals or functions despite most people saying traditional mundu is one of the most comfortable items to wear. And only 11 percent definitively say they prefer traditional clothes over branded, the 50 percent Maybe could be a result of their pride as a Mallu and their subconscious inferiority complex fighting each other.

The question about agriculture was put in because of a proposal that we had come across during research where it was suggested that only people who fail at everything else, be it an examination, immigration or even simple entrepreneurship goes into agriculture, because that's what they are taught. And then suggest that the school curriculum include two days of agricultural lessons going in depth in the science of farming. To increase popularity of farming as a profession
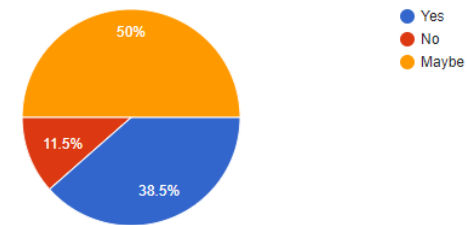

How often do you wear your traditional clothes?
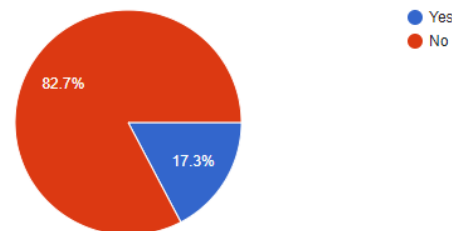52 responses
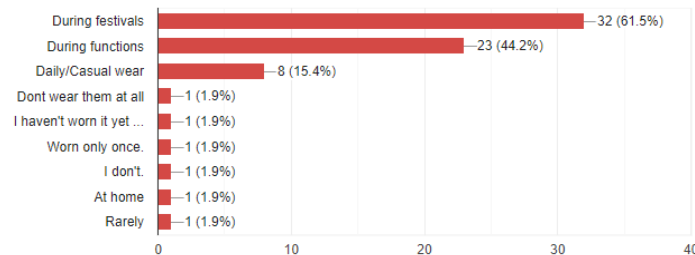
Do you prefer branded clothing over traditional wear?
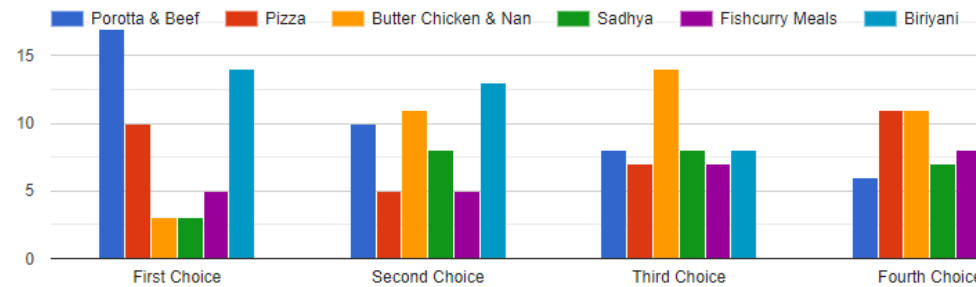52 responses

Was agriculture a part of your curriculum?
52 responses

17

As expected, Mallus loves their food. But the takeaways we got more importantly than Porotta and beef and biryani taking the lead was how sadhya was the second most favourable and fish curry meals that is the staple lunch is the least favoured. And how a fast food almost always was placed above sadhya.
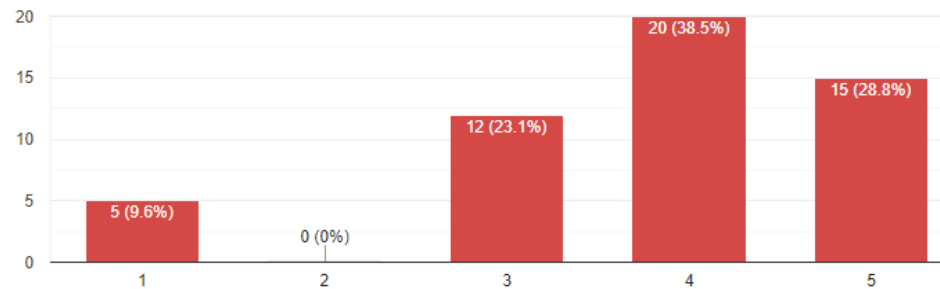
Finally we indeed with gauging the pride of Mallu, which was pretty high, we wanted to gauge this because a feeling of pride is often used to mask one's sub lying inferiority complex, which was one of the recurring elements in our causality loops.

Which of these cuisine is more appealing to you?

How proud are you of your Culture as a Mallu

52 responses

Design Opportunities

From the insights from our causal loops and primary research, we identified a few areas of design opportunities, like Low Interest in Regional History, Stale and overdone Stories, Tourism, Invasive Foreign Culture and inferiority complex, Malayali Pride

Preliminary Ideation

We came up with some quick preliminary ideas to capitalise on the opportunities like

Tourism Package involving different heritage and cultural sits across kerala with a linear storyline to increase awareness of kerala's cultural history

Artforms in kerala are usually base around mythological and historical stories as their theme but the existing stories are overdone and are not able to capture the modern audience. Maybe adding more variety into the stories with more recent history could help.

Artforms in Mixed Media, maybe using artforms as a promotion for a movie etc.